The Holy One of Israel

A Verse-by-Verse Commentary on the Book of Isaiah



By Dr. Paul Crawford

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Preface

The book of Isaiah stands as one of the most majestic, powerful, and theologically rich books in all of Scripture. Its pages move from judgment to hope, from rebellion to restoration, from human failure to divine faithfulness, and from the brokenness of the present world to the glory of the coming kingdom.

Isaiah presents us with a vision of God that is both overwhelming and comforting. He is high and lifted up. He is holy beyond measure. He rules over kings and nations. He judges sin with perfect righteousness. Yet He also comforts His people, forgives the repentant, strengthens the weary, restores the broken, and promises salvation through His Servant and Messiah.

The title of this commentary, *The Holy One of Israel*, comes from one of Isaiah's most distinctive descriptions of God. Throughout the book, Isaiah repeatedly uses this title to remind us that the God of Israel is unlike any other. He is completely pure, utterly righteous, sovereign over history, faithful to His covenant, and worthy of all worship.

That truth becomes especially vivid in Isaiah 6, where the prophet sees the Lord seated upon His throne, high and exalted, while the seraphim cry:

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory."

Isaiah's response was not pride, curiosity, or self-confidence. It was conviction.

"Woe is me! For I am undone."

That encounter with the holiness of God changed Isaiah forever. He saw God clearly, and therefore he saw himself clearly. Yet the chapter does not end with condemnation. A live coal from the altar touches Isaiah's lips, his guilt is removed, and his sin is forgiven. Then comes the call of God:

"Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

Isaiah responds:

"Here am I. Send me."

In many ways, that scene captures the message of the entire book.

We see the holiness of God.

We see the sinfulness of man.

We see the necessity of judgment.

We see the grace of cleansing.

We see the call to faithful service.

And ultimately, we see the promise of salvation.

Isaiah spoke to a nation facing spiritual decline, political uncertainty, military threats, moral corruption, false worship, and misplaced trust. The people of Judah were often tempted to depend upon armies, political alliances, wealth, idols, and human wisdom rather than the living God.

Although Isaiah ministered centuries ago, the spiritual issues he confronted remain remarkably familiar.

Human beings still trust in their own strength.

Nations still rise in pride.

Religious activity can still exist without genuine devotion.

People still search for security apart from God.

Sin is still destructive.

Judgment is still real.

Grace is still available.

And the Lord is still holy.

Yet Isaiah is not merely a book of warnings. It is also a book overflowing with hope.

Few Old Testament books reveal the coming Messiah with such clarity and beauty. Isaiah tells us of the virgin who would conceive and bear a Son called Immanuel. He speaks of the Child who would be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. He describes the Branch who would come from the line of Jesse. He presents the Servant of the Lord who would bring justice to the nations.

Most importantly, Isaiah leads us to the suffering Servant.

He would be despised and rejected.

He would bear our griefs and carry our sorrows.

He would be wounded for our transgressions.

He would be bruised for our iniquities.

The chastisement that brings peace would fall upon Him.

And by His wounds we would be healed.

Isaiah 53 points with extraordinary clarity toward the saving work of Jesus Christ. The cross was not an accident of history. It was part of the redemptive purpose of God revealed long before Christ came into the world.

But Isaiah does not stop at the suffering of the Messiah. He also looks forward to His reign.

The book speaks of a coming kingdom in which righteousness will prevail, nations will seek the Lord, creation will experience restoration, and the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth.

Isaiah ultimately looks beyond judgment, exile, and restoration to something even greater: new heavens and a new earth.

That is why Isaiah is not simply a prophecy about ancient Judah.

It is a book about God's plan of redemption.

It is a book about the Messiah.

It is a book about the nations.

It is a book about judgment and mercy.

It is a book about the future.

And above all, it is a book about the Holy One of Israel.

The purpose of this commentary is to walk carefully through Isaiah verse by verse while keeping these great themes in view. My desire is not merely to explain what the text says, but to help the reader understand why it matters.

Throughout this volume, attention will be given to the historical setting, prophetic context, important words and phrases, cross references, doctrinal truths, Messianic prophecies, practical applications, and spiritual principles that arise from the text.

Where appropriate, difficult passages will be examined carefully and competing interpretations will be acknowledged. Prophetic passages will be considered within their immediate historical setting while also recognizing their broader biblical and Messianic significance.

At the same time, this commentary is not intended only for scholars.

It is written for pastors, teachers, Bible students, Sunday school classes, small groups, and ordinary believers who simply want to understand the Word of God more deeply.

Isaiah should not be approached merely as an ancient prophetic document.

It should be read devotionally.

It should confront us.

It should humble us.

It should strengthen our faith.

It should deepen our understanding of Christ.

And it should lead us into worship.

As you move through these sixty-six chapters, you will encounter warnings against pride, idolatry, hypocrisy, injustice, and unbelief. You will also encounter extraordinary promises of comfort, forgiveness, deliverance, restoration, and everlasting salvation.

You will hear God say:

“Come now, and let us reason together.”

You will hear the promise:

“Unto us a child is born.”

You will hear the invitation:

“Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters.”

You will hear the call:

“Seek the Lord while He may be found.”

You will hear the declaration:

“My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways.”

You will hear the command:

“Arise, shine, for your light has come.”

And you will hear the promise of a future in which God creates new heavens and a new earth.

My prayer is that this commentary will help you see Isaiah not merely as a collection of prophetic sayings, but as one unified testimony to the holiness, sovereignty, justice, mercy, and saving purpose of God.

May these pages help you understand the Scriptures more clearly.

May they strengthen your confidence in God’s Word.

May they deepen your appreciation for Jesus Christ.

May they remind you that history is moving according to the sovereign purpose of God.

And above all, may they cause you to stand in awe before the One whom Isaiah called again and again:

The Holy One of Israel.

Dr. Paul Crawford

Prologue

When a Man Saw the Lord

There are moments in Scripture when heaven seems to open and the reader is permitted to see beyond the ordinary world.

Isaiah experienced such a moment.

It came during a time of uncertainty.

A king had died.

A nation was drifting.

Political danger surrounded Judah.

Spiritual compromise had infected the people.

Religious activity continued, but genuine devotion to God was disappearing.

Then Isaiah saw something that changed everything.

He saw the Lord.

Not merely an idea about God.

Not a theological argument.

Not a religious tradition.

He saw the Lord seated upon a throne, high and exalted.

The train of His robe filled the temple.

Above Him stood the seraphim.

Each had six wings.

With two they covered their faces.

With two they covered their feet.

With two they flew.

And they cried to one another:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory.”

The foundations shook.

The temple filled with smoke.

And Isaiah suddenly understood who he was standing before.

His first response was not excitement.

It was conviction.

“Woe is me! For I am undone.”

Isaiah had seen the holiness of God, and in that light he saw the depth of his own sin.

That is what happens when human beings truly encounter the holiness of God.

Pride disappears.

Excuses vanish.

Self-righteousness collapses.

The heart is exposed.

Isaiah realized that he was a sinful man living among a sinful people.

Yet the vision did not end with judgment.

One of the seraphim flew to the altar, took a burning coal, and touched Isaiah's lips.

His guilt was removed.

His sin was forgiven.

Then Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord:

"Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

And the man who moments earlier had cried, "Woe is me," now answered:

"Here am I. Send me."

That sequence is central to the message of Isaiah.

First comes revelation.

Then conviction.

Then cleansing.

Then calling.

Isaiah could not faithfully speak for God until he had first seen the holiness of God and recognized his own need for cleansing.

From that moment forward, Isaiah became a voice to his generation.

And what a message he was given.

He would speak to kings.

He would confront nations.

He would expose hypocrisy.

He would condemn idolatry.

He would warn of judgment.

He would announce coming invasion.

He would call people to repentance.

But Isaiah would also speak some of the most beautiful words of hope found anywhere in Scripture.

He would tell frightened people:

"Fear not."

He would tell the weary:

“They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.”

He would proclaim:

“Comfort, comfort My people.”

He would announce the coming of a child whose name would be called:

Wonderful Counselor.
Mighty God.
Everlasting Father.
Prince of Peace.

He would speak of a virgin who would conceive and bear a Son called Immanuel.

He would tell of a Servant who would bring justice to the nations.

He would describe One who would be despised and rejected by men.

One who would bear our griefs.

One who would carry our sorrows.

One who would be wounded for our transgressions.

One upon whom the Lord would lay the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah would see the Messiah centuries before Bethlehem.

He would see the suffering Servant before Calvary.

He would see the coming King before the world recognized His name.

He would see judgment.

He would see restoration.

He would see Israel scattered and gathered.

He would see nations coming to the light.

He would see deserts blossom.

He would see swords beaten into plowshares.

He would see a kingdom of righteousness.

And near the end of his prophecy, Isaiah would look beyond the present world altogether.

He would hear God declare:

“Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth.”

Few books of the Bible cover such an enormous horizon.

Isaiah begins with a rebellious nation and ends with a renewed creation.

It begins with sin.

It ends with worship.

It moves through judgment toward redemption.

It moves from earthly kings to the eternal King.

It moves from the corruption of Jerusalem to the glory of a world filled with the knowledge of God.

And standing above every chapter is the same God Isaiah saw in the temple:

The Holy One of Israel.

That title appears repeatedly throughout Isaiah because it expresses something essential about God.

He is not like us.

He is not controlled by human governments.

He is not threatened by armies.

He is not impressed by wealth.

He is not deceived by religious appearances.

He cannot tolerate sin as though it were insignificant.

He cannot be manipulated by rituals.

He cannot be reduced to an idol made by human hands.

He is holy.

He is sovereign.

He is righteous.

He is faithful.

He is merciful.

And He alone is God.

Isaiah’s generation desperately needed to remember that truth.

So does ours.

We live in a world filled with uncertainty.

Governments change.

Nations rise and fall.

Cultures abandon long-held convictions.

Truth is challenged.

Morality is redefined.

Fear spreads quickly.

People place their confidence in political power, money, technology, institutions, and human wisdom.

Isaiah speaks directly into such a world.

His message is simple but demanding:

Do not place ultimate trust in man.

Do not worship what human hands have made.

Do not confuse religious activity with holiness.

Do not imagine that God is indifferent to sin.

Do not believe that human history is out of control.

The Lord still reigns.

That truth echoes through the entire prophecy.

Kings may boast, but God rules over kings.

Empires may rise, but God determines their boundaries.

Armies may march, but they cannot move beyond His permission.

Idols may be worshiped, but they cannot speak, save, or predict the future.

Human plans may appear powerful, but only the counsel of the Lord will stand.

Again and again, Isaiah calls his readers away from false sources of security and back to faith in God.

But the book also raises an unavoidable question.

How can sinful people dwell with a holy God?

Isaiah answers that question gradually.

Sacrifice is necessary.

Cleansing is necessary.

A Servant is coming.

That Servant will suffer.

He will bear sin.

He will be pierced.

He will be crushed.

He will justify many.

And after suffering, He will be exalted.

The New Testament reveals the identity of that Servant.

Jesus Christ.

The Gospel is woven deeply into Isaiah.

That is why generations of Christians have sometimes referred to Isaiah as the “evangelical prophet.”

Isaiah announces good news centuries before Christ's birth.

The Holy One who judges sin is also the God who provides salvation.

The God whose throne caused Isaiah to tremble is also the God who invited sinners:

“Come now, and let us reason together.”

Though sins are like scarlet, God can make them white as snow.

This is the great tension and glory of Isaiah.

God is absolutely holy.

Man is deeply sinful.

Judgment is certain.

Yet redemption is offered.

And the bridge between holiness and sinful humanity is ultimately found in the Servant of the Lord.

As we begin this verse-by-verse journey through Isaiah, we are entering far more than an ancient prophetic book.

We are entering a panoramic revelation of God’s character and redemptive plan.

We will stand beside Isaiah before kings.

We will hear the footsteps of invading armies.

We will watch empires rise and fall.

We will listen to warnings of judgment.

We will hear songs of salvation.

We will walk through deserts that suddenly blossom.

We will hear voices crying in the wilderness.

We will stand at the foot of the cross in Isaiah 53.

We will look toward a coming kingdom.

And ultimately, we will look toward a new heaven and a new earth.

But before we examine prophecies, nations, historical events, Messianic promises, and future kingdoms, there is one truth we must never lose sight of.

Isaiah is ultimately about God.

The God who sits upon the throne.

The God before whom angels cover their faces.

The God who judges rebellion.

The God who forgives the repentant.

The God who keeps His promises.

The God who sends His Servant.

The God who saves.

The God who reigns.

The God Isaiah knew as:

The Holy One of Israel

Isaiah Chapter 1 — A Rebellious Nation and God’s Call to Repentance

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 1 opens with one of the strongest prophetic indictments in Scripture.

God speaks against:

Rebellion.

Empty religion.

Corrupt leadership.

Injustice.

Idolatry.

Hypocrisy.

The chapter begins with a courtroom-like summons:

> **“Hear, O heavens, and listen, O earth!”**

God has raised His people.

He has cared for them.

He has sustained them.

Yet they have rebelled.

Isaiah pictures Judah as spiritually diseased from head to foot.

Their worship continues.

Their sacrifices continue.

Their festivals continue.

Their prayers continue.

But God rejects them because their hearts and lives remain corrupt.

This is one of the great warnings of Isaiah 1:

Religious activity cannot substitute for repentance.

God does not ask merely for more ceremonies.

He says:

> **“Wash yourselves.”**
>
> **“Stop doing wrong.”**
>
> **“Learn to do good.”**
>
> **“Seek justice.”**

Then comes one of the most beautiful invitations in the chapter:

> **“Come now, let us reason together.”**

Scarlet sin can become white as snow.

Crimson guilt can become like wool.

Judgment is real.

But mercy is offered.

The chapter also shows that repentance must affect how people treat others.

God specifically mentions:

The oppressed.

The fatherless.

The widow.

Righteousness is not merely ceremonial.

It is ethical.

It changes conduct.

The central truth of Isaiah 1 is:

God rejects outward religion without inward repentance, but He graciously calls sinners to turn from evil, practice justice, receive cleansing, and return to faithful obedience before judgment comes.

I. ISAIAH RECEIVES A VISION CONCERNING JUDAH

Isaiah 1:1 — The Prophet and His Times

> **“This is the vision of Isaiah son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.”**

Isaiah’s ministry covered a significant period of Judah’s history.

He prophesied during the reigns of:

Uzziah.

Jotham.

Ahaz.

Hezekiah.

These were years of:

Political change.

Spiritual decline.

Foreign threats.

Periods of reform.

Periods of rebellion.

Isaiah’s message concerns especially:

Judah.

Jerusalem.

Cross References

2 Kings 15:1

Azariah, also called Uzziah, became king of Judah during the reign of Jeroboam king of Israel.

2 Chronicles 26:1

The people of Judah made Uzziah king after the death of his father Amaziah, and he began his reign while still young.

Hosea 1:1

The word of the Lord came to Hosea during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah of Judah and during the reign of Jeroboam in Israel.

Spiritual Principle

God speaks into real history.

Prophecy is not detached from actual people, rulers, sins, and consequences.

II. GOD CALLS HEAVEN AND EARTH AS WITNESSES

Isaiah 1:2 — Rebellious Children

> **“Hear, O heavens, and listen, O earth! For the Lord has spoken: ‘I raised children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against Me.’”**

God presents the case against His people.

He had:

Raised them.

Provided for them.

Protected them.

Loved them.

Yet they rebelled.

Their sin is not presented merely as breaking rules.

It is betrayal of relationship.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 32:1

Moses called the heavens to listen and the earth to hear as he spoke the words God had given him.

Deuteronomy 32:5

God’s people corrupted themselves and acted in a way unworthy of children who belonged to Him, becoming morally twisted and unfaithful.

Micah 6:2

The mountains and enduring foundations of the earth are called to hear the Lord’s case against His people because He has a controversy with them.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is rebellion against the God who has shown goodness.

Key Truth

The seriousness of sin is seen more clearly when we remember who God is and what He has done.

III. ANIMALS SHOW MORE RECOGNITION THAN GOD’S PEOPLE

Isaiah 1:3 — Israel Does Not Understand

> **“Even the ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master’s manger, but Israel does not know Me; My people do not understand.”**

The comparison is devastating.

An ox recognizes its owner.

A donkey knows where it is fed.

But Israel does not recognize the God who:

Created them.

Delivered them.

Fed them.

Protected them.

Their problem is spiritual blindness.

Cross References

Jeremiah 8:7

Even birds recognize the seasons appointed for them, but God’s people fail to understand the judgments and ways of the Lord.

Deuteronomy 32:15

Israel became prosperous and satisfied, then abandoned the God who made them and treated lightly the Rock who saved them.

Jeremiah 2:8

The priests failed to ask where the Lord was, those handling the law did not truly know Him, rulers rebelled, and prophets pursued what could not help.

Spiritual Principle

Religious knowledge is not the same as truly knowing God.

IV. JUDAH HAS ABANDONED THE HOLY ONE

Isaiah 1:4 — A Nation Loaded with Guilt

> **“Oh, sinful nation, a people weighed down with guilt, offspring of evildoers, children who act corruptly! They have abandoned the Lord; they have despised the Holy One of Israel; they have turned their backs on Him.”**

Isaiah piles description upon description.

Sinful nation.

Burdened with guilt.

Corrupt children.

Forsakers of God.

Despisers of the Holy One.

This is not accidental weakness.

It is continuing rebellion.

Cross References

Jeremiah 2:13

God says His people committed two evils: they abandoned Him, the fountain of living water, and tried to create broken containers that could hold no water.

Deuteronomy 32:15

After becoming prosperous, Israel turned away from the God who created and saved them.

2 Chronicles 29:6

Hezekiah said that previous generations had been unfaithful, turned away from the Lord, and refused to seek Him faithfully.

Spiritual Principle

Sin always moves away from God, even when religious forms remain.

V. CONTINUED REBELLION BRINGS CONTINUED CONSEQUENCES

Isaiah 1:5 — The Whole Head Is Sick

> **“Why should you be beaten anymore? You only continue to rebel. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint.”**

God asks:

Why continue?

Judgment has already come.

Yet repentance has not.

The nation is pictured as a sick body.

Head:

Sick.

Heart:

Weak.

Sin has affected the whole person and the whole society.

Cross References

Jeremiah 5:3

God disciplined the people, but they refused correction. They hardened themselves and would not return to Him.

2 Chronicles 28:22

During his time of distress, King Ahaz became even more unfaithful to the Lord rather than repenting.

Amos 4:6

God brought hardship upon Israel, yet repeatedly they refused to return to Him.

Spiritual Principle

Suffering alone does not produce repentance.

The heart must respond.

VI. THE NATION IS COVERED WITH WOUNDS

Isaiah 1:6 — Untreated Spiritual Sickness

> **“From the sole of the foot to the top of the head, there is no health—only wounds, bruises, and sores, not cleansed, bandaged, or treated with oil.”**

The picture becomes graphic.

The nation is covered with untreated injuries.

This represents:

Sin.

Consequences.

Moral corruption.

Spiritual ruin.

Nothing has been properly treated.

Cross References

Jeremiah 30:12

God describes the people’s wound as serious and their injury as severe because of persistent rebellion.

Psalm 38:3

The psalmist says his body has no soundness because of God’s discipline and his sin has robbed him of peace.

Jeremiah 6:14

False leaders treated the people’s deep spiritual wound as though it were minor, saying “Peace” when there was no true peace.

Spiritual Principle

A shallow treatment cannot heal a deep spiritual wound.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin must be dealt with honestly before healing can begin.

VII. JUDAH EXPERIENCES DEVASTATION

Isaiah 1:7 — The Land Is Desolate

> **“Your land is desolate, your cities are burned with fire; foreigners devour your fields before your eyes, a wasteland, overthrown by strangers.”**

Sin has consequences beyond the private life.

The nation experiences:

Destruction.

Foreign invasion.

Economic loss.

Burned cities.

Ruined land.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:13

During Hezekiah’s reign, the Assyrian king attacked the fortified cities of Judah and captured many of them.

Micah 1:6

God declared that Samaria would become a heap of ruins, its foundations exposed and its destruction visible.

Leviticus 26:33

God warned that persistent covenant rebellion would lead to scattering among the nations and desolation of the land.

Spiritual Principle

Persistent rebellion eventually produces visible consequences.

VIII. ZION IS LEFT VULNERABLE

Isaiah 1:8 — A Hut in a Field

> **“The daughter of Zion is left like a shelter in a vineyard, like a hut in a field of melons, like a city under siege.”**

Jerusalem is pictured as:

Isolated.

Exposed.

Vulnerable.

A temporary hut in a field has little protection.

The once glorious city is surrounded.

Cross References

Lamentations 2:1

Jerusalem is pictured as brought down from glory under the weight of divine judgment.

Micah 3:12

Because of corrupt leadership and sin, Zion would be plowed like a field and Jerusalem reduced to ruins.

Lamentations 5:18

Mount Zion is described as desolate because of the devastation brought upon the city.

Spiritual Principle

What appears secure can become vulnerable when God’s protection is rejected.

IX. A REMNANT SURVIVES BY GOD’S MERCY

Isaiah 1:9 — Not Completely Destroyed

> **“If the Lord of hosts had not left us a few survivors, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah.”**

Judah deserves complete judgment.

Yet:

Some survive.

Why?

Mercy.

The existence of a remnant is evidence of grace.

Cross References

Romans 9:29

Paul quotes Isaiah to show that if the Lord had not preserved a remnant, God’s people would have been completely destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah.

Genesis 19:24

The Lord brought devastating judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah because of their wickedness.

Lamentations 3:22

Because of the Lord’s faithful mercy, His people are not completely consumed; His compassion does not come to an end.

Spiritual Principle

Survival is sometimes not evidence of innocence.

It is evidence of mercy.

X. GOD COMPARES JUDAH TO SODOM AND GOMORRAH

Isaiah 1:10 — Hear the Word of the Lord

> **“Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom; listen to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah!”**

Isaiah is speaking to Judah and Jerusalem.

Yet he calls them:

Sodom.

Gomorrah.

The comparison shows how corrupt they have become.

Religious heritage has not protected them from moral decay.

Cross References

Genesis 19:1

The angels entered Sodom and encountered a city already marked by deep corruption.

Deuteronomy 32:32

Moses compared corrupt Israel to vines connected with Sodom and Gomorrah, producing poisoned fruit.

Ezekiel 16:46

Ezekiel also compared Jerusalem’s corruption with that of Sodom and other wicked cities.

Spiritual Principle

Religious identity cannot replace righteous character.

XI. GOD REJECTS SACRIFICES WITHOUT REPENTANCE

Isaiah 1:11 — Religious Offerings Without Obedience

> **“‘What is the purpose of your many sacrifices to Me?’ says the Lord. ‘I am full of the burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed cattle. I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs, or goats.’”**

The problem is not that God never commanded sacrifices.

He did.

The problem is:

Sacrifice without repentance.

Ritual without righteousness.

Worship without obedience.

Cross References

Amos 5:21

God says He hates and rejects religious festivals when they are separated from justice and faithful obedience.

Psalm 51:16

David recognizes that outward sacrifice alone cannot substitute for a truly broken and repentant heart.

1 Samuel 15:22

Samuel tells Saul that obeying God is better than sacrifice and listening to Him is better than offering religious gifts.

Spiritual Principle

God does not accept outward worship as a substitute for inward obedience.

Key Truth

Religious activity cannot bribe God into overlooking sin.

XII. GOD REJECTS EMPTY ATTENDANCE

Isaiah 1:12 — Trampling the Courts

> **“When you come to appear before Me, who has required this of you—this trampling of My courts?”**

The people are still appearing at worship.

But God describes it as:

Trampling.

Their presence means little because their hearts remain unchanged.

Cross References

Micah 6:6

Micah asks what a person should bring before God and whether outward offerings alone can satisfy Him.

Micah 6:7

Even enormous religious sacrifices cannot replace the obedience and righteousness God requires.

Psalm 50:8

God says the issue is not merely the number of sacrifices being offered, because religious offerings alone do not prove faithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

Church attendance, ceremonies, and outward worship mean little if the life continually rejects God.

XIII. GOD HATES HYPOCRITICAL WORSHIP

Isaiah 1:13 — Meaningless Offerings

> **“Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to Me. New moons, Sabbaths, and convocations—I cannot bear your wicked assemblies.”**

The shocking phrase is:

“Your wicked assemblies.”

The gathering is religious.

But the people are corrupt.

God does not separate worship from lifestyle.

Cross References

Malachi 1:10

God says He would rather the temple doors be closed than have corrupt worship continually offered without reverence.

Amos 5:22

God rejects burnt offerings and grain offerings when people refuse to live righteously.

Hosea 8:13

The people continue offering sacrifices, but God does not accept them because He remembers their sin and rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

Worship that ignores repentance becomes offensive rather than pleasing.

XIV. RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS BECOME A BURDEN

Isaiah 1:14 — God Is Weary of Their Religion

> **“Your new moon feasts and your appointed festivals My soul hates. They have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing them.”**

The people may believe:

God must be pleased.

The ceremonies are continuing.

But God says:

I hate them.

Why?

Because ritual is being used to cover rebellion.

Cross References

Amos 8:5

The people outwardly observe religious days while inwardly waiting for opportunities to return to dishonest business and exploitation.

Hosea 2:11

God declares that He will bring an end to Israel’s festivals, appointed feasts, and other religious celebrations because of unfaithfulness.

Lamentations 2:6

Under judgment, the place of worship and appointed gatherings are brought to an end.

Spiritual Principle

External religion becomes empty when the heart belongs elsewhere.

XV. GOD REFUSES HYPOCRITICAL PRAYER

Isaiah 1:15 — Hands Full of Blood

> **“When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you. Even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood.”**

The people pray.

Repeatedly.

At length.

But God refuses to hear.

Why?

Their hands are full of blood.

Their worship contradicts their lives.

Cross References

Micah 3:4

Corrupt leaders will eventually cry to the Lord, but He will not answer because of the evil they deliberately practiced.

Jeremiah 14:12

Even when the people fast and pray, God says He will not accept their worship while rebellion continues.

Proverbs 1:28

Those who continually reject wisdom may eventually call after consequences come, but the opportunity they despised will have passed.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer is not a substitute for repentance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not ask God to bless what He has already commanded you to forsake.

XVI. GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO CLEANSING

Isaiah 1:16 — Stop Doing Evil

> **“Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean. Remove your evil deeds from My sight. Stop doing wrong.”**

God now gives the remedy.

Notice the verbs:

Wash.

Clean.

Remove.

Stop.

Repentance requires change.

Cross References

Jeremiah 4:14

Jerusalem is called to wash evil from the heart so that deliverance may come and sinful thoughts no longer rule within.

Psalm 51:2

David asks God to wash him thoroughly from guilt and cleanse him from sin.

James 4:8

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands from sinful actions and purify your divided hearts.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance turns away from evil instead of merely feeling bad about it.

XVII. TRUE REPENTANCE PRODUCES JUSTICE

Isaiah 1:17 — Learn to Do Good

> **“Learn to do good. Seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless. Plead the case of the widow.”**

Repentance includes both:

Stopping evil.

And:

Doing good.

The people must pursue:

Justice.

Protection for the vulnerable.

Care for orphans.

Advocacy for widows.

Cross References

Micah 6:8

God has shown what is good: practice justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with Him.

James 1:27

Pure religion includes caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to be corrupted by the world.

Zechariah 7:9

God commands His people to administer true justice and show mercy and compassion to one another.

Spiritual Principle

True worship changes how we treat vulnerable people.

Key Truth

Godly repentance has social consequences.

XVIII. GOD INVITES SINNERS TO CLEANSING

Isaiah 1:18 — Scarlet Made White

> **“‘Come now, let us reason together,’ says the Lord. ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.’”**

This is one of the great gospel-like invitations of the Old Testament.

Sin is:

Scarlet.

Crimson.

Deeply stained.

Yet God offers:

Snow-like cleansing.

Wool-like purity.

The emphasis is grace.

Cross References

Psalm 51:7

David asks God to cleanse him completely so that he becomes clean and spiritually whiter than snow.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, God is faithful and righteous to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Micah 7:18

Micah declares that no God compares with the Lord, who forgives sin, passes over rebellion, and delights in faithful mercy rather than remaining angry forever.

Spiritual Principle

No stain of sin is stronger than God’s cleansing mercy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely expose sin.

He offers cleansing.

XIX. WILLING OBEDIENCE BRINGS BLESSING

Isaiah 1:19 — Eat the Good of the Land

> **“If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the good things of the land.”**

God sets before Judah a choice.

Willingness.

Obedience.

Blessing.

This reflects covenant language.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:1

God promised Israel that careful obedience to His commands would bring covenant blessing.

Deuteronomy 28:2

When Israel obeyed the Lord, covenant blessings would come upon them and accompany them.

Leviticus 26:3

God promised blessing if His people walked according to His commands and faithfully obeyed Him.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical obedience involves both:

The will.

And:

The action.

XX. REBELLION BRINGS JUDGMENT

Isaiah 1:20 — The Sword Awaits the Rebellious

> **“But if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”**

The contrast is sharp.

Verse 19:

Obedience.

Blessing.

Verse 20:

Rebellion.

Judgment.

God’s warning is certain because:

He has spoken.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:15

God warned that refusing to obey His commands would bring covenant curses and judgment.

Leviticus 26:25

Persistent rebellion would result in the sword and national judgment under the covenant.

Jeremiah 9:13

God explains that judgment comes because the people abandoned His law and refused to obey His voice.

Spiritual Principle

God’s mercy should never be interpreted as permission to continue rebelling.

XXI. THE FAITHFUL CITY HAS BECOME UNFAITHFUL

Isaiah 1:21 — Jerusalem’s Moral Collapse

> **“How the faithful city has become a prostitute! She was once full of justice; righteousness lived in her, but now—murderers.”**

Jerusalem once had:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Faithfulness.

Now:

Corruption.

Violence.

Spiritual adultery.

The contrast is tragic.

Cross References

Jeremiah 2:20

God describes Judah as breaking covenant faithfulness and pursuing spiritual unfaithfulness like an adulterous partner.

Ezekiel 23:4

Ezekiel uses the imagery of two unfaithful sisters to describe Samaria and Jerusalem’s spiritual adultery.

Hosea 4:1

God brings charges against the land because truth, faithfulness, and knowledge of Him have disappeared.

Spiritual Principle

Past faithfulness does not excuse present corruption.

XXII. WHAT WAS VALUABLE HAS BECOME CORRUPTED

Isaiah 1:22 — Silver to Dross

> **“Your silver has become dross, your wine diluted with water.”**

Silver represents value.

Dross is impurity.

Wine diluted with water is weakened.

Everything that should have remained strong has become corrupted.

Cross References

Ezekiel 22:18

God compares His corrupt people to worthless dross mixed into precious metal.

Jeremiah 6:28

The people are described as stubborn rebels who spread corruption and refuse refinement.

Proverbs 25:4

Remove the impurities from silver, and the metal can then be prepared for the craftsman’s work.

Spiritual Principle

Sin corrupts what was originally valuable.

XXIII. LEADERSHIP HAS BECOME CORRUPT

Isaiah 1:23 — Bribes Instead of Justice

> **“Your rulers are rebels, companions of thieves. Everyone loves a bribe and chases after rewards. They do not defend the orphan, and the widow’s case never comes before them.”**

Isaiah condemns leadership corruption.

The rulers:

Take bribes.

Associate with thieves.

Ignore orphans.

Refuse widows justice.

Their sin is both:

Personal.

Institutional.

Cross References

Micah 3:11

Jerusalem’s leaders judge for bribes, priests teach for payment, and prophets speak for money while pretending God guarantees their safety.

Micah 7:3

Leaders and judges pursue evil for personal gain, asking for bribes and joining together in corruption.

Ezekiel 22:27

The rulers are compared to wolves tearing prey, shedding blood and destroying lives for dishonest gain.

Spiritual Principle

Leadership becomes corrupt when personal profit becomes more important than justice.

Key Truth

God judges leaders not merely for what they personally do, but for how they use authority.

XXIV. GOD ANNOUNCES JUDGMENT

Isaiah 1:24 — The Mighty One of Israel Speaks

> **“Therefore the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, declares: ‘Ah! I will vent My wrath on My enemies and avenge Myself on My foes.’”**

God now announces action.

The people who claimed to belong to Him have become aligned with rebellion.

Judgment will come.

Cross References

Ezekiel 5:13

God declares that His righteous anger will be completed against persistent rebellion until the seriousness of sin is understood.

Deuteronomy 32:41

God says He will bring justice against His adversaries and repay those who persist in opposition.

Ezekiel 22:31

God says He will pour out judgment against corruption and hold people accountable for their evil ways.

Spiritual Principle

God’s patience does not eliminate His justice.

XXV. GOD’S JUDGMENT WILL ALSO REFINE

Isaiah 1:25 — Removing the Dross

> **“I will turn My hand against you; I will thoroughly purge away your impurities and remove all your dross.”**

Judgment here has a refining purpose.

God will:

Remove impurity.

Burn away corruption.

Cleanse what has been polluted.

Cross References

Malachi 3:2

The Lord’s coming is compared with a refiner’s fire and cleansing soap because His holiness exposes and purifies.

Malachi 3:3

God will sit like a refiner of precious metal, purifying His people so they can offer what is right before Him.

Zechariah 13:9

God says He will bring a remnant through refining fire, test them like precious metal, and restore covenant fellowship with them.

Spiritual Principle

God’s discipline may be severe because His purpose is holiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God sometimes removes what we would rather keep because it is destroying what He intends to restore.

XXVI. GOD PROMISES RESTORATION

Isaiah 1:26 — The Faithful City Restored

> **“I will restore your judges as in the beginning, and your counselors as at first. Afterward you will be called the City of Righteousness, the Faithful City.”**

Judgment is not the final word.

God promises:

Restored leadership.

Restored justice.

Restored righteousness.

Restored reputation.

The city once called unfaithful will again be called:

Faithful.

Cross References

Jeremiah 33:7

God promises to restore His people from captivity and rebuild them as they were before.

Zechariah 8:3

God promises to return to Zion, and Jerusalem will again be called the City of Truth and Faithfulness.

Amos 9:11

God promises to raise up what has fallen, repair its breaches, and restore what has been ruined.

Spiritual Principle

God’s goal is not merely to expose corruption.

He also restores what repentance and grace make new.

XXVII. ZION WILL BE REDEEMED WITH JUSTICE

Isaiah 1:27 — Redemption and Righteousness

> **“Zion will be redeemed with justice, her repentant ones with righteousness.”**

Restoration is not sentimental.

It is joined with:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Repentance.

God does not redeem by pretending sin never mattered.

Cross References

Romans 11:26

Paul speaks of God’s future saving work and points to the promised Deliverer who removes ungodliness.

Romans 11:27

God’s covenant promise includes the removal and forgiveness of sin.

Psalm 51:14

David asks God to deliver him from bloodguiltiness so he can joyfully proclaim God’s righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

Grace does not cancel righteousness.

Grace restores sinners to righteousness.

XXVIII. REBELLION WILL END IN DESTRUCTION

Isaiah 1:28 — Those Who Forsake the Lord Will Perish

> **“But rebels and sinners together will be crushed, and those who forsake the Lord will perish.”**

The chapter repeatedly presents two paths.

Repentance.

Rebellion.

Those who reject God’s mercy remain under judgment.

Cross References

Psalm 1:6

The Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the path chosen by the wicked ultimately leads to ruin.

Proverbs 1:31

Those who reject wisdom will eventually experience the consequences produced by their own choices.

Amos 9:10

Those who persist in sin and assume judgment will never reach them will fall under the judgment they denied.

Spiritual Principle

The invitation to repentance must be taken seriously because judgment is real.

XXIX. IDOLATRY WILL END IN SHAME

Isaiah 1:29 — The Oaks and Gardens

> **“For you will be ashamed of the sacred oaks you desired; you will be embarrassed because of the gardens you chose.”**

The people had used:

Trees.

Gardens.

High places.

As sites of idolatrous worship.

What once attracted them will eventually shame them.

Cross References

Hosea 4:13

The people practiced idolatry under trees and in elevated places, pursuing false worship instead of covenant faithfulness.

Deuteronomy 12:2

Israel was commanded to destroy the places where pagan nations worshiped idols on mountains, hills, and under spreading trees.

Ezekiel 6:13

God says the people will recognize His judgment where their idols and false worship had filled the land.

Spiritual Principle

Sin eventually makes us ashamed of what once attracted us.

XXX. IDOLATRY PRODUCES SPIRITUAL DRYNESS

Isaiah 1:30 — An Oak with Fading Leaves

> **“You will be like an oak with fading leaves, like a garden without water.”**

Earlier, the people desired sacred oaks and gardens.

Now they become like:

A dying tree.

A dry garden.

Idolatry promises life.

It produces dryness.

Cross References

Psalm 1:3

The righteous person is like a tree planted beside streams of water, fruitful and healthy because of continual nourishment.

Jeremiah 17:8

The person who trusts the Lord is like a tree beside water, remaining green and fruitful even during heat and drought.

James 1:11

Human glory fades like grass and flowers under the heat of the sun, reminding us of life's temporary nature.

Spiritual Principle

Whatever replaces God eventually leaves the soul dry.

Key Truth

False gods promise fruitfulness but produce barrenness.

XXXI. THE STRONG AND HIS WORK WILL BURN TOGETHER

Isaiah 1:31 — No One Will Quench the Fire

> **"The strong will become like tinder, and their work like a spark; both will burn together, with no one to quench the fire."**

The chapter ends with judgment.

Human strength will not save.

Human works will not save.

The strong person becomes:

Tinder.

His work becomes:

A spark.

Together:

They burn.

Cross References

Amos 2:9

God reminds Israel that even strong enemies could not stand when He judged them, because human strength is powerless before Him.

Obadiah 1:18

God says judgment will consume the wicked like fire consuming dry stubble.

Nahum 1:10

God’s enemies are pictured as dry thorns ready to be completely consumed by judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Human strength cannot protect rebellion from divine judgment.

XXXII. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 1

1. Sin Is Rebellion Against a Loving God

Israel is pictured as children rebelling against the One who raised them.

Principle:

Sin is more than breaking law; it is rejecting God’s rightful authority and goodness.

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2. Sin Produces Spiritual Sickness

The whole body is wounded.

Principle:

Sin eventually affects every part of life.

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3. Religious Activity Cannot Replace Repentance

The people sacrifice, gather, celebrate, and pray.

God rejects it.

Principle:

God wants obedience more than religious performance.

---

4. True Repentance Changes Conduct

God says:

Stop doing evil.

Learn to do good.

Seek justice.

Principle:

Repentance produces visible fruit.

---

5. God Offers Cleansing

Scarlet can become white as snow.

Principle:

No sinner is beyond God’s mercy when genuine repentance turns toward Him.

---

6. God Cares About Justice

He specifically mentions:

The oppressed.

The fatherless.

The widow.

Principle:

Spiritual faithfulness affects how we treat vulnerable people.

---

7. God Refines in Order to Restore

He removes the dross.

Then He restores the faithful city.

Principle:

God’s correction can become the path toward restoration.

---

8. Rebellion Eventually Ends in Judgment

Those who forsake God perish.

Principle:

Grace should lead to repentance, not presumption.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 1 TEACHES ABOUT SIN

Sin is pictured as:

Rebellion.

Disease.

Corruption.

Unfaithfulness.

Bloodshed.

Idolatry.

Sin is never presented as harmless.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never call small what God says is destroying you.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 1 TEACHES ABOUT RELIGION

Judah remains highly religious.

They still have:

Sacrifices.

Sabbaths.

Festivals.

Prayer.

Assemblies.

Yet God rejects their worship.

Why?

Because religion has become disconnected from righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

The strongest evidence of genuine worship appears after the service is over.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 1 TEACHES ABOUT REPENTANCE

Repentance includes:

Turning from sin.

Seeking cleansing.

Doing good.

Seeking justice.

Changing conduct.

Key Truth

Repentance is more than saying:

“I am sorry.”

It means turning.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 1 TEACHES ABOUT FORGIVENESS

Verse 18 is one of Scripture’s greatest pictures of cleansing.

Scarlet.

To:

Snow.

Crimson.

To:

Wool.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s forgiveness does not merely make sin look cleaner.

He offers real cleansing.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 1 TEACHES ABOUT JUSTICE

God connects spiritual faithfulness with the treatment of vulnerable people.

The oppressed matter to Him.

The fatherless matter.

The widow matters.

Spiritual Principle

A religion that loves ceremonies but ignores injustice has misunderstood God’s heart.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 1 TEACHES ABOUT LEADERSHIP

Corrupt rulers:

Take bribes.

Partner with thieves.

Ignore the vulnerable.

Leadership affects the moral condition of society.

Key Truth

Authority is stewardship before God.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 1 TEACHES ABOUT DISCIPLINE

God’s judgment is not random cruelty.

Verse 25 presents it as refining.

The dross must be removed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s discipline attacks what is destroying His people.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 1 TEACHES ABOUT RESTORATION

The city called corrupt becomes:

The City of Righteousness.

The Faithful City.

That is grace.

God can restore what sin has corrupted.

Spiritual Principle

Your present condition does not have to become your permanent identity when God brings repentance and restoration.

XLI. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What is the main accusation God makes against Judah?

They have rebelled against the God who raised, cared for, and sustained them.

Question 2

Why does Isaiah compare Israel with an ox and donkey?

Because even animals recognize the one who feeds and owns them, while Israel has failed to recognize God faithfully.

Question 3

What does the wounded body picture represent?

It represents the widespread spiritual, moral, and social damage caused by sin.

Question 4

Why does God reject Judah’s sacrifices?

Because they continue worshiping outwardly while refusing repentance and righteous living.

Question 5

Does Isaiah 1 teach that sacrifice itself was wrong?

No.

The problem was sacrifice separated from obedience, justice, and repentance.

Question 6

What does God command in verses 16–17?

He commands them to:

Turn from evil.

Do good.

Seek justice.

Defend the oppressed.

Care for the fatherless.

Protect the widow.

Question 7

What does verse 18 teach about forgiveness?

It teaches that even deeply stained sin can be cleansed by God.

Question 8

What is the difference between verses 19 and 20?

Verse 19 describes the path of willing obedience.

Verse 20 warns of the consequences of continued rebellion.

Question 9

What happened to Jerusalem’s leadership?

It became corrupt through bribery, injustice, and alliance with wickedness.

Question 10

What does removing dross mean?

It pictures God purifying His people by removing corruption.

Question 11

Will judgment be God’s final word for repentant Zion?

No.

God promises restoration and renewed righteousness.

Question 12

What should Isaiah 1 change in us?

It should move us to examine whether our worship is matched by repentance, obedience, justice, and genuine devotion to God.

XLII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 1 asks several searching questions.

Am I Practicing Religion Without Repentance?

Do I:

Pray?

Attend worship?

Read Scripture?

Sing?

Serve?

Yet protect sins God has told me to forsake?

Do I Truly Know God?

Or do I only know religious information?

What Wounds Has Sin Produced?

Where has rebellion damaged:

My character?

Relationships?

Spiritual life?

Do My Prayers Match My Conduct?

Am I asking God for blessing while refusing obedience?

Have I Truly Repented?

What have I:

Stopped?

Changed?

Made right?

Do I Care About Justice?

How do I respond to people who are:

Weak?

Vulnerable?

Ignored?

Oppressed?

Have I Received God's Cleansing?

Am I carrying guilt God invites me to confess and forsake?

Is God Refining Something in Me?

What dross needs to be removed?

XLIII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

"God Does Not Want Religious Activity to Cover Unrepentant Sin"

Judah had:

Worship.

Sacrifices.

Festivals.

Prayer.

Yet God said:

Stop.

Why?

Because their religion had become a covering for rebellion.

Principle:

Never confuse being religious with being right with God.

XLIV. SCARLET CAN BECOME WHITE

Isaiah 1 begins with:

Rebellion.

Wounds.

Desolation.

Corruption.

Yet God says:

Come.

This is remarkable.

The same God who exposes sin offers cleansing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Conviction is not God saying:

“Stay away.”

It is often God saying:

“Come back.”

XLV. TRUE WORSHIP LEAVES THE SANCTUARY WITH YOU

God says:

Learn to do good.

Seek justice.

Defend the oppressed.

Care for the fatherless.

Plead for the widow.

True worship does not remain inside a building.

Spiritual Principle

What happens in worship should change what happens in daily life.

XLVI. THE DANGER OF EMPTY PRAYER

The people multiply prayers.

God refuses to listen.

Why?

Their hands remain full of blood.

This does not mean prayer is powerless.

It means prayer cannot be used as a religious shield against repentance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prayer should lead us into obedience, not become an excuse to avoid it.

XLVII. THE REFINER'S HAND

God says:

> **"I will thoroughly purge away your impurities."**

Refining fire is painful.

But it has purpose.

Dross reduces value.

God removes it.

Spiritual Principle

Some of God's hardest work in us may produce His greatest purity through us.

XLVIII. THE FAITHFUL CITY CAN LIVE AGAIN

Jerusalem had become:

Corrupt.

Violent.

Unfaithful.

Yet God promises:

Restoration.

That offers tremendous hope.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is able to restore identities that sin has ruined.

XLIX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 1 opens the book with a confrontation.

God’s people are religious.

But they are rebellious.

They know the ceremonies.

But they have forgotten the God behind them.

They pray.

But refuse repentance.

They worship.

But practice injustice.

They offer sacrifices.

But their hands are full of blood.

Isaiah therefore asks every generation:

What kind of worship are we offering?

Is our worship:

Real?

Obedient?

Repentant?

Righteous?

Or merely:

Familiar?

Habitual?

External?

God says:

“Stop doing wrong.”

But He does not stop there.

He says:

“Learn to do good.”

Repentance is both:

Turning away.

And:

Turning toward.

Turn from sin.

Turn toward righteousness.

Turn from injustice.

Turn toward mercy.

Turn from hypocrisy.

Turn toward truth.

Then comes the great invitation:

“Come now, let us reason together.”

Do not miss the mercy in those words.

Judah deserves judgment.

Yet God still says:

Come.

Scarlet can become white.

Crimson can become clean.

That is grace.

But the chapter also ends with a warning.

If people refuse:

The fire remains.

Rebellion remains deadly.

Therefore:

Do not hide behind religion.

Do not postpone repentance.

Do not assume outward worship can compensate for inward rebellion.

Bring your sin honestly before God.

Let Him cleanse.

Let Him refine.

Let Him restore.

Seek justice.

Defend the weak.

Walk in obedience.

And remember:

The God who exposes the stain is also the God who says:

> **“They shall be as white as snow.”**

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for speaking truthfully about sin.

Do not allow us to hide behind religion.

Search our hearts.

Expose:

Rebellion.

Pride.

Hypocrisy.

Injustice.

Idolatry.

Secret sin.

Father, forgive us when we have gone through the motions of worship while our hearts were far from You.

Forgive us when we have:

Prayed without repenting.

Sung without obeying.

Served without surrendering.

Spoken of holiness while protecting sin.

Wash us.

Cleanse us.

Remove evil from our lives.

Teach us to stop doing wrong.

Teach us to do good.

Give us hearts that seek justice.

Help us care about:

The oppressed.

The fatherless.

The widow.

The vulnerable.

Teach us to reflect Your compassion.

Thank You for the invitation of verse 18.

Thank You that scarlet sin can become white as snow.

Thank You that crimson guilt can be cleansed.

Help us confess our sins honestly.

Help us receive Your mercy humbly.

Father, refine us.

Remove the dross.

Even when the process is uncomfortable, do not leave corruption untouched.

Make us:

Faithful.

Pure.

Righteous.

Obedient.

Restore what sin has damaged.

Restore:

Character.

Worship.

Relationships.

Integrity.

Spiritual hunger.

Let our lives become faithful again.

Protect us from idolatry.

Keep us from looking to temporary things for what only You can give.

Make us like trees planted near water rather than gardens dried by rebellion.

Above all, draw us closer to You.

May our worship be genuine.

May our repentance be sincere.

May our obedience be visible.

May our lives bring honor to the Holy One of Israel.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"Come now, let us reason together," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool." — Isaiah 1:18**

Central Truth

God rejects religion without repentance, exposes the destructive sickness of sin, calls His people to turn from evil and practice justice, offers complete cleansing to the repentant, and promises both judgment for rebellion and restoration for those who return to Him.

Isaiah 1 in One Sentence

Isaiah opens his prophecy by confronting Judah's rebellion, hypocrisy, injustice, and empty worship while revealing a holy God who calls sinners to repent, promises to cleanse scarlet guilt, refines His people through discipline, restores righteousness, and judges those who persist in forsaking Him.

Isaiah Chapter 2 — The Lord’s Mountain and the Pride of Man

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 2 presents two dramatically different pictures.

The first is glorious.

The second is terrifying.

The chapter begins with a vision of the future reign of God.

The mountain of the Lord’s house is exalted.

The nations come.

They seek God’s instruction.

They learn His ways.

They walk in His paths.

Weapons of war are transformed into tools of cultivation.

Nations no longer train for war.

Peace comes because God reigns in righteousness.

Then the chapter changes.

Isaiah turns from what God’s kingdom will become to what Judah has become.

Instead of trusting God, the people have filled the land with:

Foreign spiritual practices.

Fortune-tellers.

Silver.

Gold.

Horses.

Chariots.

Idols.

Human pride.

They have replaced confidence in God with confidence in:

Wealth.

Military power.

Human achievement.

False religion.

The result is judgment.

Isaiah repeatedly declares that human pride will be brought low.

The central statement appears twice:

> **“The Lord alone will be exalted in that day.”**

Everything humanity has raised against God will eventually fall.

Tall trees.

High mountains.

Fortified towers.

Trading ships.

Beautiful vessels.

Idols.

Human greatness itself.

The chapter ends with a simple command:

> **“Stop trusting in man.”**

Human beings are temporary.

Our breath is fragile.

Our power is limited.

God alone is worthy of ultimate trust.

The central truth of Isaiah 2 is:

God’s kingdom will ultimately be exalted above every human power, His righteous rule will bring true peace, and every form of pride, idolatry, wealth, military strength, and human self-confidence will be humbled before His majesty.

I. ISAIAH RECEIVES ANOTHER WORD CONCERNING JUDAH

Isaiah 2:1 — God Speaks to Judah and Jerusalem

> **“This is the word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.”**

Isaiah again identifies his message.

The word concerns:

Judah.

Jerusalem.

The message is prophetic.

Isaiah does not merely hear words.

He “sees” the message.

Prophecy reveals God’s perspective on both:

The present.

The future.

Cross References

Micah 1:1

The word of the Lord came to Micah concerning Samaria and Jerusalem during the reigns of the kings of Judah.

Amos 1:1

Amos received words concerning Israel during the days of the kings of Judah and Israel, before a significant earthquake.

Habakkuk 1:1

The prophet Habakkuk received a prophetic burden and vision from God concerning what would come.

Spiritual Principle

God reveals reality from His perspective, not merely from human appearance.

II. THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD WILL BE EXALTED

Isaiah 2:2 — All Nations Will Flow to It

> **“In the last days, the mountain of the Lord’s house will be established as the highest of the mountains, lifted above the hills. All nations will flow to it.”**

Isaiah looks ahead.

The phrase:

“the last days”

points to God’s future purposes.

The mountain of the Lord’s house represents the place of God’s rule and worship.

It will be:

Established.

Exalted.

Recognized.

The nations will come.

God’s kingdom will not remain hidden.

Cross References

Micah 4:1

In the last days, the mountain associated with the Lord’s house will be established above other mountains, and peoples from many nations will come toward it.

Hebrews 12:22

Believers are described as coming to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and the joyful gathering of countless angels.

Zechariah 8:3

The Lord promises to return to Zion, and Jerusalem will be known as the City of Truth while the mountain of the Lord will be called holy.

Spiritual Principle

God’s kingdom will ultimately stand above every competing kingdom.

Key Truth

What the world overlooks today will one day be recognized universally.

III. THE NATIONS WILL SEEK GOD’S TEACHING

Isaiah 2:3 — “He Will Teach Us His Ways”

> **“Many peoples will come and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths.’ For the law will go out from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”**

The nations are not merely coming to admire Jerusalem.

They come to:

Learn.

Listen.

Obey.

Notice the order:

God teaches.

People walk.

True learning produces changed conduct.

Cross References

Micah 4:2

Many nations will encourage one another to go up to the Lord’s mountain so that He may teach them His ways and they may walk in His paths.

Luke 24:47

Jesus declared that repentance and forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

Psalm 110:2

The Lord extends the authority of His Messiah from Zion so that His rule reaches into the midst of opposition.

Spiritual Principle

The purpose of learning God’s Word is walking in God’s ways.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Truth has not completed its work when it reaches the mind.

It should reach the life.

IV. GOD WILL BRING TRUE PEACE

Isaiah 2:4 — Swords into Plowshares

> **“He will judge between the nations and settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.”**

Peace comes because God judges rightly.

Human peace efforts are often temporary because:

Sin remains.

Pride remains.

Injustice remains.

But under God’s rule, disputes are settled righteously.

Weapons become farming tools.

Swords become plowshares.

Spears become pruning hooks.

Resources once used to destroy life are redirected toward sustaining life.

Cross References

Micah 4:3

God will judge disputes among nations, and people will turn their weapons into agricultural tools because warfare will no longer dominate their lives.

Joel 3:10

Joel reverses the picture during a time of judgment, telling nations to prepare weapons for conflict and divine reckoning.

Psalm 46:9

God brings wars to an end, breaks weapons, destroys instruments of violence, and demonstrates His supreme authority.

Spiritual Principle

True peace comes through righteous rule.

Key Truth

Humanity will not finally achieve lasting peace by power alone.

Peace comes when God reigns.

V. JUDAH IS CALLED TO WALK IN GOD'S LIGHT NOW

Isaiah 2:5 — "Come, Let Us Walk"

> **"House of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord."**

Isaiah has just described the future.

Now he applies it to the present.

If nations will one day walk in God's ways:

Judah should walk in them now.

Future hope should produce present obedience.

Cross References

Micah 4:5

Though other peoples may walk in the names of their gods, God's people declare that they will walk in the name of the Lord forever.

John 8:12

Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not continue walking in darkness but will possess the light of life."

1 John 1:7

If we walk in the light as God is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and cleansing through Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Principle

Do not merely admire the future kingdom.

Live according to its light now.

VI. JUDAH HAS EMBRACED OCCULT PRACTICES

Isaiah 2:6 — Filled with Practices from the East

> **“Lord, You have abandoned Your people, the house of Jacob, because they are filled with practices from the East and follow fortune-tellers like the Philistines. They make deals with foreigners.”**

Judah has absorbed surrounding pagan practices.

Instead of looking to God for direction, they seek:

Omens.

Fortune-telling.

Foreign spiritual practices.

This violates God’s commands.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 18:10

God forbids His people from practicing divination, sorcery, interpreting omens, or engaging in occult practices.

Deuteronomy 18:11

God also forbids spells, consulting mediums, spiritists, or attempting to communicate with the dead.

2 Kings 21:6

King Manasseh practiced sorcery, divination, and consultation with mediums, provoking the Lord through persistent evil.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual curiosity becomes rebellion when it seeks guidance from sources God has forbidden.

VII. JUDAH TRUSTS IN WEALTH AND MILITARY POWER

Isaiah 2:7 — Silver, Gold, Horses, and Chariots

> **“Their land is full of silver and gold; there is no end to their treasures. Their land is full of horses; there is no end to their chariots.”**

Prosperity itself is not condemned.

The problem is misplaced trust.

Their security rests in:

Money.

Treasures.

Military power.

Horses.

Chariots.

What God gave has become what they trust instead of God.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 17:16

Israel’s king was warned not to multiply horses for himself or return to Egypt to build military strength in disobedient dependence.

Deuteronomy 17:17

The king was also warned not to multiply wives or accumulate excessive silver and gold in ways that would turn his heart away from God.

Hosea 8:4

Israel established rulers without seeking God’s will and used silver and gold to make idols that would eventually lead to destruction.

Spiritual Principle

A blessing becomes an idol when confidence shifts from the Giver to the gift.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Possessing wealth is not the same as trusting wealth.

God condemns the trust.

VIII. THEIR LAND IS FULL OF IDOLS

Isaiah 2:8 — Worshiping Their Own Work

> **“Their land is full of idols; they bow down to the work of their own hands, to what their own fingers have made.”**

The absurdity of idolatry is exposed.

People create an object.

Then bow before it.

The maker worships what he made.

Cross References

Psalm 115:4

The idols of the nations are made from silver and gold by human hands.

Habakkuk 2:18

An idol cannot teach truth because it is only a human-made image, and those who trust it depend upon something speechless and false.

Jeremiah 10:3

The religious customs of the nations are empty because people cut down wood and shape it into objects through human craftsmanship.

Spiritual Principle

Anything created by people is unworthy of the worship owed to the Creator.

IX. HUMANITY WILL BE BROUGHT LOW

Isaiah 2:9 — Pride Ends in Humiliation

> **“So people will be brought low, and mankind humbled—do not forgive them!”**

The people chose:

Idols.

Wealth.

Occult practices.

Pride.

The result:

Humbling.

Human self-exaltation always moves toward collapse when it competes with God.

Cross References

Psalm 62:9

Ordinary people and powerful people alike are temporary and lighter than breath when weighed against ultimate reality.

Jeremiah 5:9

God asks whether such rebellion should escape judgment and whether He should not hold a sinful nation accountable.

Micah 6:16

Because the people followed corrupt practices and sinful leadership, God declares that judgment and shame will follow.

Spiritual Principle

Pride promises elevation.

God says it ends in humiliation.

X. PEOPLE WILL TRY TO HIDE FROM GOD’S MAJESTY

Isaiah 2:10 — Hide in the Rocks

> **“Go into the rocks, hide in the dust from the fear of the Lord and the splendor of His majesty.”**

Human pride seems strong until God reveals His glory.

Then people hide.

The issue is not that God becomes majestic.

He already is.

The difference is:

Humanity finally sees it.

Cross References

Revelation 6:15

Kings, rulers, military leaders, wealthy people, powerful people, and everyone else hide themselves in caves and among the rocks.

Revelation 6:16

They call for the mountains and rocks to hide them from the presence of the One on the throne and from coming judgment.

Hosea 10:8

During judgment, people will cry out for mountains and hills to cover them because they cannot escape God’s reckoning.

Spiritual Principle

The glory people ignore today will not be ignorable forever.

XI. THE LORD ALONE WILL BE EXALTED

Isaiah 2:11 — Human Pride Brought Low

> **“The proud eyes of man will be humbled, and human pride brought low. The Lord alone will be exalted in that day.”**

This is one of the central declarations of the chapter.

Human pride falls.

God remains exalted.

No person shares His ultimate glory.

Cross References

Proverbs 16:18

Pride goes before destruction, and an arrogant spirit prepares the way for a fall.

Luke 18:14

Jesus taught that everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, while the one who humbles himself will be exalted.

1 Peter 5:5

God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble, so believers are called to clothe themselves with humility.

Spiritual Principle

There is room for only one ultimate throne.

Key Truth

Either we humble ourselves before God now, or pride will eventually be humbled by God.

XII. THE DAY OF THE LORD WILL CONFRONT ALL PRIDE

Isaiah 2:12 — Everything Lifted Up Will Fall

> **“For the Lord Almighty has a day in store against all the proud and arrogant, against all who are lifted up—and they will be brought low.”**

The “day of the Lord” refers to decisive divine intervention in judgment.

Nothing arrogant escapes.

No:

Status.

Wealth.

Military power.

Culture.

Institution.

Will remain above God.

Cross References

Zephaniah 1:14

The great day of the Lord is near and approaching quickly, bringing a fearful reckoning.

Zephaniah 1:15

That day is described as a day of wrath, distress, devastation, darkness, and judgment.

Malachi 4:1

A coming day will burn against the arrogant and wicked, exposing and consuming human rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

God has appointed an end to human arrogance.

XIII. THE TALLEST TREES WILL BE BROUGHT LOW

Isaiah 2:13 — Cedars and Oaks

> **“Against all the tall and lofty cedars of Lebanon, and all the oaks of Bashan.”**

Tall trees become symbols of:

Height.

Strength.

Pride.

Splendor.

Even the most impressive things in creation are small before God.

Cross References

Ezekiel 31:3

A powerful kingdom is compared to a great cedar of Lebanon, impressive in height, branches, and appearance.

Zechariah 11:1

Lebanon is told to open its doors so that fire may consume its cedars.

Zechariah 11:2

The mighty trees are told to mourn because the great cedars fall and what seemed strong is brought down.

Spiritual Principle

Height is not the same as permanence.

XIV. EVEN MOUNTAINS CANNOT COMPETE WITH GOD

Isaiah 2:14 — Every High Hill

> **“Against all the towering mountains, and all the high hills.”**

Mountains represent:

Permanence.

Power.

Height.

Yet before God:

They are not ultimate.

Cross References

Ezekiel 6:3

God announces judgment against mountains, hills, valleys, and places associated with idolatrous worship.

Jeremiah 49:16

A nation may live high among cliffs and imagine itself secure, but pride cannot prevent God from bringing it down.

Obadiah 1:3

Pride deceives those who live in high places and imagine that no one can bring them down.

Spiritual Principle

No position is high enough to escape God.

XV. HUMAN DEFENSES WILL FAIL

Isaiah 2:15 — Towers and Walls

> **“Against every lofty tower, and every fortified wall.”**

Humans build walls because we want security.

But physical defenses cannot protect against divine judgment.

Cross References

Ezekiel 26:4

God declares that enemy forces will destroy fortified structures and reduce proud defenses.

Proverbs 18:11

The wealthy imagine their possessions are like a strong fortified city and protective wall.

Deuteronomy 28:52

God warned Israel that rebellion could lead to siege until even fortified walls they trusted were brought down.

Spiritual Principle

Human defenses are useful but never ultimate.

XVI. COMMERCIAL POWER WILL ALSO BE HUMBLED

Isaiah 2:16 — Ships of Tarshish

> **“Against every trading ship of Tarshish, and against every beautiful vessel.”**

Ships represented:

Commerce.

Wealth.

International trade.

Luxury.

Human achievement.

God’s judgment reaches economic pride as well as military pride.

Cross References

1 Kings 10:22

Solomon maintained trading ships that returned periodically carrying valuable goods, luxury items, and exotic products.

Ezekiel 27:25

The trading ships of Tarshish carried merchandise and contributed to the wealth and commercial pride of great trading cities.

Jonah 1:3

Jonah found a ship traveling toward Tarshish and boarded it while attempting to flee from the Lord’s command.

Spiritual Principle

Economic success does not create independence from God.

XVII. HUMAN ARROGANCE WILL COLLAPSE

Isaiah 2:17 — God Alone Exalted

> **“The arrogance of man will be brought low, and human pride humbled. The Lord alone will be exalted in that day.”**

Isaiah repeats the great statement.

Why repeat it?

Because this is the main point.

Human glory passes.

God’s glory remains.

Cross References

Philippians 2:9

God highly exalted Jesus and gave Him the name above every name.

Proverbs 29:23

A person’s pride will bring him low, but humility leads toward honor.

Job 40:11

God challenges Job to pour out righteous anger against pride and bring every arrogant person low.

Spiritual Principle

God does not compete with human pride.

He ultimately ends it.

XVIII. IDOLS WILL DISAPPEAR

Isaiah 2:18 — False Gods Cannot Survive God’s Presence

> **“And the idols will totally disappear.”**

This verse is short.

But powerful.

Everything people worship instead of God will ultimately vanish.

The idols cannot:

Save.

Speak.

Protect.

Survive judgment.

Cross References

Zechariah 13:2

God promises to remove idolatry from the land so that false worship is no longer remembered.

Micah 5:13

God declares that carved images and religious monuments will be destroyed so His people no longer worship what their hands have made.

Ezekiel 30:13

God promises judgment against false gods and idols, exposing their inability to deliver.

Spiritual Principle

Every substitute for God has an expiration date.

XIX. HUMANITY WILL FLEE INTO CAVES

Isaiah 2:19 — God Rises to Shake the Earth

> **“People will flee to caves in the rocks and to holes in the ground from the fear of the Lord and the splendor of His majesty, when He rises to shake the earth.”**

Again, humans hide.

Why?

God’s majesty has become undeniable.

Human confidence disappears.

Cross References

Revelation 6:15

People from every social rank hide in caves and among the rocks during divine judgment.

Hebrews 12:26

God promises another shaking, not only of the earth but of the created order, revealing what is truly unshakable.

Judges 6:2

During oppression, Israel hid in mountain dens, caves, and fortified places for survival.

Spiritual Principle

The earth may shake, but God does not.

XX. PEOPLE WILL THROW AWAY THEIR IDOLS

Isaiah 2:20 — Silver and Gold Become Worthless

> **“In that day people will throw away their idols of silver and gold, which they made to worship, to the moles and bats.”**

Earlier, the idols seemed valuable.

They were made from:

Silver.

Gold.

Now they are thrown into dark places.

Judgment exposes their true worthlessness.

Cross References

Ezekiel 7:19

People will throw away silver and gold because wealth will be unable to rescue them in the day of divine judgment.

Habakkuk 2:19

Woe to the person who speaks to wood and stone as though idols could wake, teach, or give guidance, though they have no life within them.

Hosea 8:6

Israel's idol came from human craftsmanship rather than from God and therefore would ultimately be broken.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment changes the value people assign to idols.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What seems priceless in rebellion may look worthless when eternity becomes clear.

XXI. AGAIN PEOPLE HIDE FROM GOD

Isaiah 2:21 — No Cave Is Deep Enough

> **"They will go into caverns in the rocks and to the clefts in the cliffs, from the fear of the Lord and the splendor of His majesty, when He rises to shake the earth."**

Isaiah repeats the scene.

People flee.

But hiding cannot remove accountability.

Rocks cannot protect from the Creator of rocks.

Cross References

Jeremiah 4:29

When judgment approaches, people flee into thickets, climb among rocks, and abandon cities in terror.

Revelation 6:16

People cry for mountains and rocks to fall upon them and hide them from the presence of God and coming judgment.

1 Samuel 13:6

When Israel saw danger, the people hid in caves, rocks, pits, and other places because they were afraid.

Spiritual Principle

You can hide from people.

You cannot hide from God.

XXII. STOP TRUSTING IN MAN

Isaiah 2:22 — Human Life Is Only a Breath

> **“Stop trusting in man, who has only breath in his nostrils. Why hold him in such high esteem?”**

The chapter ends with one of its clearest commands.

Stop placing ultimate confidence in human beings.

Why?

Humans are:

Mortal.

Temporary.

Limited.

Dependent upon breath.

Isaiah is not saying people have no value.

He is saying they are not God.

Cross References

Psalm 146:3

Do not place ultimate trust in rulers or human beings because they cannot provide final salvation.

Psalm 146:4

When a person’s breath leaves, the body returns to the earth, and that person’s earthly plans end.

Jeremiah 17:5

The Lord warns against placing ultimate confidence in human strength while turning the heart away from Him.

Spiritual Principle

Respect people.

Love people.

Learn from people.

But worship and ultimately trust God alone.

Key Truth

Anyone whose life depends upon breath is too limited to occupy God’s place.

XXIII. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 2

1. God’s Kingdom Will Be Exalted

The Lord’s mountain will rise above every competing authority.

Principle:

God’s kingdom is not one kingdom among many; it is ultimately supreme.

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2. God’s Word Will Reach the Nations

People will come wanting to learn His ways.

Principle:

God’s truth is intended to transform peoples and nations.

---

3. True Peace Comes Through God’s Rule

Weapons become agricultural tools.

Principle:

Lasting peace depends upon righteous judgment.

---

4. God Calls His People to Walk in the Light Now

Future hope requires present obedience.

Principle:

Do not wait for tomorrow's kingdom to begin obeying today's King.

---

5. Wealth and Military Strength Can Become Idols

Silver, gold, horses, and chariots filled the land.

Principle:

Anything trusted more than God can become an idol.

---

6. Pride Will Be Humbled

Human greatness cannot stand against God's majesty.

Principle:

God opposes self-exaltation.

---

7. Idols Will Ultimately Disappear

People eventually throw them away.

Principle:

Everything worshiped instead of God will fail.

---

8. God Alone Deserves Ultimate Trust

Humans possess only temporary breath.

Principle:

Confidence belongs finally in the eternal God, not temporary humanity.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 2 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S KINGDOM

God’s kingdom is presented as:

Universal.

Righteous.

Authoritative.

Peace-producing.

Instruction-giving.

The nations come willingly to learn.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s kingdom does not merely change government.

It changes how people:

Think.

Learn.

Walk.

Relate.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 2 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE

Isaiah’s vision of peace is not sentimental.

It comes after God:

Judges.

Settles disputes.

Rules.

Only then are weapons transformed.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical peace is built upon righteousness, not denial of wrongdoing.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 2 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

Pride fills much of the chapter.

Proud eyes.

Lofty trees.

High mountains.

Tall towers.

Powerful ships.

Everything elevated is brought low.

Key Truth

Pride is the attempt to occupy a height that belongs to God alone.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 2 TEACHES ABOUT WEALTH

The land is full of:

Silver.

Gold.

Treasure.

But wealth becomes dangerous when it becomes:

Security.

Identity.

Confidence.

An idol.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Money makes a useful servant.

It makes a terrible god.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 2 TEACHES ABOUT POWER

Judah trusted in:

Horses.

Chariots.

Fortifications.

Military ability.

Isaiah says all human power is limited.

Spiritual Principle

Use human means responsibly.

Never mistake them for ultimate security.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 2 TEACHES ABOUT IDOLATRY

The idol is:

Made by human hands.

Worshiped by humans.

Then discarded by humans.

That is the tragedy of idolatry.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

An idol is anything beneath God that we elevate into God’s place.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 2 TEACHES ABOUT THE DAY OF THE LORD

The day of the Lord is a day when:

Human arrogance collapses.

Idols disappear.

False security fails.

God’s majesty becomes undeniable.

Key Truth

The day of the Lord reveals what was always true:

God alone is supreme.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 2 TEACHES ABOUT HUMANITY

The final verse puts humanity in perspective.

Man has:

Breath.

And that breath is temporary.

Human beings have value because God created them.

But humans do not possess divine permanence or authority.

Spiritual Principle

Never give a human being the trust, fear, worship, or dependence that belongs to God.

XXXII. THE MOUNTAIN AND THE CAVE

Isaiah 2 gives two locations.

At the beginning:

People go up to God’s mountain willingly.

At the end:

People flee into caves fearfully.

That contrast is powerful.

One group says:

> **“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord.”**

Another group says in effect:

Hide us.

The question becomes:

How will we respond to God?

With:

Worship?

Or:

Fearful resistance?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The safest place is not hiding from God.

It is walking with God.

XXXIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What does Isaiah see happening in the last days?

The Lord’s mountain is exalted and nations come to learn God’s ways.

Question 2

Why do the nations come?

They want God to teach them so they can walk in His paths.

Question 3

What happens to weapons under God’s righteous rule?

Weapons of destruction are transformed into tools used for cultivation and life.

Question 4

What command does Isaiah give Judah in verse 5?

He calls them to walk in the light of the Lord.

Question 5

What sinful practices had Judah adopted?

They had embraced fortune-telling, occult practices, foreign customs, idols, and misplaced confidence.

Question 6

Why is the abundance of silver, gold, horses, and chariots criticized?

Because the people trusted these things rather than trusting God.

Question 7

What is the central message of verses 11 and 17?

Human pride will be humbled, and the Lord alone will be exalted.

Question 8

What does the day of the Lord accomplish?

It exposes and destroys human arrogance, idolatry, and false security.

Question 9

Why do people throw away their idols?

They finally recognize that those idols are powerless before God.

Question 10

Why do people hide in caves?

The revealed majesty and judgment of God terrify those who resisted Him.

Question 11

What does verse 22 command?

Stop placing ultimate confidence in human beings.

Question 12

What should Isaiah 2 change in us?

It should cause us to reject pride, idols, misplaced trust, and human self-sufficiency while choosing to walk in God’s light.

XXXIV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 2 asks several searching questions.

Am I Walking in the Light?

Do my daily choices reflect God’s truth?

What Do I Trust for Security?

Money?

Government?

Career?

Strength?

Relationships?

Possessions?

Or God?

Have I Allowed Cultural Practices to Shape Me More Than Scripture?

What beliefs have I adopted simply because society accepts them?

Are There Modern Idols in My Life?

What would devastate me to lose because it has become more important than God?

Is Pride Controlling Me?

Do I need:

Recognition?

Status?

Control?

Praise?

Do I Truly Believe God Alone Will Be Exalted?

Does my life reflect that belief?

Am I Trusting Too Much in People?

Have I placed expectations upon human beings that belong only to God?

XXXV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Whatever You Exalt Above God Will Eventually Be Brought Down”

Isaiah lists:

Trees.

Mountains.

Towers.

Walls.

Ships.

Idols.

Human pride.

Each represents something impressive.

Each is humbled.

Principle:

God will not permanently share His throne with anything we choose to place above Him.

XXXVI. FROM SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES

Isaiah’s picture of peace is beautiful.

Swords once designed to kill become:

Plowshares.

Spears become:

Pruning hooks.

Human creativity is redirected.

From:

Destruction.

To:

Cultivation.

Spiritual Principle

God’s kingdom does not merely stop violence.

It redirects life toward fruitfulness.

XXXVII. WALK IN THE LIGHT NOW

It would be easy to read verses 2–4 and say:

“That will be wonderful someday.”

Isaiah immediately says:

> **“Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.”**

Future prophecy should produce present faithfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If you believe God will rule tomorrow, live under His rule today.

XXXVIII. THE IDOL MADE BY HUMAN HANDS

The absurdity of idolatry is simple.

A person:

Mines the metal.

Shapes the metal.

Polishes the metal.

Carries the metal.

Then bows to it.

The created object cannot become greater than its maker.

And neither the maker nor the idol is greater than God.

Spiritual Principle

We often create our idols before our idols begin controlling us.

XXXIX. THE DANGER OF SUCCESS

Isaiah does not describe a poor nation.

He describes a land full of:

Wealth.

Treasures.

Military resources.

Success can produce a dangerous illusion:

“We do not need God.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prosperity can test faith just as severely as hardship.

XL. THE LORD ALONE WILL BE EXALTED

This statement is repeated because it summarizes the chapter.

Not:

Kings.

Not:

Armies.

Not:

Wealth.

Not:

Culture.

Not:

Technology.

Not:

Human achievement.

The Lord alone.

Spiritual Principle

History is moving toward the universal recognition of God’s supremacy.

XLI. STOP TRUSTING IN MAN

The final verse brings everything down to one question:

Who has your confidence?

Human beings:

Breathe.

Then stop breathing.

God:

Is eternal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never build eternal confidence on temporary breath.

XLII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 2 begins with a mountain.

It ends with a warning about man.

The contrast is deliberate.

At the beginning:

God is exalted.

The nations come.

They want to learn.

They walk in His ways.

Peace spreads.

Weapons disappear.

At the end:

Proud humanity is hiding in caves.

Idols are thrown away.

Human greatness collapses.

What changed?

Nothing about God.

God was always supreme.

What changed was humanity’s recognition of that truth.

This chapter therefore asks us:

Why wait?

Why wait until judgment to recognize God’s majesty?

Why wait until idols fail before abandoning them?

Why wait until wealth disappears before admitting it cannot save?

Why wait until human power collapses before trusting God?

Isaiah says:

> **“House of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.”**

Walk now.

Trust now.

Humble yourself now.

Reject idols now.

Do not wait for the day when pride is forcibly brought low.

Choose humility.

Do not wait until false gods become worthless before throwing them away.

Reject them now.

Do not wait until human strength fails before realizing its limits.

Trust God now.

One day:

The Lord alone will be exalted.

Therefore, live today as though that is already true.

Because it is.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You alone are worthy to be exalted.

Forgive us for the many ways we place temporary things where only You belong.

Search our hearts.

Expose our idols.

Show us where we have trusted in:

Money.

Possessions.

Human power.

Government.

Achievement.

Relationships.

Reputation.

Our own abilities.

Father, teach us to walk in Your light.

Give us hearts that desire Your Word.

Teach us Your ways.

Help us walk in Your paths.

Bring Your truth into every area of our lives.

Where pride exists, humble us.

Protect us from believing we are:

Self-sufficient.

Untouchable.

Independent of You.

Remind us that every breath is a gift.

Father, keep us from occult practices, superstition, false spirituality, and every attempt to seek guidance apart from You.

Give us discernment.

Keep us anchored in Your truth.

Teach us to use money without worshiping it.

Use strength without trusting it.

Respect people without idolizing them.

Build without becoming proud of what we build.

Father, bring peace into our lives.

Turn our swords into plowshares.

Where we have used words to wound, teach us to build.

Where anger has ruled, teach us peace.

Where conflict has grown, bring righteousness and reconciliation.

And when we look toward the future, remind us that Your kingdom will stand.

Nations rise.

Nations fall.

Human glory fades.

But You remain.

Teach us to live now in the light of the day when:

You alone will be exalted.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“The proud eyes of man will be humbled, and human pride brought low. The Lord alone will be exalted in that day.” — Isaiah 2:11**

Central Truth

God’s kingdom will ultimately rise above every human power, His righteous rule will bring true peace, and every form of pride, idolatry, wealth, military confidence, and human self-exaltation will be humbled so that the Lord alone is recognized as supreme.

Isaiah 2 in One Sentence

Isaiah sees a future when the nations come to learn God’s ways and enjoy His peace, while warning Judah that pride, idols, wealth, military strength, and human confidence will all be brought low when the majesty of the Lord is fully revealed.

Isaiah Chapter 3 — Judgment on Jerusalem’s Leaders and the Proud Daughters of Zion

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 3 describes the collapse of a society that has rejected God’s order.

The judgment is not limited to one area.

It reaches:

Food.

Water.

Leadership.

Justice.

Social stability.

Public morality.

National dignity.

Personal pride.

The chapter begins with God removing the supports Judah depends upon.

Bread is removed.

Water is removed.

Capable leaders are removed.

Military strength is removed.

Wise counselors are removed.

Experienced elders are removed.

What remains is instability.

Inexperienced people rule.

Neighbors oppress one another.

The young rise against the old.

The dishonorable rise against the honorable.

Leadership becomes so undesirable that people refuse responsibility.

Isaiah then exposes the deeper reason for the collapse:

“Their words and actions are against the Lord.”

Judah’s problem is not merely political.

It is spiritual.

Their rebellion against God has corrupted:

Leadership.

Justice.

Social relationships.

Personal conduct.

The leaders exploit the poor.

The people flaunt sin openly.

Pride dominates the wealthy.

Outward appearance becomes more important than inward character.

Then God announces judgment.

He removes what they trusted.

He strips away what they gloried in.

Beauty becomes shame.

Luxury becomes loss.

Strength becomes defeat.

The chapter ends with Jerusalem sitting on the ground in mourning.

The central truth of Isaiah 3 is:

When a people reject God, leadership weakens, justice collapses, pride increases, social order deteriorates, and false securities fail; yet God still distinguishes between the righteous and the wicked and judges every person according to their deeds.

I. GOD REMOVES THE BASIC SUPPORTS OF JUDAH

Isaiah 3:1 — Bread and Water Taken Away

> **“Look, the Lord, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, is taking away from Jerusalem and Judah everything they depend on—all supplies of bread, and all supplies of water.”**

The chapter begins with a shocking picture.

God removes:

Bread.

Water.

Support.

The people have treated security as though it were guaranteed.

Isaiah reminds them that even the most basic necessities are gifts.

Cross References

Leviticus 26:26

God warned Israel that persistent disobedience would result in severe shortages of bread so that food would become scarce and insufficient.

Ezekiel 4:16

God told Ezekiel that Jerusalem’s supply of bread and water would be broken, causing people to eat and drink with anxiety and fear.

Ezekiel 5:16

God warned that famine would intensify against Jerusalem and that basic supplies would fail under judgment.

Spiritual Principle

What we call ordinary provision is still dependent upon God.

Key Truth

Human security becomes fragile when God removes the supports we assume will always remain.

II. GOD REMOVES STRONG AND CAPABLE LEADERS

Isaiah 3:2 — Warriors, Judges, Prophets, and Elders

> **“Heroes and warriors, judges and prophets, the wise and the elders.”**

Judah loses more than food.

It loses:

Experience.

Wisdom.

Leadership.

Military strength.

Judicial stability.

Spiritual guidance.

A society suffers when its capable leaders disappear.

Cross References

Micah 3:11

Judah’s leaders accepted bribes, priests taught for payment, and prophets gave messages for money while claiming the Lord was still with them.

Jeremiah 18:18

The people believed they could oppose Jeremiah because they assumed priests, wise men, and prophets would always remain available to them.

Ezekiel 7:26

Disaster would follow disaster, and people would desperately seek guidance from prophets, priests, and elders, but reliable counsel would disappear.

Spiritual Principle

Wise leadership is a gift that should never be taken for granted.

III. SKILL AND EXPERIENCE ARE ALSO REMOVED

Isaiah 3:3 — Captains, Craftsmen, and Counselors

> **“Captains of fifty, honorable men, counselors, skilled craftsmen, and eloquent speakers.”**

The judgment touches every level of society.

Military leadership disappears.

Respected citizens disappear.

Counselors disappear.

Skilled workers disappear.

Persuasive speakers disappear.

The nation loses competence.

Cross References

2 Kings 24:14

When Jerusalem was conquered, many leaders, skilled workers, soldiers, and craftsmen were taken away into exile.

2 Kings 24:16

The invading king carried away strong soldiers and skilled craftsmen who could contribute to the nation’s defense and stability.

Daniel 1:3

The king of Babylon ordered that capable young men from Judah’s royal and noble families be brought into his service.

Spiritual Principle

A nation weakens when wisdom, skill, and responsibility are removed from public life.

IV. INEXPERIENCE TAKES THE PLACE OF WISDOM

Isaiah 3:4 — Children as Rulers

> **“I will make children their rulers; inexperienced ones will rule over them.”**

The point is not merely physical age.

The emphasis is immaturity.

Leadership becomes:

Inexperienced.

Unstable.

Impulsive.

Unprepared.

A society under childish leadership becomes vulnerable.

Cross References

Ecclesiastes 10:16

A land suffers when its ruler behaves immaturely and those in authority live for pleasure rather than responsibility.

Hosea 13:11

God reminds Israel that He gave them a king in anger and could also remove rulers in judgment.

1 Kings 12:8

Rehoboam rejected the wise counsel of experienced elders and instead followed the advice of younger companions who encouraged harsher rule.

Spiritual Principle

Leadership requires more than position.

It requires maturity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Authority without wisdom becomes dangerous.

V. SOCIAL ORDER BREAKS DOWN

Isaiah 3:5 — Neighbor Against Neighbor

> **“People will oppress one another—neighbor against neighbor. The young will rise up against the old, and the dishonorable against the honorable.”**

When righteous order collapses, respect collapses.

People turn against:

Neighbors.

Older generations.

Honorable people.

The breakdown is social as well as political.

Cross References

Micah 7:6

Micah describes a time when family relationships collapse and respect between generations disappears.

Matthew 10:21

Jesus warned that severe conflict could divide even families, with relatives turning against one another.

Malachi 4:6

God’s restoring work includes turning the hearts of parents and children toward one another rather than leaving families divided.

Spiritual Principle

Rebellion against God eventually damages relationships between people.

VI. PEOPLE WILL BE DESPERATE FOR ANYONE TO LEAD

Isaiah 3:6 — “You Have a Cloak”

> **“A man will grab his brother in his father’s house and say, ‘You have a cloak—you be our leader; take charge of this ruin!’”**

Leadership becomes so scarce that people choose someone for the shallowest reason:

He has clothing.

That alone seems to make him appear capable.

The phrase:

> **“take charge of this ruin”**

reveals how desperate conditions have become.

Cross References

Judges 9:8

Jotham told a parable in which the trees searched for someone willing to rule over them.

Judges 9:9

The olive tree refused to abandon its productive purpose merely to seek status over the other trees.

1 Samuel 8:5

Israel asked Samuel to appoint a king so they could be governed like surrounding nations.

Spiritual Principle

Desperation can cause people to choose leaders for shallow reasons.

VII. EVEN POTENTIAL LEADERS REFUSE THE RESPONSIBILITY

Isaiah 3:7 — “I Cannot Fix This”

> **“But on that day he will protest, ‘I cannot fix this! I have no food or clothing in my house. Don’t make me the ruler of the people!’”**

The situation is so broken that even leadership becomes undesirable.

The man recognizes:

He has no resources.

No solution.

No ability to repair the ruin.

Cross References

Exodus 4:10

Moses told God that he did not feel qualified to speak and saw himself as inadequate for the assignment.

Judges 6:15

Gideon questioned how he could deliver Israel because his family seemed weak and he considered himself insignificant.

1 Kings 3:7

Solomon acknowledged his inexperience and dependence upon God when he became king.

Spiritual Principle

Wise people understand that leadership carries responsibility, not merely status.

VIII. JERUSALEM FALLS BECAUSE OF OPEN REBELLION

Isaiah 3:8 — Words and Actions Against the Lord

> **"Jerusalem staggers; Judah falls. Their words and actions are against the Lord, defying His glorious presence."**

Here Isaiah identifies the root problem.

Their words are against God.

Their deeds are against God.

Their entire culture has become defiant.

Cross References

Jeremiah 44:8

God rebuked His people for provoking Him through their sinful actions and false worship.

Numbers 15:30

The person who sins defiantly acts with open contempt toward the Lord and rejects His authority.

Psalm 78:40

Israel repeatedly rebelled against God and grieved Him through persistent disobedience.

Spiritual Principle

National collapse may have many visible causes, but Isaiah exposes the spiritual root:

Rebellion against God.

IX. SIN IS OPENLY DISPLAYED

Isaiah 3:9 — Sin Like Sodom

> **“The look on their faces testifies against them. They flaunt their sin like Sodom; they do not even try to hide it. Woe to them! They have brought disaster upon themselves.”**

Sin has moved from:

Private compromise.

To:

Public pride.

There is no shame.

No attempt to hide.

They advertise rebellion.

Cross References

Genesis 19:5

The men of Sodom openly demanded the opportunity to commit gross sexual wickedness against the visitors in Lot’s house.

Jeremiah 3:3

Judah is described as having lost the capacity to blush because of shameless unfaithfulness.

Jeremiah 6:15

The people committed detestable acts but felt no shame and did not know how to blush.

Spiritual Principle

One of the most dangerous stages of sin is when shame disappears.

Key Truth

Sin grows especially destructive when rebellion becomes something to celebrate.

X. GOD REMEMBERS THE RIGHTEOUS

Isaiah 3:10 — “It Will Be Well with You”

> **“Tell the righteous, ‘It will be well with you, for you will enjoy the reward of your deeds.’”**

In the middle of national judgment, God distinguishes the righteous.

Not everyone shares the same spiritual condition.

God sees individuals.

The righteous are not forgotten.

Cross References

Psalm 128:2

Those who fear the Lord will enjoy the fruit of faithful labor, and blessing will attend their lives.

Galatians 6:8

The one who sows to the Spirit will receive the life-producing harvest that comes from the Spirit rather than the corruption produced by sin.

Proverbs 11:18

The wicked receive deceptive rewards, but the person who sows righteousness receives a dependable reward.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness still matters even when the surrounding culture is corrupt.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You do not need a righteous culture in order to make a righteous choice.

XI. THE WICKED WILL REAP WHAT THEY HAVE DONE

Isaiah 3:11 — “Woe to the Wicked”

> **“Woe to the wicked! Disaster is upon them. They will be paid back for what their hands have done.”**

Isaiah now gives the opposite message.

The righteous:

It will be well.

The wicked:

Woe.

Actions have consequences.

Cross References

Psalm 7:15

The wicked dig pits to trap others but may fall into the very destruction they prepared.

Proverbs 1:31

Those who reject wisdom eventually eat the fruit produced by their own choices.

Romans 6:23

Sin pays the wage of death, but God offers eternal life as a gift through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Spiritual Principle

We eventually harvest what we consistently plant.

XII. MISLEADING LEADERS CONFUSE THE PEOPLE

Isaiah 3:12 — Leaders Destroy the Path

> **“My people are oppressed by children; women rule over them. O My people, your leaders mislead you; they confuse the direction of your paths.”**

The central point is leadership failure.

Those guiding the nation:

Mislead.

Confuse.

Distort direction.

The result is oppression.

Cross References

Micah 3:5

False prophets misled the people by tailoring their message to personal benefit rather than truth.

Jeremiah 23:1

God pronounces judgment upon shepherds who destroy and scatter the people entrusted to their care.

Jeremiah 23:2

God holds corrupt leaders accountable for driving His people away and failing to care for them properly.

Spiritual Principle

Bad leadership does more than make bad decisions.

It can cause an entire people to lose direction.

XIII. GOD TAKES HIS PLACE AS JUDGE

Isaiah 3:13 — The Lord Rises to Judge

> **“The Lord takes His stand to argue His case; He rises to judge the people.”**

The courtroom imagery returns.

God:

Stands.

Presents His case.

Judges.

No corrupt human court can overrule Him.

Cross References

Micah 6:1

God summons creation to hear His case against His people.

Micah 6:2

The mountains and foundations of the earth are called to witness the Lord’s controversy with Israel.

Psalm 82:1

God stands in the assembly and judges those who exercise authority.

Spiritual Principle

Human leaders may avoid accountability temporarily.

They cannot avoid God’s court.

XIV. GOD CHARGES THE LEADERS WITH EXPLOITATION

Isaiah 3:14 — The Poor Have Been Plundered

> **“The Lord brings charges against the elders and leaders of His people: ‘You have ruined My vineyard. The plunder taken from the poor is stored in your houses.’”**

The leaders were supposed to protect.

Instead they exploited.

God calls the people:

“My vineyard.”

The leaders destroyed what belonged to Him.

They enriched themselves through oppression.

Cross References

Micah 3:1

Micah challenges rulers to understand justice because leadership carries responsibility before God.

Micah 3:2

Corrupt leaders are condemned for hating good, loving evil, and treating the people with shocking cruelty.

Amos 5:11

Because the wealthy oppressed the poor and extracted resources from them, God warned that the houses and vineyards built through injustice would not bring lasting enjoyment.

Spiritual Principle

God takes personally the exploitation of people entrusted to leadership.

Key Truth

Authority is given for service, not plunder.

XV. GOD DEFENDS THE POOR

Isaiah 3:15 — “Why Do You Crush My People?”

> **“What do you mean by crushing My people, and grinding the faces of the poor?” declares the Lord, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.”**

This is one of the strongest questions in the chapter.

God identifies with the oppressed.

He calls them:

“My people.”

The leaders crush them.

God notices.

Cross References

Amos 4:1

Amos condemns the wealthy who oppress the poor and crush the needy while living comfortably.

Amos 8:4

God calls attention to those who trample the needy and attempt to remove the poor for personal gain.

Proverbs 22:22

God warns against exploiting the poor simply because they are vulnerable and unable to defend themselves.

Spiritual Principle

God hears the cries of people powerful leaders ignore.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

How we treat people with less power reveals much about our relationship with God.

XVI. THE DAUGHTERS OF ZION ARE PROUD

Isaiah 3:16 — Haughty and Self-Exalting

> **“The Lord says, ‘Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, walking with heads held high, flirting with their eyes, strutting with quick steps, tinkling their ankle jewelry.’”**

Isaiah now addresses another expression of pride.

The issue is not simply:

Jewelry.

Clothing.

Appearance.

The central problem is:

Haughtiness.

Their outward display reflects inward pride.

Cross References

1 Timothy 2:9

Women are encouraged to dress with modesty, self-control, and dignity rather than making expensive outward display the center of their identity.

Proverbs 6:17

Among the things God hates are proud and arrogant eyes.

1 Peter 3:3

Peter teaches that a woman’s beauty should not depend primarily upon external decoration such as elaborate hair, jewelry, or clothing.

Spiritual Principle

The issue is not beauty itself.

The issue is pride built upon beauty.

XVII. PRIDE WILL BE REPLACED WITH HUMILIATION

Isaiah 3:17 — Shame Exposed

> **“The Lord will bring sores on the heads of the daughters of Zion; He will expose their shame.”**

Their pride centered on appearance.

Judgment strikes the very area in which they gloried.

What produced:

Attention.

Status.

Confidence.

Will become shame.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:27

God warned Israel that covenant rebellion could bring severe physical affliction as part of judgment.

Leviticus 13:2

The law gave careful instructions concerning visible skin diseases and conditions requiring examination.

2 Chronicles 26:19

King Uzziah was struck with a visible skin disease when pride led him to act unlawfully in the temple.

Spiritual Principle

God may humble us in the very area where pride has become strongest.

XVIII. GOD REMOVES THEIR ORNAMENTS

Isaiah 3:18 — Finery Stripped Away

> **“In that day the Lord will strip away their finery—the jewelry that jingles on their ankles, headbands and crescent necklaces.”**

The list begins.

Isaiah deliberately names the things associated with:

Fashion.

Status.

Display.

Luxury.

The purpose is not to say every ornament is inherently sinful.

The issue is pride and misplaced identity.

Cross References

1 Peter 3:3

True beauty is not to be defined merely by hair, jewelry, or clothing.

Genesis 24:22

Abraham’s servant gave Rebekah valuable jewelry as part of the marriage arrangements.

Judges 8:21

Crescent ornaments were among the valuable items associated with Midianite rulers.

Spiritual Principle

Anything used to create identity apart from God can become a false security.

XIX. JEWELRY WILL NOT PROTECT THEM

Isaiah 3:19 — Earrings, Bracelets, and Veils

> **“Earrings, bracelets, and veils.”**

Isaiah continues listing the outward decorations.

The accumulation emphasizes how much attention had been placed upon appearance.

Cross References

Ezekiel 16:11

God describes adorning Jerusalem with bracelets and jewelry as a picture of the beauty He had given her.

Genesis 24:47

Rebekah received jewelry as part of the marriage arrangement connected with Isaac.

Song of Solomon 1:10

The bride’s beauty is praised with imagery involving jewelry and ornaments.

Spiritual Principle

Beautiful things become dangerous when they become sources of pride.

XX. LUXURY CANNOT STOP JUDGMENT

Isaiah 3:20 — Perfume, Chains, and Charms

> **“Scarves, ankle chains, sashes, perfume bottles, and charms.”**

The list continues.

The society has invested heavily in:

Presentation.

Luxury.

Adornment.

But none of it can preserve them when judgment comes.

Cross References

Exodus 35:22

Men and women willingly brought jewelry and valuable objects as offerings for the work of the tabernacle.

Numbers 31:50

Israelites brought jewelry and valuable objects as an offering before the Lord.

Ezekiel 16:12

God describes Jerusalem as being adorned with rings, earrings, and a beautiful crown.

Spiritual Principle

Luxury cannot purchase spiritual security.

XXI. SYMBOLS OF STATUS WILL ALSO BE REMOVED

Isaiah 3:21 — Signet Rings and Nose Rings

> **“Signet rings and nose rings.”**

Signet rings could signify:

Authority.

Identity.

Status.

Yet external symbols cannot protect against inward corruption.

Cross References

Genesis 24:47

Rebekah received a nose ring and bracelets as part of the gifts associated with her future marriage.

Ezekiel 16:12

God describes placing jewelry on Jerusalem as a picture of the favor and beauty He had given.

Genesis 35:4

Jacob’s household surrendered foreign gods and earrings associated with idolatrous practices before returning to worship the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Even honorable objects can become spiritually dangerous when connected with pride or idolatry.

XXII. EXPENSIVE CLOTHING CANNOT SAVE

Isaiah 3:22 — Fine Robes and Purses

> **“Fine robes and capes, cloaks and purses.”**

The people have concentrated on appearance.

But judgment strips away the appearance of prosperity.

Cross References

1 Peter 3:4

Peter teaches that the deepest beauty should come from the inner person, especially a gentle and peaceful spirit valued by God.

Genesis 45:22

Joseph gave his brothers changes of clothing as generous gifts when he reconciled with them.

2 Kings 5:22

Clothing and silver were requested deceitfully in the account involving Gehazi’s greed.

Spiritual Principle

Fine clothing can cover the body.

It cannot cover the soul.

XXIII. OUTWARD APPEARANCE IS TEMPORARY

Isaiah 3:23 — Mirrors, Linen, Turbans, and Shawls

> **“Mirrors, linen garments, turbans and shawls.”**

The list ends with more objects associated with:

Appearance.

Presentation.

Status.

Isaiah is dismantling the illusion that outward appearance determines true worth.

Cross References

Proverbs 31:22

The capable woman prepares quality clothing for her household and is herself clothed with dignity.

Ezekiel 16:13

Jerusalem is pictured as adorned with fine clothing, jewelry, and expensive materials.

Genesis 24:65

Rebekah covered herself appropriately when she learned that Isaac was approaching.

Spiritual Principle

Outward beauty has a place.

It should never replace inward character.

XXIV. BEAUTY IS REPLACED WITH SHAME

Isaiah 3:24 — The Great Reversal

> **“Instead of fragrance, there will be a stench; instead of a sash, a rope; instead of well-set hair, baldness; instead of fine clothes, sackcloth; instead of beauty, branding.”**

The verse is built around reversals.

Fragrance becomes stench.

Sash becomes rope.

Styled hair becomes baldness.

Fine clothing becomes sackcloth.

Beauty becomes shame.

Everything trusted outwardly is reversed.

Cross References

Amos 8:10

God warns that celebration will become mourning and joyful songs will turn into lamentation.

Job 16:15

Job describes wearing sackcloth and sitting in humiliation because of overwhelming suffering.

Joel 1:8

God's people are told to mourn deeply like someone grieving the loss of a beloved relationship.

Spiritual Principle

Pride turns temporary beauty into permanent disappointment.

Key Truth

Anything we worship can become the very thing through which we are humbled.

XXV. THE MEN WILL FALL IN BATTLE

Isaiah 3:25 — Warriors Destroyed

> **"Your men will fall by the sword, your warriors in battle."**

Military strength collapses.

The nation loses:

Defenders.

Soldiers.

Strong men.

The consequences of rebellion become national tragedy.

Cross References

Jeremiah 15:2

God describes coming judgments including death, sword, famine, and captivity.

Lamentations 2:21

Young and old fall in the streets during Jerusalem's devastation.

Deuteronomy 28:25

God warned Israel that covenant rebellion could cause defeat before enemies.

Spiritual Principle

Human strength cannot guarantee national preservation.

XXVI. ZION SITS DESOLATE

Isaiah 3:26 — The City Mourns

> **“The gates of Zion will mourn and lament; deserted, she will sit on the ground.”**

The chapter ends with Jerusalem personified as a grieving woman.

The once proud city is:

Empty.

Defeated.

Mourning.

Sitting in the dust.

Cross References

Lamentations 1:1

Jerusalem is pictured as lonely and deserted after once being full of people and significance.

Lamentations 2:10

Jerusalem’s elders sit silently on the ground, covered in dust and mourning after the city’s destruction.

Jeremiah 14:2

Judah mourns, its cities languish, and Jerusalem’s cry rises because of distress.

Spiritual Principle

Pride eventually sits where humility could have knelt.

XXVII. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 3

1. God Can Remove False Supports

Food.

Water.

Leadership.

Security.

Principle:

Never treat God’s gifts as though they exist independently of Him.

---

2. Leadership Matters

When wise leadership disappears, instability spreads.

Principle:

A society suffers when authority lacks wisdom and maturity.

---

3. Rebellion Produces Disorder

Neighbor turns against neighbor.

Honor disappears.

Principle:

Spiritual disorder eventually becomes social disorder.

---

4. Open Sin Produces Destruction

Judah flaunts sin like Sodom.

Principle:

Celebrating rebellion does not remove its consequences.

---

5. God Distinguishes the Righteous from the Wicked

The righteous are told:

It will be well.

The wicked are told:

Woe.

Principle:

Individual faithfulness matters even during widespread corruption.

---

6. God Judges Corrupt Leadership

The leaders robbed the poor.

Principle:

Authority always comes with accountability.

---

7. Pride in Outward Beauty Is Temporary

Everything outward can be removed.

Principle:

Build identity upon character and God, not appearance.

---

8. Human Security Can Collapse Quickly

The chapter ends with:

Defeat.

Loss.

Mourning.

Principle:

God alone provides ultimate security.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 3 TEACHES ABOUT LEADERSHIP

Leadership affects everyone.

Bad leadership produces:

Confusion.

Oppression.

Instability.

Misguided direction.

God does not treat leadership lightly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The higher the authority, the greater the responsibility to serve justly.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 3 TEACHES ABOUT SOCIAL ORDER

The chapter describes:

Generational conflict.

Disrespect.

Oppression.

Dishonor.

These are symptoms of deeper spiritual decay.

Spiritual Principle

When truth collapses, relationships often collapse with it.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 3 TEACHES ABOUT SIN

Sin is described as:

Open.

Defiant.

Shameless.

Self-destructive.

Verse 9 says:

> **“They have brought disaster upon themselves.”**

Key Truth

Sin often carries consequences within itself.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 3 TEACHES ABOUT THE RIGHTEOUS

Even in a corrupt society, God says:

> **“It will be well with you.”**

That means the righteous should not conclude:

“Everyone else is doing wrong, so faithfulness no longer matters.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God sees faithfulness even when society ignores it.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 3 TEACHES ABOUT THE WICKED

The wicked receive the consequences of their actions.

This is a repeated biblical principle:

Sowing.

Harvest.

Cause.

Effect.

Spiritual Principle

Actions are seeds.

Consequences are harvests.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 3 TEACHES ABOUT JUSTICE

God directly confronts leaders who:

Exploit.

Plunder.

Crush.

The poor.

God cares deeply about justice.

Key Truth

A society is not righteous merely because it is religious or prosperous.

It must also treat people justly.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 3 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

The daughters of Zion are condemned primarily for:

Haughtiness.

Their outward display reflects inward arrogance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride can wear expensive clothing or poor clothing.

The issue is the heart.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 3 TEACHES ABOUT BEAUTY

Scripture does not condemn beauty.

The problem is:

Making beauty an idol.

Using appearance as identity.

Treating outward attraction as more valuable than inward righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

Outward beauty is temporary.

Godly character has deeper value.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 3 TEACHES ABOUT FALSE SECURITY

Judah trusted:

Leaders.

Military strength.

Social position.

Material prosperity.

Personal attractiveness.

God shows how quickly all of these can disappear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never build permanent confidence on temporary supports.

XXXVII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What does God remove first in Isaiah 3?

He removes basic provisions and the people upon whom Judah depends for leadership and stability.

Question 2

Why are inexperienced rulers part of the judgment?

Because immature leadership produces instability, poor decisions, and disorder.

Question 3

What happens socially when order collapses?

People oppress one another and traditional respect disappears.

Question 4

Why does no one want to become leader?

The society is so ruined that leadership carries enormous responsibility with little ability to repair the damage.

Question 5

What does verse 9 teach about open sin?

It shows that Judah has become shameless and no longer tries to hide rebellion.

Question 6

Does God forget righteous individuals during national judgment?

No.

He specifically says that it will be well with the righteous.

Question 7

What happens to the wicked?

They receive the consequences of what they have done.

Question 8

Why does God judge Judah’s leaders?

Because they mislead the people, exploit the poor, and abuse authority.

Question 9

What is the central problem with the daughters of Zion?

Their outward display reflects inward pride and self-exaltation.

Question 10

Does Isaiah 3 teach that jewelry itself is sinful?

No.

The issue is haughtiness, misplaced identity, luxury, and pride rather than the mere existence of ornamentation.

Question 11

What happens to the things in which they took pride?

They are stripped away and replaced with shame, loss, and mourning.

Question 12

What should Isaiah 3 change in us?

It should teach us to trust God rather than temporary supports, pursue wise leadership, reject pride, defend the vulnerable, and live righteously even in a corrupt culture.

XXXVIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 3 asks several searching questions.

What Am I Depending On?

Money?

Government?

Leadership?

Career?

Appearance?

Status?

Or God?

Am I Growing in Maturity?

If responsibility increased tomorrow, would my character be ready?

Do I Respect Wisdom and Experience?

Or do I reject good counsel because it challenges me?

Am I Flaunting What God Calls Sin?

Have I become comfortable with something that once convicted me?

Am I Living Righteously Even When Others Do Not?

Does surrounding corruption excuse my compromise?

How Do I Treat People With Less Power?

Do I:

Protect?

Serve?

Ignore?

Exploit?

Is Pride Hiding Behind My Appearance?

How much of my identity depends upon what other people think when they see me?

What Temporary Support Would Devastate Me If God Removed It?

That may reveal where trust has shifted.

XXXIX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“When a Culture Rejects God’s Order, Disorder Does Not Stay Spiritual”

Isaiah 3 begins with rebellion.

Then come:

Leadership problems.

Economic shortages.

Social conflict.

Oppression.

Pride.

Military defeat.

National mourning.

Principle:

Spiritual rebellion eventually produces consequences throughout life.

XL. WHEN LEADERS MISLEAD

Verse 12 says:

> **“Your leaders mislead you.”**

Leadership has enormous influence.

A leader can:

Clarify the path.

Or:

Confuse it.

A leader can:

Protect people.

Or:

Exploit them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never judge leadership only by charisma.

Judge it by truth, character, justice, and fruit.

XLI. GOD’S CONCERN FOR THE POOR

The strongest language against leadership concerns:

The poor.

God says:

> **“You have ruined My vineyard.”**
>
> **“You have crushed My people.”**

God sees exploitation.

Spiritual Principle

People society overlooks are never invisible to God.

XLII. THE DANGER OF SHAMELESS SIN

Verse 9 says:

> **“They flaunt their sin like Sodom.”**

There is a difference between:

Falling into sin.

And:

Boasting in sin.

One is failure.

The other is hardened rebellion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When sin stops producing conviction and starts producing pride, spiritual danger has greatly increased.

XLIII. THE RIGHTEOUS IN A CORRUPT CULTURE

Verse 10 provides hope.

God says:

> **“It will be well with you.”**

The righteous do not need ideal circumstances in order to remain righteous.

Joseph lived righteously in Egypt.

Daniel lived faithfully in Babylon.

Believers can remain faithful in difficult cultures.

Spiritual Principle

Your environment influences you.

It does not have to determine you.

XLIV. OUTWARD BEAUTY AND INNER CHARACTER

Isaiah spends many verses describing ornaments.

Why?

Because outward presentation had become tied to:

Pride.

Identity.

Status.

God strips the illusion away.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The mirror shows your appearance.

God sees your character.

Care about both, but never confuse which matters most eternally.

XLV. THE GREAT REVERSAL

Verse 24 repeats:

Instead of.

Instead of.

Instead of.

God reverses their pride.

Fragrance becomes stench.

Fine clothing becomes sackcloth.

Beauty becomes shame.

Spiritual Principle

Anything exalted above God can become an instrument of humiliation.

XLVI. WHEN A CITY SITS IN THE DUST

The chapter ends with Zion:

Mourning.

Deserted.

Sitting on the ground.

This is the opposite of:

Pride.

Luxury.

Security.

God has brought the nation low.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Humility chosen before God is far better than humiliation forced by consequences.

XLVII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 3 is a warning about what happens when the foundations of a society weaken.

The people have rejected God.

Then the supports begin disappearing.

Food.

Water.

Leadership.

Wisdom.

Social order.

Honor.

Justice.

Military strength.

The chapter teaches us:

Do not assume stability is permanent.

Do not assume good leadership will always be present.

Do not assume prosperity cannot disappear.

Do not assume cultural order can survive indefinitely when truth is rejected.

But Isaiah also speaks directly to individuals.

To the righteous:

> **“It will be well with you.”**

To the wicked:

> **“Woe.”**

That means we are personally responsible.

We cannot say:

“Everyone else is doing it.”

“Society has changed.”

“My leaders failed.”

God still sees individual choices.

Isaiah also confronts leaders.

If God gives you authority:

Use it to serve.

Do not exploit.

Do not mislead.

Do not crush people to enrich yourself.

Remember:

The people under your authority belong to God.

Finally, Isaiah confronts pride.

Beauty fades.

Clothing changes.

Jewelry disappears.

Status can vanish.

The things people use to make themselves feel superior can disappear in a moment.

Therefore:

Build your life on something deeper.

Character.

Humility.

Justice.

Faithfulness.

Truth.

God.

Do not wait until God removes your false securities to discover that they were never secure.

Do not wait until pride becomes humiliation.

Choose humility now.

Do not wait until society becomes unstable to value wise leadership.

Honor truth now.

Do not wait until sin produces destruction to call sin what God calls it.

Repent now.

And when culture around you becomes confused:

Remain faithful.

Because God still says:

> **“Tell the righteous, ‘It will be well with you.’”**

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for reminding us that every good support in life ultimately comes from You.

Forgive us for trusting in:

Money.

Leadership.

Strength.

Appearance.

Status.

Human institutions.

More than we trust You.

Give us wisdom to recognize how dependent we are upon Your mercy.

Father, raise up wise and righteous leaders.

Give those in authority:

Humility.

Discernment.

Courage.

Integrity.

Compassion.

Justice.

Protect us from leaders who mislead, exploit, and confuse.

And if You give us any authority, help us use it faithfully.

Teach us to serve rather than dominate.

Protect the poor.

Defend the vulnerable.

Care for those who have little power.

Father, search our hearts for pride.

If appearance has become an idol, humble us.

If possessions have become identity, correct us.

If praise from others controls us, free us.

Give us the inner beauty of:

Holiness.

Humility.

Kindness.

Faithfulness.

Wisdom.

Father, keep us from shameless sin.

Never let our hearts become so hardened that we boast about what should bring us to repentance.

Keep our consciences tender.

When we sin, convict us.

When You convict us, help us repent.

Strengthen righteous people living in corrupt times.

Remind them that You still see them.

Help them remain faithful when:

Leadership fails.

Culture changes.

Truth is mocked.

Sin is celebrated.

Give them courage.

And Father, let us never forget:

All human supports are temporary.

You alone are eternal.

May our confidence rest in You.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“Tell the righteous, ‘It will be well with you, for you will enjoy the reward of your deeds.’ Woe to the wicked! Disaster is upon them. They will be paid back for what their hands have done.” — Isaiah 3:10–11**

Central Truth

When people reject God, leadership deteriorates, justice is corrupted, social order weakens, pride increases, and false securities collapse; yet God sees each person, judges corrupt leaders, defends the vulnerable, honors righteousness, and brings wickedness to account.

Isaiah 3 in One Sentence

Isaiah warns that Judah’s rebellion will strip away food, leadership, social order, wealth, beauty, and military security while showing that God judges corrupt rulers, humbles pride, protects the vulnerable, and still promises that it will be well with those who remain righteous.

Isaiah Chapter 4 — The Branch of the Lord and Zion’s Cleansing

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 4 is short, but it is filled with hope.

Chapter 3 ended with:

Judgment.

Loss.

Humiliation.

Death.

Desolation.

Chapter 4 begins in the aftermath of that devastation.

The population has been reduced.

Social stability has collapsed.

Disgrace hangs over the people.

Yet God does not end His message with ruin.

He turns the reader toward:

Restoration.

Holiness.

Cleansing.

Messianic hope.

Divine presence.

Protection.

The chapter introduces one of Isaiah’s important messianic images:

“The Branch of the Lord.”

This Branch is described as:

Beautiful.

Glorious.

Connected with restoration.

The faithful remnant will survive.

Those remaining in Zion will be called:

Holy.

But restoration requires cleansing.

God must wash away:

Filth.

Bloodguilt.

Corruption.

He does this through:

Judgment.

Purifying fire.

Then God’s presence returns in imagery that recalls Israel’s wilderness journey.

There is:

Cloud by day.

Fire by night.

Glory covering the people.

Shelter.

Shade.

Refuge.

Protection from storms.

The chapter therefore moves from:

Disgrace.

To:

Glory.

From:

Defilement.

To:

Holiness.

From:

Judgment.

To:

Restoration.

From:

Exposure.

To:

Divine covering.

The central truth of Isaiah 4 is:

After judgment has removed pride and corruption, God promises to preserve a holy remnant, cleanse Zion from guilt, reveal the glory of the Branch of the Lord, and cover His restored people with His protective presence.

I. THE AFTERMATH OF JUDGMENT PRODUCES DESPERATION

Isaiah 4:1 — “Take Away Our Disgrace”

> **“In that day seven women will take hold of one man, saying, ‘We will eat our own food and provide our own clothes; just let us be called by your name. Take away our disgrace.’”**

This verse continues directly from the judgment described in Isaiah 3.

Many men have died in battle.

The social consequences are severe.

The image of seven women seeking one man emphasizes:

Population loss.

Desperation.

Social disruption.

The women even offer to provide their own:

Food.

Clothing.

They simply want:

His name.

The removal of reproach.

Cross References

Genesis 30:23

After Rachel finally conceived and gave birth, she said that God had removed the disgrace she had carried because of her barrenness.

Luke 1:25

Elizabeth said that the Lord had shown her favor and removed the reproach she had experienced among the people.

Ruth 1:20

Naomi asked people to call her Mara rather than Naomi because she felt that great bitterness had come upon her life.

Spiritual Principle

Sin and judgment often create consequences far beyond the original act of rebellion.

Key Truth

A society’s spiritual decline eventually affects ordinary people in painful and personal ways.

II. THE BRANCH OF THE LORD WILL BE BEAUTIFUL AND GLORIOUS

Isaiah 4:2 — Hope Appears After Judgment

> **“In that day the Branch of the Lord will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of those in Israel who survive.”**

The chapter suddenly shifts from humiliation to hope.

The phrase:

“The Branch of the Lord”

becomes important in prophetic Scripture.

The Branch points toward God’s promised ruler and Messiah.

Isaiah’s prophecy looks beyond immediate devastation toward a future restoration under God’s appointed King.

The Branch will be:

Beautiful.

Glorious.

The survivors of Israel will experience restored blessing.

Cross References

Jeremiah 23:5

The Lord promises that the days are coming when He will raise up a righteous Branch from David’s line. He will reign as King, act wisely, and establish justice and righteousness in the land.

Zechariah 3:8

God tells Joshua the high priest and those with him that they are signs of what is coming, because God will bring forth His Servant called the Branch.

Jeremiah 33:15

God promises that in the appointed time He will cause a righteous Branch to grow from David’s family, and this ruler will practice justice and righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

God can cause hope to grow from what appears ruined.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Judgment may cut down human pride, but it cannot cut off God’s promises.

III. THE SURVIVING REMNANT WILL BE CALLED HOLY

Isaiah 4:3 — Those Recorded Among the Living

> **“Everyone who remains in Zion and is left in Jerusalem will be called holy—all who are recorded among the living in Jerusalem.”**

Not everyone is destroyed.

A remnant remains.

Those who survive are called:

Holy.

This means:

Set apart.

Belonging to God.

Purified for His purposes.

The verse also speaks of people:

“recorded among the living.”

This emphasizes God’s knowledge of His own.

Cross References

Daniel 12:1

Daniel is told that a time of severe distress will come, but everyone among God’s people whose name is found written in the book will be delivered.

Revelation 21:27

Nothing impure will enter the holy city, nor anyone practicing what is shameful or false; only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life will enter.

Luke 10:20

Jesus told His disciples not to rejoice merely because spiritual powers submitted to them, but to rejoice that their names were written in heaven.

Spiritual Principle

God knows those who belong to Him.

Key Truth

The mark of God’s restored people is not merely survival.

It is holiness.

IV. GOD WASHES AWAY ZION’S FILTH

Isaiah 4:4 — Cleansing Through Judgment and Fire

> **“The Lord will wash away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleanse the bloodstains of Jerusalem from her midst by a spirit of judgment and a spirit of fire.”**

Isaiah 3 described the pride and corruption of Zion.

Isaiah 4 describes cleansing.

God will wash away:

Filth.

Bloodguilt.

Moral corruption.

This cleansing comes through:

Judgment.

Fire.

Fire here is not merely destructive.

It is refining.

God removes what contaminates His people.

Cross References

Malachi 3:2

The coming Lord is compared to a refiner’s fire and cleansing soap because His presence exposes impurity and purifies what belongs to Him.

Ezekiel 36:25

God promises to sprinkle clean water upon His people, cleanse them from impurity, and free them from the defilement of idols.

Zechariah 13:1

A fountain will be opened for God’s people to cleanse them from sin and impurity.

Spiritual Principle

God does not restore His people by pretending corruption does not matter.

He cleanses it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace does not preserve our filth.

Grace washes it away.

V. GOD’S GLORY RETURNS AS A COVERING

Isaiah 4:5 — Cloud by Day and Fire by Night

> **“Then the Lord will create over all of Mount Zion and over those who gather there a cloud of smoke by day and a glowing fire by night; over everything the glory will be a covering.”**

The imagery immediately recalls Israel’s wilderness journey.

God guided Israel through:

Cloud by day.

Fire by night.

That presence meant:

Guidance.

Protection.

Direction.

Assurance.

God was with them.

Now Isaiah pictures restored Zion under the same divine presence.

Most striking is the phrase:

> **“the glory will be a covering.”**

Earlier:

Sin exposed shame.

Now:

God’s glory covers His people.

Cross References

Exodus 13:21

The Lord went before Israel during the day in a pillar of cloud to guide them and during the night in a pillar of fire to give them light so they could continue traveling.

Exodus 13:22

The pillar of cloud remained with the people by day, and the pillar of fire remained with them by night.

Exodus 40:38

The cloud of the Lord rested over the tabernacle during the day, and fire was visible within it at night before all Israel throughout their journeys.

Spiritual Principle

God’s greatest gift to His restored people is His own presence.

Key Truth

Protection is strongest when the Protector Himself is present.

VI. GOD BECOMES THEIR SHELTER AND REFUGE

Isaiah 4:6 — Protection from Heat and Storm

> **“It will be a shelter to give shade from the heat by day, a place of refuge, and a hiding place from storm and rain.”**

The chapter ends with security.

God’s presence becomes:

Shade.

Shelter.

Refuge.

Hiding place.

The people who were once exposed to judgment now rest under divine protection.

Cross References

Psalm 121:5

The Lord Himself watches over you and remains close beside you like protective shade.

Psalm 121:6

The sun will not overpower you by day, nor will the dangers associated with the night ultimately destroy you under God’s keeping care.

Psalm 91:1

The person who dwells in the shelter of the Most High rests safely under the protective shadow of the Almighty.

Spiritual Principle

God does not merely cleanse His people.

He keeps them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The same God who washes away sin becomes the refuge of the cleansed sinner.

VII. SEVEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 4

1. Judgment Has Real Consequences

Verse 1 shows the social aftermath of the judgment described in Chapter 3.

Principle:

Sin affects more than the person committing it.

---

2. God Preserves Hope After Judgment

The Branch appears after devastation.

Principle:

God’s promises survive even when human pride collapses.

---

3. The Branch Points Toward the Messiah

The prophetic Branch is connected with Davidic kingship, righteousness, and restoration.

Principle:

God’s ultimate answer to human failure is His appointed King.

---

4. God Preserves a Remnant

Some remain in Zion.

Principle:

Judgment does not cancel God’s covenant purposes.

---

5. God’s People Are Called to Holiness

The survivors are called:

Holy.

Principle:

Restoration is not merely returning to comfort; it is returning to consecration.

---

6. God Cleanses What He Restores

The filth and bloodguilt must be washed away.

Principle:

God’s restoration includes purification.

---

7. God’s Presence Becomes the People’s Refuge

Cloud.

Fire.

Shade.

Shelter.

Principle:

The greatest security is not found in circumstances but in God’s presence.

VIII. WHAT ISAIAH 4 TEACHES ABOUT THE MESSIAH

The Branch becomes one of the important messianic themes of the prophets.

Jeremiah speaks of a righteous Branch from David.

Zechariah calls God’s coming Servant:

The Branch.

Isaiah will later develop related imagery of new growth from David’s line.

Spiritual Principle

Human leadership repeatedly fails.

God ultimately provides the righteous King humanity needs.

IX. WHAT ISAIAH 4 TEACHES ABOUT THE REMNANT

Isaiah repeatedly emphasizes survivors.

God’s judgment is serious.

Yet He preserves people through it.

The remnant demonstrates:

Grace.

Faithfulness.

Covenant preservation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When most people turn away, God still knows those who remain faithful.

X. WHAT ISAIAH 4 TEACHES ABOUT HOLINESS

The survivors are called:

Holy.

God does not merely say:

“They survived.”

He says:

They are set apart.

Key Truth

God’s goal is not simply to get us through difficulty.

His goal is to make us holy.

XI. WHAT ISAIAH 4 TEACHES ABOUT CLEANSING

Verse 4 uses strong language.

Wash.

Cleanse.

Judgment.

Fire.

The problem is deep.

Therefore the cleansing must be real.

Spiritual Principle

God’s forgiveness is never permission to continue cherishing the filth He wants removed.

XII. WHAT ISAIAH 4 TEACHES ABOUT JUDGMENT

Judgment and restoration are not opposites in this chapter.

God uses judgment to remove corruption.

Then restoration follows.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes what feels like loss is God removing what cannot remain in a restored life.

XIII. WHAT ISAIAH 4 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S PRESENCE

The cloud and fire remind us of the Exodus.

God’s presence means:

He guides.

He protects.

He remains.

Spiritual Principle

God’s presence is more valuable than the absence of difficulty.

XIV. WHAT ISAIAH 4 TEACHES ABOUT PROTECTION

God promises protection from:

Heat.

Storm.

Rain.

That does not mean His people will never encounter difficulty.

It means difficulty will not exist outside His sovereign care.

Key Truth

Refuge does not mean storms never come.

It means there is somewhere safe to stand when they do.

XV. WHAT ISAIAH 4 TEACHES ABOUT RESTORATION

The chapter moves through a beautiful progression:

Disgrace.

Branch.

Holiness.

Cleansing.

Glory.

Shelter.

That is restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoration does more than return what was lost.

It transforms what remains.

XVI. CHRIST AND THE BRANCH OF THE LORD

Christians have historically understood the Branch prophecies in light of Jesus Christ.

The Old Testament presents the Branch as:

Davidic.

Righteous.

Royal.

Restorative.

Jesus fulfills the hope of the righteous King who comes from David’s line.

Yet Isaiah 4 also speaks directly to Zion’s future cleansing and restoration.

Both themes belong in the prophecy.

Spiritual Principle

The hope of restoration ultimately rests not in human leaders but in God’s Messiah.

XVII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

How does Isaiah 4 connect with Isaiah 3?

Verse 1 continues the social consequences of the judgment described at the end of Chapter 3.

Question 2

Why are seven women pictured seeking one man?

The image emphasizes the devastating population loss and social disorder resulting from judgment.

Question 3

What is the Branch of the Lord?

It is prophetic imagery associated with God’s promised righteous ruler and the hope ultimately fulfilled in the Messiah.

Question 4

Why is the Branch called beautiful and glorious?

Because God’s promised King stands in complete contrast to the corrupt leadership and pride condemned in previous chapters.

Question 5

Who are those called holy?

Those who remain in Zion after God’s purifying judgment and belong to His restored people.

Question 6

What does it mean to be “recorded among the living”?

It emphasizes God’s knowledge, preservation, and recognition of those who belong to Him.

Question 7

What does God wash away?

The moral filth and bloodguilt of Jerusalem.

Question 8

Why are judgment and fire mentioned in connection with cleansing?

Because God’s holiness exposes, removes, and refines corruption.

Question 9

What does the cloud and fire imagery recall?

It recalls God’s presence with Israel during the wilderness journey after the Exodus.

Question 10

What does God’s glory become?

A covering over His restored people.

Question 11

What does the shelter in verse 6 communicate?

It communicates protection, refuge, and security under God’s presence.

Question 12

What should Isaiah 4 change in us?

It should cause us to trust God’s Messiah, desire holiness, accept God’s cleansing work, and seek security in His presence rather than temporary human supports.

XVIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 4 asks several searching questions.

What Disgrace Do I Want God to Remove?

Am I trying merely to hide shame?

Or am I allowing God to deal with its root?

Is Christ My Hope?

When human leaders fail, where does my confidence rest?

Do I Desire Holiness?

Do I merely want relief from consequences?

Or do I want to become spiritually clean?

What Needs to Be Washed Away?

Is there:

Pride?

Bitterness?

Impurity?

Dishonesty?

Idolatry?

Unforgiveness?

Am I Resisting God’s Refining Work?

What if the fire is removing something that cannot remain?

Where Do I Look for Protection?

Money?

People?

Possessions?

Or God’s presence?

Do I Trust God in the Storm?

Do I believe He can be my refuge when circumstances become difficult?

XIX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Does Not Merely Rescue Us From Judgment—He Cleanses Us for His Presence”

Isaiah 4 does not stop at:

Survival.

It moves toward:

Holiness.

God cleanses His people because He intends to dwell among them.

Principle:

God’s purpose is not merely to make life easier; it is to make His people holy and bring them near to Himself.

XX. FROM DISGRACE TO GLORY

Verse 1 speaks of:

Disgrace.

Verse 5 speaks of:

Glory.

That movement summarizes the chapter.

Human sin produces shame.

God’s restoring work produces glory.

Spiritual Principle

God can write a different ending than sin appears to promise.

XXI. THE BRANCH AFTER THE CUTTING DOWN

The previous chapters have described judgment as though everything proud is being cut down.

Yet:

A Branch appears.

That picture is powerful.

Something living comes from apparent devastation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never mistake pruning for the end of God’s purpose.

XXII. HOLY AFTER JUDGMENT

The survivors are not simply called:

Fortunate.

Lucky.

Strong.

They are called:

Holy.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest evidence of restoration is not prosperity.

It is transformed character.

XXIII. THE SPIRIT OF JUDGMENT AND FIRE

Fire can:

Destroy.

But fire can also:

Refine.

Purify.

Remove contamination.

Isaiah uses this image to show God’s holy work.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God loves His people too deeply to leave destructive impurities untouched.

XXIV. THE GLORY AS A COVERING

Earlier chapters exposed:

Sin.

Pride.

Shame.

Now God provides a covering of glory.

This is not a covering that hides unrepented corruption.

The cleansing occurs first.

Then:

Glory covers.

Spiritual Principle

God’s covering follows God’s cleansing.

XXV. CLOUD BY DAY, FIRE BY NIGHT

This imagery reaches backward to Exodus.

Israel once traveled through the wilderness under God’s presence.

Now Isaiah presents Zion under the same kind of divine care.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who guided His people before remains able to guide His people again.

XXVI. SHELTER IN THE HEAT

The desert sun could be dangerous.

Shade represented life and relief.

God Himself provides covering.

Spiritual Principle

God understands the environments that exhaust His people and provides grace appropriate to the need.

XXVII. REFUGE IN THE STORM

Verse 6 does not promise:

No storms.

It promises:

Refuge.

This distinction matters.

The Christian life is not the elimination of every storm.

It is life under the care of God in every storm.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith does not say:

“No storm can come.”

Faith says:

“No storm can remove me from God’s care.”

XXVIII. FIVE GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 4

1. Disgrace

Judgment leaves painful consequences.

2. Hope

The Branch appears.

3. Holiness

The remnant is set apart.

4. Cleansing

Sin and bloodguilt are washed away.

5. Presence

God covers His people with glory and refuge.

Key Truth

God’s restoration moves His people from shame toward holiness and from exposure toward His presence.

XXIX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 4 is only six verses long.

But its message is enormous.

Chapter 3 leaves Jerusalem devastated.

Pride has been stripped away.

Leadership has failed.

War has taken lives.

The city mourns.

Then:

God speaks hope.

The Branch appears.

This teaches us something essential.

Judgment is not stronger than God’s promise.

Failure is not stronger than God’s grace.

Human corruption cannot cancel God’s purpose.

The Branch will come.

God will preserve a remnant.

But restoration requires cleansing.

God does not say:

“Let us simply forget the sin.”

He washes away:

Filth.

Bloodguilt.

Corruption.

He uses:

Judgment.

Fire.

That may sound severe.

But holiness matters.

Then something remarkable happens.

God’s presence returns.

Cloud by day.

Fire by night.

Glory as a covering.

Shade from the heat.

Refuge from the storm.

The people who had lost nearly everything receive something greater:

God Himself with them.

That is the heart of restoration.

God does not merely give:

Better circumstances.

He gives:

His presence.

Therefore:

Do not fear God’s cleansing work.

Let Him remove what is corrupt.

Do not cling to the dross.

Do not confuse discipline with abandonment.

Do not believe devastation means God has lost control.

Look for the Branch.

Look for His promise.

Seek holiness.

Welcome cleansing.

Rest beneath His glory.

And remember:

The God who leads through the wilderness is also the God who shelters from the storm.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that judgment is not the final word for those who belong to You.

Thank You for the hope of the Branch.

Thank You for Jesus Christ, the righteous King and promised Messiah.

When human leaders fail, remind us that Christ does not fail.

When earthly kingdoms shake, remind us that His kingdom remains.

Father, make us holy.

Do not merely remove difficult circumstances.

Remove sin.

Wash away:

Pride.

Impurity.

Bitterness.

Dishonesty.

Selfishness.

Idolatry.

Anything that keeps us from walking closely with You.

Refine us.

If there is dross in our lives, remove it.

Give us humility to receive Your correction.

Thank You that You know those who belong to You.

Thank You that our names are known in heaven.

Help us live as people set apart for You.

Father, cover us with Your presence.

Be our cloud in the day.

Be our fire in the night.

Guide us when we do not know the way.

Protect us when danger surrounds us.

Give us shade when the heat becomes exhausting.

Give us refuge when storms come.

Give us a hiding place when life feels overwhelming.

Teach us that the greatest blessing is not always the removal of difficulty.

Sometimes the greatest blessing is knowing:

You are with us.

Restore what sin has damaged.

Remove disgrace.

Create holiness.

Bring glory.

And let our lives testify that the God who judges sin is also the God who cleanses, restores, protects, and saves.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"In that day the Branch of the Lord will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of those in Israel who survive." — Isaiah 4:2**

Central Truth

After judgment removes pride and corruption, God promises to reveal the glory of His Branch, preserve a holy remnant, cleanse Zion from sin and bloodguilt, and cover His restored people with His guiding, protecting, and sheltering presence.

Isaiah 4 in One Sentence

Isaiah moves from the shame left by judgment to the hope of the glorious Branch, showing that God will preserve a holy remnant, wash away Zion's corruption, restore His presence, and become the shelter and refuge of His cleansed people.

Isaiah Chapter 5 — The Song of the Vineyard and Woes of Judgment

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 5 begins as a love song.

Isaiah sings about a vineyard carefully planted and lovingly prepared by its owner.

The owner chooses:

A fertile hillside.

Good soil.

The best vines.

A protective watchtower.

A winepress.

Everything necessary for fruitfulness is provided.

The owner reasonably expects:

Good grapes.

Instead:

The vineyard produces wild, bitter fruit.

Isaiah then reveals the meaning.

The vineyard is:

Israel.

The pleasant planting is:

Judah.

God looked for:

Justice.

But found:

Oppression.

He looked for:

Righteousness.

But heard:

Cries of distress.

The tragedy of Isaiah 5 is not that God failed to provide.

It is that His people failed to produce the fruit that His grace should have produced.

The chapter then gives a series of solemn woes against:

Greed.

Self-indulgence.

Drunkenness.

Spiritual blindness.

Defiant sin.

Moral reversal.

Intellectual pride.

Corrupt justice.

Isaiah describes people who not only sin but pull sin behind them like a loaded cart.

They mock God.

They challenge Him to act.

They call:

Evil good.

Good evil.

Darkness light.

Light darkness.

They become wise in their own eyes.

Finally, God announces judgment.

The vineyard that rejected His care will lose its protection.

The people who ignored His Word will experience the consequences of rejecting it.

God summons a distant nation as an instrument of judgment.

The chapter ends with:

Roaring.

Darkness.

Distress.

The central truth of Isaiah 5 is:

God faithfully cultivates His people and rightly expects the fruit of justice and righteousness; when His grace is answered with greed, rebellion, moral confusion, pride, and rejection of His Word, judgment follows because the Holy God will always uphold His righteousness.

I. ISAIAH SINGS ABOUT GOD'S VINEYARD

Isaiah 5:1 — A Vineyard on a Fertile Hillside

> **"Now I will sing for the One I love, a song about His vineyard. My beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hillside."**

Isaiah begins with tenderness.

This is:

A love song.

The vineyard belongs to:

His beloved.

The location is ideal.

It is planted on fertile ground.

Nothing about the setting explains the coming failure.

The owner has chosen a place where fruit should grow.

Cross References

Matthew 21:33

Jesus told of a landowner who planted a vineyard, placed a protective wall around it, prepared a winepress, built a tower, leased it to tenants, and went away.

Psalm 80:8

God brought Israel out of Egypt like a vine and planted the people in the land after driving out the nations before them.

Psalm 80:9

God prepared the ground for His vine, allowed it to take deep root, and caused it to spread through the land.

Spiritual Principle

God does not demand fruit without first providing what is needed for fruitfulness.

Key Truth

Grace comes before expectation.

II. GOD PROVIDED EVERYTHING THE VINEYARD NEEDED

Isaiah 5:2 — Good Preparation, Bad Fruit

> **“He dug it up and cleared it of stones, planted it with the best vines, built a watchtower in it, and cut out a winepress as well. He expected it to yield good grapes, but it produced only wild, bitter ones.”**

The owner does everything properly.

He:

Clears the ground.

Removes stones.

Plants quality vines.

Builds protection.

Prepares for harvest.

His expectation is reasonable.

But the vineyard produces:

Wild grapes.

Bitter fruit.

The problem is not the owner.

The problem is the vineyard.

Cross References

Matthew 21:34

When harvest time arrived, the owner sent servants to the tenants to receive the fruit that rightly belonged to him.

Jeremiah 2:21

God says He planted Israel like a choice vine from pure stock, yet the people became corrupted like a strange and wild vine.

Mark 12:1

Jesus told of a man who planted a vineyard, protected it, prepared a winepress, built a tower, and entrusted it to tenants.

Spiritual Principle

Privilege increases responsibility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The more faithfully God has cultivated your life, the more seriously you should ask what fruit your life is producing.

III. GOD CALLS JUDAH TO JUDGE THE CASE

Isaiah 5:3 — “Judge Between Me and My Vineyard”

> **“Now, you people of Jerusalem and Judah, judge between Me and My vineyard.”**

God invites the people to examine the evidence.

This is a courtroom challenge.

Who failed?

The owner?

Or:

The vineyard?

The answer will become obvious.

Cross References

Micah 6:1

God calls His people to hear His case and summons creation to witness the charges He brings against them.

Micah 6:2

The mountains and ancient foundations of the earth are called to listen as God presents His covenant case against Israel.

Jeremiah 2:5

God asks what wrong their ancestors found in Him that caused them to wander after worthless things and become worthless themselves.

Spiritual Principle

God’s judgment is never based on ignorance.

He knows the full case.

IV. GOD ASKS WHAT MORE HE COULD HAVE DONE

Isaiah 5:4 — “What More Could I Have Done?”

> **“What more could I have done for My vineyard that I have not already done? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad ones?”**

This is one of the most searching questions in the chapter.

God provided:

Covenant.

Law.

Priests.

Prophets.

Land.

Protection.

Correction.

Mercy.

Yet the people produced rebellion.

Cross References

Jeremiah 2:21

God reminds Israel that He planted them as a choice and faithful vine, yet they turned into a corrupted vine.

Micah 6:3

God asks His people what He has done against them or how He has wearied them, inviting them to answer His complaint.

Jeremiah 8:19

The people cry from afar, but God asks why they provoked Him with idols and foreign vanities.

Spiritual Principle

When fruit is absent, we should not immediately blame God’s provision.

Key Truth

God is never deficient in faithfulness.

V. GOD REMOVES THE VINEYARD'S PROTECTION

Isaiah 5:5 — The Hedge Is Removed

> **"Now I will tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will remove its hedge, and it will be destroyed; I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled."**

The vineyard enjoyed protection.

Now that protection is removed.

This is judgment.

God allows the consequences of rebellion to reach the people who refused His care.

Cross References

Psalm 80:12

The psalmist asks why God allowed the vineyard's walls to be broken so that passersby could plunder its fruit.

Psalm 80:13

Wild animals ravage the unprotected vineyard and destroy what once flourished.

Nehemiah 1:3

Jerusalem's survivors were in great distress because the city wall had been broken and its gates burned.

Spiritual Principle

One severe form of judgment is when God allows people to experience what life looks like without protections they once took for granted.

VI. THE VINEYARD BECOMES A WASTELAND

Isaiah 5:6 — No Rain, No Cultivation

> **“I will make it a wasteland. It will not be pruned or cultivated, and briers and thorns will grow there. I will command the clouds not to rain on it.”**

The cultivated vineyard becomes:

Abandoned.

Overgrown.

Dry.

Fruitless.

What once received careful attention now experiences desolation.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:23

God warned that persistent rebellion could result in the skies becoming like bronze and the ground like iron because rain would fail.

Deuteronomy 28:24

Instead of life-giving rain, drought and dust would fall upon the land under covenant judgment.

Amos 4:7

God withheld rain from Israel as a warning, yet the people still refused to return to Him.

Spiritual Principle

Fruitlessness eventually has consequences.

VII. ISAIAH EXPLAINS THE VINEYARD

Isaiah 5:7 — God Looked for Justice

> **“For the vineyard of the Lord of Heaven’s Armies is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are His pleasant planting. He looked for justice, but found only oppression; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.”**

Now the parable is interpreted.

Vineyard:

Israel.

Pleasant planting:

Judah.

Expected fruit:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Actual fruit:

Oppression.

Distress.

This verse is the key to the vineyard song.

Cross References

John 15:1

Jesus declares Himself to be the true vine and identifies His Father as the One who tends and cultivates the vineyard.

Jeremiah 2:21

God says He planted Israel as a choice vine, yet the nation became corrupt.

Micah 6:8

God has shown humanity what is good: practice justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with Him.

Spiritual Principle

God evaluates His people by the fruit their lives produce.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Religious identity without righteous fruit does not satisfy God.

VIII. WOE TO THOSE WHO HOARD LAND AND PROPERTY

Isaiah 5:8 — House Added to House

> **“Woe to those who add house to house and join field to field until there is no room left, and you live alone in the land.”**

The first woe concerns greed.

Powerful people expand their estates at the expense of others.

They accumulate:

Houses.

Land.

Property.

Until others are squeezed out.

Cross References

Micah 2:2

The wicked covet fields and seize them, desire houses and take them, and oppress families by stealing their inheritance.

1 Kings 21:19

God condemned Ahab for arranging Naboth’s death so that he could take possession of Naboth’s vineyard.

Habakkuk 2:9

Woe is pronounced upon the person who builds wealth through dishonest gain in an attempt to establish personal security.

Spiritual Principle

Ownership becomes sinful when greed destroys justice.

IX. LARGE HOUSES WILL BECOME EMPTY

Isaiah 5:9 — Luxury Turns to Desolation

> **“The Lord Almighty has declared in My hearing: ‘Surely many houses will be ruined, large and beautiful houses left empty.’”**

They accumulated property.

God says:

It will become empty.

Their security becomes desolation.

Cross References

Amos 5:11

Because the wealthy oppressed the poor and built expensive houses through injustice, God warned they would not enjoy the homes they constructed.

Zephaniah 1:13

Wealth gained in rebellion would be plundered, houses left deserted, and vineyards planted without the owners enjoying their fruit.

Micah 6:16

Because the people followed corrupt practices, God warned that their land and accomplishments would become objects of devastation and shame.

Spiritual Principle

What greed accumulates can disappear quickly.

X. THE LAND WILL PRODUCE ALMOST NOTHING

Isaiah 5:10 — A Failed Harvest

> **“Ten acres of vineyard will yield only a few gallons of wine, and a large amount of seed will yield only a small measure of grain.”**

The land produces far less than expected.

This reverses normal blessing.

They wanted abundance through greed.

God sends scarcity.

Cross References

Haggai 1:6

The people planted much but harvested little, ate without satisfaction, drank without fullness, and earned wages that seemed to disappear.

Leviticus 26:20

God warned that persistent rebellion would make human labor fruitless because the land would not yield its produce.

Deuteronomy 28:38

Israel could sow much seed yet gather little because judgment would consume the expected harvest.

Spiritual Principle

More possessions do not guarantee more satisfaction.

XI. WOE TO THOSE CONTROLLED BY DRINK

Isaiah 5:11 — Chasing Strong Drink

> **“Woe to those who rise early in the morning to chase after strong drink, who stay up late at night inflamed with wine.”**

Their entire day revolves around intoxication.

Morning:

Drink.

Night:

Drink.

Pleasure has become bondage.

Cross References

Proverbs 23:29

Scripture asks who experiences sorrow, conflict, complaints, unnecessary wounds, and clouded eyes because of destructive drinking.

Proverbs 23:30

The answer is those who linger over wine and continually seek stronger drink.

Amos 6:6

The self-indulgent drink excessively and use expensive luxuries while remaining unconcerned about the spiritual ruin around them.

Spiritual Principle

Pleasure becomes slavery when it begins controlling the schedule, appetite, judgment, and priorities of life.

XII. THEIR PARTIES HAVE EVERYTHING EXCEPT GOD

Isaiah 5:12 — Music Without Spiritual Awareness

> **“They have harps and lyres, tambourines, flutes, and wine at their feasts, but they pay no attention to the Lord’s work, and they do not see what His hands have done.”**

Their parties have:

Music.

Instruments.

Wine.

Entertainment.

What is missing?

Attention to God.

They are spiritually distracted by pleasure.

Cross References

Amos 6:5

The self-indulgent entertain themselves with music while imagining themselves secure.

Amos 6:6

They drink and enjoy luxury but refuse to grieve over the spiritual destruction of God’s people.

Psalm 28:5

Because people refuse to consider the Lord’s works and what His hands have done, they place themselves under judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Enjoyment becomes dangerous when it makes us spiritually blind.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A life can be full of entertainment and empty of awareness of God.

XIII. GOD’S PEOPLE GO INTO EXILE FOR LACK OF KNOWLEDGE

Isaiah 5:13 — Ignorance With Consequences

> **“Therefore My people will go into exile for lack of knowledge. Their nobles will die of hunger, and the masses will be parched with thirst.”**

This is not lack of information alone.

It is rejection of the knowledge of God.

They had:

Law.

Prophets.

Warnings.

But refused understanding.

Cross References

Hosea 4:6

God says His people are destroyed for lack of knowledge because they rejected His truth and refused faithful instruction.

Hosea 4:1

God charges the land because truth, faithful love, and knowledge of Him have disappeared.

Jeremiah 4:22

God describes His people as foolish because they do not know Him; they are clever in doing evil but do not know how to do good.

Spiritual Principle

Rejecting truth eventually produces consequences.

XIV. THE GRAVE OPENS WIDE

Isaiah 5:14 — Death Swallows the Proud

> **“Therefore the grave has enlarged its appetite and opened its mouth wide. Into it will descend their nobles, their multitudes, their noisy revelers, and all who celebrate with joy.”**

The image is frightening.

The grave is pictured as expanding.

It swallows:

Nobles.

Crowds.

Revelers.

Those who thought the party would never end.

Cross References

Proverbs 27:20

Death and destruction are never satisfied, just as human desire can continually demand more.

Habakkuk 2:5

The proud person is pictured as enlarging desire like the grave, never satisfied with what has already been obtained.

Numbers 16:30

In Korah’s rebellion, the ground opened and swallowed rebels alive as a dramatic act of divine judgment.

Spiritual Principle

A life devoted entirely to pleasure cannot escape mortality.

XV. HUMAN PRIDE WILL BE BROUGHT LOW

Isaiah 5:15 — The Arrogant Humbled

> **“People will be brought low, everyone humbled; the eyes of the arrogant brought down.”**

This continues the theme from Isaiah 2.

Human pride rises.

God brings it low.

Cross References

Proverbs 16:18

Pride prepares the way for destruction, and arrogance comes before a fall.

1 Peter 5:5

God opposes the proud but gives grace to those who humble themselves.

1 Peter 5:6

Believers are called to humble themselves under God’s mighty hand so that He may exalt them at the proper time.

Spiritual Principle

Humility chosen today is better than humiliation forced tomorrow.

XVI. GOD IS EXALTED THROUGH JUSTICE

Isaiah 5:16 — The Holy God Shows Himself Holy

> **“But the Lord Almighty will be exalted by His justice, and the Holy God will show Himself holy by His righteousness.”**

Human beings are humbled.

God is exalted.

His judgment reveals:

Justice.

Holiness.

Righteousness.

Cross References

Leviticus 10:3

God declares that those who approach Him must recognize His holiness and that His glory must be honored before the people.

Ezekiel 38:23

God says He will demonstrate His greatness and holiness so that the nations recognize who He is.

Psalm 99:4

God is a powerful King who loves justice and establishes what is right.

Spiritual Principle

God’s holiness is revealed both through mercy and through righteous judgment.

Key Truth

God never becomes unjust in order to appear loving.

XVII. THE RUINS OF THE RICH BECOME PASTURE

Isaiah 5:17 — Sheep Among the Ruins

> **“Then sheep will graze as in their own pasture; lambs will feed among the ruins of the rich.”**

The once wealthy estates become abandoned.

Sheep graze where:

Luxury.

Power.

Greed.

Once dominated.

Cross References

Zephaniah 2:6

Places once occupied by proud cities will become grazing land for shepherds and flocks.

Micah 7:14

God is asked to shepherd His people and feed them in good pasture under His care.

Ezekiel 34:14

God promises to feed His flock in good pasture and provide them with safe grazing places.

Spiritual Principle

Human monuments to greed do not last forever.

XVIII. WOE TO THOSE WHO DRAG SIN BEHIND THEM

Isaiah 5:18 — Ropes of Wickedness

> **“Woe to those who drag their sins along with cords of deceit, who pull wickedness with ropes like a cart.”**

This is powerful imagery.

They do not merely fall into sin.

They:

Drag it.

Pull it.

Attach themselves to it.

They work to carry wickedness forward.

Cross References

Proverbs 5:22

The wicked person becomes trapped by his own sins and held by the cords created by his wrongdoing.

Jeremiah 5:25

The people’s sins have held back good things and separated them from blessings they might otherwise have enjoyed.

Hosea 11:4

God says He drew His people with cords of kindness and bands of love, treating them tenderly rather than oppressively.

Spiritual Principle

Repeated sin can become a bondage we ourselves strengthen.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin first appears as something you carry.

Eventually it becomes something that carries you where you never intended to go.

XIX. THE PEOPLE MOCK GOD'S WARNING

Isaiah 5:19 — "Let God Hurry"

> **"They mock, saying, 'Let God hurry and do His work so we can see it! Let the plan of the Holy One of Israel come true, so we may know it!'"**

The people have moved beyond disobedience.

Now they mock.

They challenge God:

Do it.

Show us.

Prove it.

They treat divine warning as entertainment.

Cross References

2 Peter 3:3

Peter warns that mockers will come, following their own desires and ridiculing God's promises.

2 Peter 3:4

They will ask where the promised coming is and use apparent delay as an excuse for unbelief.

Jeremiah 17:15

Jeremiah's hearers mockingly ask where the Lord's threatened word is and challenge it to come true.

Spiritual Principle

God’s patience should never be mistaken for inability.

XX. WOE TO THOSE WHO REVERSE MORALITY

Isaiah 5:20 — Calling Evil Good

> **“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.”**

This is one of Isaiah’s strongest moral warnings.

The people do not merely practice evil.

They rename it.

Moral language is reversed.

Evil becomes:

Good.

Good becomes:

Evil.

Darkness becomes:

Light.

Cross References

Malachi 2:17

The people weary God by treating evildoers as though they were good and by questioning whether God truly judges rightly.

Proverbs 17:15

God condemns both the person who declares the guilty innocent and the one who declares the innocent guilty.

Micah 3:2

Corrupt leaders are described as people who hate what is good and love what is evil.

Spiritual Principle

One of the deepest forms of rebellion is changing the labels while keeping the sin.

Key Truth

Truth does not change merely because culture changes vocabulary.

XXI. WOE TO THE SELF-PROCLAIMED WISE

Isaiah 5:21 — Wise in Their Own Eyes

> **“Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight.”**

Self-confidence has become intellectual pride.

They do not merely think.

They believe they cannot be corrected.

Cross References

Proverbs 3:7

Do not consider yourself wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and turn away from evil.

Proverbs 26:12

There is more hope for a fool than for a person who is convinced of his own wisdom.

Romans 12:16

Believers are instructed not to become proud or wise in their own estimation but to live humbly with others.

Spiritual Principle

Wisdom begins when we recognize that we can be wrong.

XXII. THEY ARE HEROES AT DRINKING

Isaiah 5:22 — A Perverted Definition of Greatness

> **“Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine, and champions at mixing drinks.”**

Isaiah uses sarcasm.

Heroes?

Champions?

Not in:

Courage.

Justice.

Faithfulness.

But drinking.

The culture celebrates the wrong achievements.

Cross References

Proverbs 20:1

Wine can mock and strong drink can produce disorder, and the person controlled by them does not walk wisely.

Proverbs 23:20

Do not join those whose lives are dominated by excessive drinking and indulgence.

Proverbs 23:21

Drunkenness and uncontrolled appetite produce poverty, laziness, and ruin.

Spiritual Principle

A culture reveals its values by the people it calls heroes.

XXIII. JUSTICE IS SOLD FOR A BRIBE

Isaiah 5:23 — Guilty Acquitted, Innocent Condemned

> **“Who acquit the guilty for a bribe, but deny justice to the innocent.”**

The moral reversal of verse 20 enters the courtroom.

Those with money can manipulate justice.

The innocent suffer.

The guilty escape.

Cross References

Exodus 23:8

God forbids judges from accepting bribes because gifts can blind clear judgment and corrupt the words of righteous people.

Proverbs 17:15

Declaring the guilty innocent or condemning the righteous is detestable before God.

Micah 3:11

Judges take bribes, religious leaders serve for personal gain, and yet they falsely assume God’s presence guarantees their safety.

Spiritual Principle

Justice that can be purchased is no longer justice.

XXIV. REJECTING GOD’S WORD BRINGS DESTRUCTION

Isaiah 5:24 — Roots Rot and Blossoms Blow Away

> **“Therefore, as fire devours stubble and flames consume dry grass, so their roots will rot and their blossoms will blow away like dust; for they have rejected the law of the Lord Almighty and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.”**

Isaiah identifies the root issue.

They rejected:

God’s law.

God’s Word.

That rejection produces destruction at both ends of the plant.

Roots:

Rot.

Blossoms:

Disappear.

Nothing remains secure.

Cross References

Malachi 4:1

The coming day of judgment is compared to a burning furnace in which arrogant wickedness becomes like dry stubble.

Matthew 3:12

John the Baptist describes God separating the grain from the chaff and burning what is worthless with unquenchable fire.

Amos 2:4

Judah is judged because the people rejected the Lord’s law, refused His commands, and followed falsehood.

Spiritual Principle

The visible collapse begins with invisible rejection of truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God’s Word is despised at the root, corruption eventually appears in the fruit.

XXV. GOD’S ANGER REMAINS AGAINST PERSISTENT REBELLION

Isaiah 5:25 — His Hand Is Still Raised

> **“Therefore the Lord’s anger burns against His people; He has raised His hand against them and struck them down. The mountains shake, and dead bodies lie like refuse in the streets. Yet for all this, His anger is not turned away; His hand is still raised to strike.”**

Judgment has already begun.

Yet rebellion remains so serious that further judgment follows.

The imagery is severe because sin is severe.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 29:24

Other nations would ask why the Lord brought such devastating judgment upon the land.

Deuteronomy 29:25

The answer would be that the people abandoned their covenant with the Lord and turned away from faithful obedience.

Amos 4:10

God describes severe judgments sent as warnings, yet repeatedly says the people still did not return to Him.

Spiritual Principle

Persistent rebellion can continue even under warning.

XXVI. GOD SUMMONS A DISTANT NATION

Isaiah 5:26 — The Army Comes Swiftly

> **“He lifts up a banner for the nations far away; He whistles for them from the ends of the earth. They come swiftly and speedily.”**

God is sovereign even over nations Judah fears.

He can summon them as instruments of judgment.

The image is effortless:

God whistles.

They come.

Cross References

Habakkuk 1:6

God announces that He is raising up a fierce foreign nation to move across lands and seize territories.

Deuteronomy 28:49

Israel was warned that rebellion could bring a distant nation swiftly against them like an eagle descending upon prey.

Jeremiah 5:15

God warns that He will bring a powerful and ancient nation from far away against His rebellious people.

Spiritual Principle

World powers are never outside God’s sovereignty.

XXVII. THE INVADING ARMY IS FULLY PREPARED

Isaiah 5:27 — No One Grows Tired

> **“Not one of them grows tired or stumbles; no one slumbers or sleeps. Their belts are tight, their sandals strapped on.”**

The army is pictured as:

Alert.

Disciplined.

Prepared.

Unstoppable.

There is no weakness in the advancing force.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:49

God warned that a distant nation could descend rapidly against Israel like an eagle.

Deuteronomy 28:50

The invading nation would be fierce, showing little respect for age and little compassion for vulnerability.

Joel 2:7

An invading army is pictured as disciplined warriors running forward without breaking formation.

Spiritual Principle

When judgment finally arrives, opportunities previously ignored may be gone.

XXVIII. THEIR WEAPONS ARE READY

Isaiah 5:28 — Bows Strung and Wheels Like a Whirlwind

> **“Their arrows are sharp, all their bows strung. Their horses’ hooves are like flint; their chariot wheels like a whirlwind.”**

Everything about the army communicates:

Speed.

Strength.

Readiness.

Danger.

Cross References

Jeremiah 5:16

The enemy’s weapons are described as deadly, and its warriors as powerful.

Habakkuk 1:8

The invading horses are described as swift and fierce, moving rapidly toward their prey.

Habakkuk 1:9

The army advances violently and gathers captives with overwhelming speed.

Spiritual Principle

God’s warnings are merciful because judgment, once unleashed, can move quickly.

XXIX. THE ENEMY SEIZES ITS PREY

Isaiah 5:29 — Like a Lion

> **“Their roar is like that of a lion; they roar like young lions. They growl and seize their prey; they carry it off with no one to rescue.”**

The army is compared to:

A lion.

Young lions.

Once prey is caught:

No rescuer appears.

Judah’s false securities cannot deliver.

Cross References

Jeremiah 5:6

Because of persistent rebellion, destructive enemies are pictured like wild animals waiting to tear and devour.

1 Peter 5:8

The devil is compared to a roaring lion searching for someone to devour, so believers are called to remain alert.

Amos 3:4

A lion does not roar over prey without reason; the roar signals that something has been seized.

Spiritual Principle

False security is most clearly exposed when the danger it promised to prevent finally arrives.

XXX. THE CHAPTER ENDS IN DARKNESS

Isaiah 5:30 — Darkness and Distress

> **“In that day they will roar over them like the roaring of the sea. And if one looks across the land, there is only darkness and distress; even the light will be darkened by clouds.”**

Isaiah 5 begins with:

A fertile vineyard.

It ends with:

Darkness.

Distress.

Why?

The vineyard rejected its Owner.

The people rejected God’s Word.

The result is darkness.

Cross References

Amos 5:18

Those who casually desire the day of the Lord are warned that for the rebellious it will be darkness rather than light.

Amos 5:20

The day of the Lord is described as deep darkness without brightness for those under judgment.

Joel 2:2

The approaching day of the Lord is pictured as a day of darkness, gloom, clouds, and overwhelming judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Rejecting God’s light eventually leaves people in darkness.

Key Truth

The chapter begins with opportunity and ends with consequence.

XXXI. THE SIX WOES OF ISAIAH 5

1. Woe Against Greed — Verse 8

They accumulate property without concern for others.

Lesson:

Greed asks, “How much more can I get?” rather than, “How faithfully am I using what God has given?”

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2. Woe Against Self-Indulgent Drunkenness — Verse 11

Their lives revolve around pleasure.

Lesson:

Anything pursued without restraint can become a master.

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3. Woe Against Defiant Sin — Verse 18

They drag sin behind them like a cart.

Lesson:

Habitual sin becomes bondage.

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4. Woe Against Moral Reversal — Verse 20

They call evil good.

Lesson:

Changing moral vocabulary cannot change moral reality.

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5. Woe Against Intellectual Pride — Verse 21

They are wise in their own eyes.

Lesson:

A person who cannot be corrected cannot easily become wiser.

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6. Woe Against Corrupt Justice — Verses 22–23

Pleasure and bribery corrupt judgment.

Lesson:

When truth can be purchased, society loses justice.

XXXII. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 5

1. God Expects Fruit from His People

Israel was carefully planted and cultivated.

Principle:

Grace should produce righteousness.

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2. God Has the Right to Examine the Fruit

The vineyard belongs to Him.

Principle:

God does not merely ask whether we are planted; He asks what we are producing.

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3. Greed Destroys Community

House joins house.

Field joins field.

Others are pushed aside.

Principle:

Possession without justice becomes oppression.

---

4. Pleasure Can Blind the Soul

Music and feasting consume their attention.

Principle:

Pleasure is dangerous when it makes God irrelevant.

---

5. Sin Becomes Bondage

People drag sin with ropes.

Principle:

What begins voluntarily can become enslaving.

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6. Moral Confusion Is Serious Rebellion

Evil is called good.

Principle:

Truth cannot be reversed by popular opinion.

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7. God’s Holiness Will Prevail

People are humbled.

God is exalted.

Principle:

God’s standards do not fall when human standards fall.

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8. Judgment Can Come Swiftly

The distant army arrives quickly.

Principle:

God’s patience should lead to repentance before consequences arrive.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 5 TEACHES ABOUT FRUITFULNESS

The vineyard had every opportunity.

God expected:

Justice.

Righteousness.

That is fruit.

Fruitfulness means God’s grace becomes visible through changed life.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The question is not only:

“What has God given me?”

The question is:

“What am I producing with what God has given me?”

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 5 TEACHES ABOUT GREED

Greed expands without satisfaction.

House.

Then another house.

Field.

Then another field.

Greed says:

More.

More.

More.

Spiritual Principle

Greed has no natural stopping point because possessions cannot satisfy the spiritual hunger beneath it.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 5 TEACHES ABOUT PLEASURE

Music is not condemned.

Food is not condemned.

Celebration is not condemned.

The problem is:

They ignore God.

Key Truth

A good gift becomes spiritually dangerous when enjoying it causes us to forget the Giver.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 5 TEACHES ABOUT KNOWLEDGE

Verse 13 says the people perish for lack of knowledge.

They had information.

What they lacked was obedient knowledge of God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Biblical knowledge is not merely information retained.

It is truth received, believed, and lived.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 5 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

Pride appears in several forms:

Economic pride.

Intellectual pride.

Moral pride.

Social pride.

God brings it all low.

Spiritual Principle

Pride changes clothing, but its heart remains the same:

“I do not need God to tell me how to live.”

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 5 TEACHES ABOUT MORAL TRUTH

Verse 20 is central.

Good and evil are not created by:

Votes.

Trends.

Preferences.

Human language.

God determines moral truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Calling darkness light may change the label on the darkness.

It does not make the darkness shine.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 5 TEACHES ABOUT JUSTICE

God expected justice.

Instead:

The poor are oppressed.

Land is hoarded.

Judges accept bribes.

The innocent suffer.

Spiritual Principle

A society cannot claim righteousness while justice is sold to the highest bidder.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 5 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S WORD

Verse 24 gives the root problem:

They rejected God’s law.

They despised His Word.

Everything else grows from that rejection.

Key Truth

When God’s Word loses authority, human desire rushes to fill the empty throne.

XLI. WHAT ISAIAH 5 TEACHES ABOUT JUDGMENT

Judgment comes because God is:

Holy.

Just.

Righteous.

It is not uncontrolled anger.

It is the response of the Holy One to persistent rebellion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s patience is long.

It is not permission.

XLII. THE VINEYARD PRINCIPLE

A vineyard requires:

Planting.

Pruning.

Protection.

Water.

Cultivation.

But ultimately:

Fruit.

God is not cultivating lives merely so they can look religious.

He seeks fruit.

Spiritual Principle

The purpose of cultivation is fruitfulness.

XLIII. WILD GRAPES

The vineyard produces something.

But it is the wrong fruit.

That distinction matters.

Activity is not necessarily fruitfulness.

A person can be:

Busy.

Religious.

Successful.

Visible.

And still produce bitter fruit.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse activity for God with fruit that resembles God.

XLIV. “WHAT MORE COULD I HAVE DONE?”

God’s question in verse 4 should cause serious reflection.

What has God given?

Scripture.

Grace.

Conviction.

Teaching.

Prayer.

Fellowship.

Opportunities.

Warnings.

Spiritual Principle

God’s blessings create responsibility.

XLV. DRAGGING SIN WITH ROPES

Verse 18 pictures intentional attachment to sin.

Some people do not merely stumble.

They organize life around keeping sin close.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot walk freely with God while deliberately tying yourself to what God tells you to release.

XLVI. WHEN PEOPLE MOCK GOD’S PATIENCE

Verse 19 shows people daring God to act.

They interpret delay as weakness.

Scripture repeatedly warns against this mistake.

Spiritual Principle

Delayed judgment is an opportunity for repentance, not evidence that judgment is impossible.

XLVII. CALLING EVIL GOOD

Moral confusion becomes especially dangerous when wrong is not merely tolerated but celebrated as right.

Isaiah says:

Woe.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When a culture loses the ability to distinguish light from darkness, it loses the ability to recognize where it is going.

XLVIII. WISE IN THEIR OWN EYES

Verse 21 addresses self-sufficient reasoning.

The problem is not intelligence.

The problem is refusing correction.

Spiritual Principle

Real wisdom remains teachable before God.

XLIX. THE HOLY GOD WILL BE EXALTED

Humanity is humbled.

God is exalted.

That is the direction of the chapter.

Key Truth

History does not end with human pride having the final word.

God’s holiness does.

L. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What does the vineyard represent?

The vineyard represents the house of Israel, with Judah described as God’s pleasant planting.

Question 2

What did God expect from His vineyard?

He expected the fruit of justice and righteousness.

Question 3

What did He find instead?

He found oppression and heard the cries of people suffering injustice.

Question 4

What does verse 4 teach about God’s care?

It teaches that God had faithfully provided everything necessary for fruitfulness.

Question 5

What happens when the vineyard refuses to produce good fruit?

Its protection is removed and it becomes desolate.

Question 6

What is wrong with adding house to house and field to field?

The context condemns greedy accumulation that pushes others aside and turns property into an instrument of oppression.

Question 7

What is wrong with the parties in verses 11–12?

The central problem is that pleasure consumes their attention while they ignore God and His work.

Question 8

What does it mean to drag sin with cords?

It pictures deliberately remaining attached to wickedness until sin becomes a heavy bondage.

Question 9

What does calling evil good mean?

It means reversing God’s moral categories and presenting wrongdoing as righteousness.

Question 10

Why is being wise in our own eyes dangerous?

Because pride makes correction difficult and causes human judgment to replace dependence upon God.

Question 11

Why does God judge the courts?

Because judges accept bribes, protect the guilty, and deny justice to innocent people.

Question 12

What is the root reason for judgment in verse 24?

The people rejected God’s law and despised the Word of the Holy One of Israel.

Question 13

Who summons the invading army?

God does.

Isaiah presents the foreign power as operating under God’s sovereign judgment.

Question 14

How does the chapter end?

It ends in darkness and distress as the consequences of rebellion finally arrive.

LI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 5 asks several searching questions.

What Fruit Is My Life Producing?

Justice?

Righteousness?

Love?

Holiness?

Or:

Bitterness?

Selfishness?

Pride?

What Has God Invested in Me?

How much truth have I received?

How many warnings?

How many opportunities?

What am I doing with them?

Is Greed Controlling Me?

When is enough:

Enough?

Does Pleasure Distract Me from God?

Can I enjoy good things without forgetting Him?

Am I Dragging a Sin I Should Release?

What have I tied to myself?

Have I Redefined Anything God Has Clearly Defined?

Am I calling:

Evil good?

Good evil?

Am I Wise in My Own Eyes?

Can Scripture correct me?

Can godly counsel correct me?

Do I Care About Justice?

Do I treat people differently based on:

Money?

Influence?

Status?

Do I Take God’s Warnings Seriously?

Or do I assume His patience means He will never act?

LII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Cultivates His People Because He Intends His People to Bear Fruit”

God did not plant the vineyard as decoration.

He wanted fruit.

He:

Prepared it.

Protected it.

Cultivated it.

Then:

He looked for grapes.

Principle:

Every blessing from God carries an opportunity to produce something that honors God.

LIII. GOD LOOKED FOR JUSTICE

This phrase reveals God’s concern for public righteousness.

He did not merely ask:

Did they attend worship?

Did they sing?

Did they sacrifice?

He looked at how people treated one another.

Spiritual Principle

Faith that never affects justice has not produced the fruit Isaiah describes.

LIV. GOD LOOKED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

Righteousness includes a life aligned with God.

Instead of righteousness:

God hears cries.

Someone is being hurt.

Someone is oppressed.

Someone is denied justice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Your spirituality is partly revealed by what happens to other people when they encounter your character.

LV. THE DANGER OF A LIFE BUILT ONLY AROUND PLEASURE

The people have:

Music.

Parties.

Wine.

Entertainment.

But no awareness of God.

A life can be:

Full.

Busy.

Exciting.

And spiritually empty.

Spiritual Principle

Do not let noise become a substitute for meaning.

LVI. TRUTH DOES NOT NEED OUR PERMISSION TO REMAIN TRUE

Verse 20 warns against redefining morality.

Human beings can:

Rename.

Reframe.

Reinterpret.

But they cannot make darkness become light.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Truth is not determined by how many people agree with it.

LVII. REJECTING THE WORD DESTROYS THE ROOT

Verse 24 says:

Roots rot.

Blossoms disappear.

Why?

God’s Word has been rejected.

Roots determine what eventually appears above ground.

Spiritual Principle

Long before public collapse becomes visible, private rejection of truth may already be destroying the roots.

LVIII. THE ARMY GOD WHISTLES FOR

The chapter ends with a striking demonstration of God’s sovereignty.

A distant nation appears powerful.

Yet Isaiah says:

God calls it.

The empire believes it moves by its own strength.

God remains sovereign over history.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The strongest nation on earth is still not stronger than the God who rules history.

LIX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 5 begins with love.

That is important.

God lovingly plants a vineyard.

He does not begin with destruction.

He begins with:

Preparation.

Provision.

Protection.

Expectation.

Then He looks for fruit.

That gives the chapter its force.

God had been good to His people.

Their rebellion was not caused by lack of divine faithfulness.

They responded to grace with:

Greed.

Pleasure.

Arrogance.

Injustice.

Moral confusion.

Rejection of God’s Word.

The same question comes to us:

What are we doing with what God has given us?

If God has given:

Truth.

Grace.

Opportunity.

Teaching.

Conviction.

Forgiveness.

Then what fruit is growing?

God still looks for:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Faithfulness.

Holiness.

Do not become a vineyard full of religious leaves but bitter grapes.

Isaiah also warns us against the progression of sin.

Sin may begin as:

A desire.

Then become:

A habit.

Then:

A rope.

Then:

A cart being dragged through life.

Then people begin:

Defending it.

Mocking correction.

Renaming it.

Calling evil:

Good.

That is dangerous.

Do not wait until sin must be defended before surrendering it.

Break the cord early.

Listen to God’s Word.

Remain teachable.

Reject the pride that says:

“I know better.”

Reject the culture that says:

“Truth is whatever we decide.”

God remains:

Holy.

Just.

Righteous.

Isaiah 5 also reminds us that judgment may appear delayed.

But delay is mercy.

The people mocked:

“Let God hurry.”

Eventually:

He did.

The distant army came.

Therefore:

Do not challenge God’s patience.

Receive it as an opportunity to repent.

And remember the central image:

You are not merely occupying soil.

God desires fruit.

So ask:

What is growing?

What is God receiving from the life He has cultivated?

Let the answer increasingly become:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Truth.

Humility.

Faithfulness.

Fruit worthy of the One who planted the vineyard.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for planting, protecting, correcting, and caring for Your people.

Thank You for every blessing You have placed into our lives.

Forgive us when You have looked for good fruit and found:

Pride.

Greed.

Selfishness.

Bitterness.

Injustice.

Disobedience.

Father, make our lives fruitful.

Produce in us:

Righteousness.

Justice.

Mercy.

Faithfulness.

Holiness.

Love.

Teach us not merely to receive Your blessings but to respond to them faithfully.

Guard us from greed.

Keep possessions from possessing us.

Teach us contentment.

Protect us from building life around pleasure while ignoring Your work.

Let us enjoy Your gifts without forgetting the Giver.

Father, break every cord of sin.

If we are dragging something You have commanded us to release, give us strength to let it go.

Do not allow habitual sin to become deeper bondage.

Keep our hearts sensitive to Your correction.

Protect us from mocking Your warnings.

Protect us from confusing patience with permission.

Give us repentance while mercy still calls.

Father, guard our minds from moral confusion.

Help us never call:

Evil good.

Good evil.

Darkness light.

Light darkness.

Anchor us in Your truth.

Keep us from being wise in our own eyes.

Make us:

Teachable.

Humble.

Correctable.

Dependent upon Your Word.

Father, establish justice.

Protect innocent people from corrupt systems.

Give leaders integrity.

Keep money, status, and influence from purchasing decisions that should belong to truth.

Remind us that You are the Holy One of Israel.

You will be exalted through righteousness and justice.

May Your Word take deep root in us.

May our roots remain healthy.

May our blossoms remain.

May our fruit honor You.

When You look at the vineyard of our lives, may You find the fruit You desire.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"For the vineyard of the Lord of Heaven's Armies is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are His pleasant planting. He looked for justice, but found only oppression; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress." — Isaiah 5:7**

Central Truth

God faithfully cultivates His people and rightly expects the fruit of justice and righteousness, but persistent greed, self-indulgence, defiant sin, moral reversal, pride, corruption, and rejection of His Word bring judgment because the Holy God will always uphold truth and righteousness.

Isaiah 5 in One Sentence

Isaiah compares Israel and Judah to a carefully cultivated vineyard that produced bitter fruit, then pronounces judgment upon greed, drunkenness, defiant sin, moral confusion, pride, and corrupted justice, warning that rejection of God's Word ultimately brings darkness and judgment while God Himself remains exalted in holiness and righteousness.

Isaiah Chapter 6 — Isaiah's Vision and Commission

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 6 is one of the most majestic passages in the entire Old Testament.

Isaiah is given a vision of God.

He sees:

A throne.

A King.

A temple filled with glory.

Seraphim surrounding the throne.

Smoke filling the temple.

Foundations shaking.

And he hears heaven declaring:

> **"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Heaven's Armies."**

Everything changes when Isaiah sees God as He truly is.

Before Isaiah can become the prophet who declares:

"Woe to others,"

he first says:

“Woe is me!”

The holiness of God exposes the sinfulness of Isaiah.

He becomes especially aware of his:

Unclean lips.

And the unclean lips of the people around him.

Yet God does not leave Isaiah condemned.

A seraph takes a burning coal from the altar.

The coal touches Isaiah’s lips.

Then comes the declaration:

“Your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.”

Only after:

Vision.

Conviction.

Cleansing.

Does Isaiah hear the call:

“Whom shall I send?”

Isaiah responds:

“Here am I. Send me!”

The order is important.

Isaiah sees God.

Isaiah sees himself.

Isaiah is cleansed.

Isaiah hears God.

Isaiah volunteers.

Isaiah is commissioned.

But his assignment will not be easy.

He will preach to people who repeatedly hear but refuse to understand.

His ministry will expose their hardened condition and confirm judgment upon persistent rebellion.

Isaiah asks:

> **“Lord, how long?”**

The answer is sobering.

Until:

Cities are ruined.

Houses are abandoned.

The land is devastated.

The people are scattered.

Yet even then:

God preserves hope.

A stump remains.

And within that stump:

> **“The holy seed.”**

Judgment will not destroy God’s promises.

The central truth of Isaiah 6 is:

A true encounter with the holiness of God exposes human sinfulness, leads to cleansing by divine grace, produces willing service, and equips God’s servant to proclaim His Word faithfully even when the message is rejected, because God will preserve His holy purposes through a faithful remnant.

I. ISAIAH SEES THE LORD UPON HIS THRONE

Isaiah 6:1 — The King Still Reigns

> **“In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of His robe filled the temple.”**

The chapter begins with a historical marker:

King Uzziah died.

An earthly king has died.

But Isaiah sees another King.

The Lord is:

Alive.

Seated.

Reigning.

High.

Exalted.

Uzziah’s throne is empty.

God’s throne is not.

This contrast is essential.

Human rulers come and go.

God remains King.

The train of His robe fills the temple, emphasizing the overwhelming majesty of His royal presence.

Cross References

2 Chronicles 26:23

Uzziah died and was buried with his ancestors, though because of the disease that marked the end of his life he was buried in a field associated with the royal burial place, and his son Jotham became king after him.

John 12:41

John explains that Isaiah said these things because he saw Christ’s glory and spoke concerning Him.

Revelation 4:2

John was immediately caught up in the Spirit and saw a throne established in heaven with One seated upon that throne.

Spiritual Principle

When earthly stability disappears, heaven’s throne remains occupied.

Key Truth

Kings die.

Governments change.

God still reigns.

II. THE SERAPHIM STAND BEFORE THE LORD

Isaiah 6:2 — Reverence in the Presence of God

> **“Above Him stood the seraphim, each with six wings: with two they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew.”**

Isaiah sees heavenly beings called:

Seraphim.

Each has six wings.

Two cover the face.

Two cover the feet.

Two are used to fly.

Their posture communicates:

Reverence.

Humility.

Readiness.

Even sinless heavenly beings do not behave casually in the presence of God’s holiness.

Cross References

Revelation 4:8

The living creatures around God’s throne each have six wings and continually worship God day and night, declaring His holiness, almighty power, eternal existence, and coming rule.

Ezekiel 1:11

The heavenly creatures had wings extended upward, wings touching one another, and other wings covering their bodies as they served in God’s presence.

Exodus 25:20

The cherubim above the mercy seat were to spread their wings upward, overshadowing the cover, while facing one another with their attention directed toward the mercy seat.

Spiritual Principle

The closer we understand God’s holiness, the less casually we approach Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Reverence is not distance from God.

It is the proper response to recognizing who God truly is.

III. HEAVEN DECLARES GOD THREE TIMES HOLY

Isaiah 6:3 — “Holy, Holy, Holy”

> **“And they called to one another: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Heaven’s Armies; the whole earth is filled with His glory.’”**

The central attribute emphasized is:

Holiness.

Not merely:

Holy.

But:

Holy.

Holy.

Holy.

This threefold declaration intensifies the truth.

God is completely:

Pure.

Set apart.

Morally perfect.

Majestic.

Unlike anything created.

The seraphim also proclaim:

> **“The whole earth is filled with His glory.”**

God’s glory cannot be confined to one temple.

His glory fills creation.

Cross References

Revelation 4:8

The heavenly creatures never cease declaring that the Lord God Almighty is holy, holy, holy—the eternal God who was, who is, and who is coming.

Habakkuk 2:14

The earth will one day be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as completely as waters cover the sea.

Psalm 72:19

Blessed forever is God’s glorious name, and may the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and amen.

Spiritual Principle

Holiness is not merely something God possesses.

God is holy in His very nature.

Key Truth

Everything about God is untouched by moral corruption.

IV. THE TEMPLE SHAKES AT THE SOUND OF WORSHIP

Isaiah 6:4 — Smoke Fills the Temple

> **“The foundations of the thresholds shook at the sound of their voices, and the temple was filled with smoke.”**

Heavenly worship is not presented as weak or casual.

The foundations shake.

Smoke fills the temple.

The scene communicates:

Power.

Majesty.

Awe.

Divine presence.

Isaiah is overwhelmed by the reality of God.

Cross References

Exodus 19:18

Mount Sinai was covered with smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire; the smoke rose like smoke from a furnace, and the entire mountain shook violently.

Revelation 15:8

The heavenly temple was filled with smoke from the glory and power of God, and no one could enter until His judgments were completed.

Acts 4:31

After the believers prayed, the place where they were gathered was shaken, they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke God's Word with boldness.

Spiritual Principle

The presence of God should never be reduced to something ordinary.

V. ISAIAH SEES HIS OWN SINFULNESS

Isaiah 6:5 — "Woe Is Me!"

> **"Then I cried, 'Woe is me! I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Heaven's Armies.'"**

Isaiah has already pronounced:

Woe.

Against sin.

Now:

He pronounces woe upon himself.

The closer Isaiah gets to God's holiness, the more clearly he sees his own sin.

He does not compare himself with:

Other prophets.

Other Israelites.

Wicked rulers.

Idolaters.

He compares himself with:

God’s holiness.

And he says:

> **“I am ruined.”**

He especially recognizes his:

Unclean lips.

That is significant for a prophet whose ministry will depend upon words.

Cross References

Exodus 33:20

God told Moses that no human being could behold the fullness of His unveiled presence and survive such an encounter.

Job 42:6

After gaining a deeper awareness of God, Job rejected his former presumption and humbled himself deeply in repentance.

Luke 5:8

After witnessing Jesus’ miraculous power, Peter fell before Him and cried out that he was a sinful man unworthy of such holiness.

Spiritual Principle

A genuine vision of God produces humility, not spiritual pride.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The person who sees God more clearly usually sees himself more honestly.

VI. A SERAPH BRINGS A COAL FROM THE ALTAR

Isaiah 6:6 — Cleansing Comes from God’s Provision

> **“Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar.”**

Isaiah cannot cleanse himself.

He confesses.

God provides cleansing.

The coal comes from:

The altar.

The altar points toward:

Sacrifice.

Atonement.

God’s provision for guilt.

The seraph moves toward Isaiah because grace originates with God.

Cross References

Jeremiah 1:9

The Lord reached out, touched Jeremiah’s mouth, and declared that He had placed His words in the prophet’s mouth.

Revelation 8:5

An angel took fire from the heavenly altar, placed it in a container, and cast it toward the earth, followed by thunder, voices, lightning, and an earthquake.

Leviticus 16:12

On the Day of Atonement, the high priest was instructed to take burning coals from the altar before the Lord, together with fragrant incense, as part of his sacred service.

Spiritual Principle

The sinner does not manufacture cleansing.

God provides it.

VII. ISAIAH’S GUILT IS REMOVED

Isaiah 6:7 — “Your Sin Is Atoned For”

> **“He touched my mouth with it and said, ‘See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.’”**

Isaiah confessed:

Unclean lips.

God cleanses:

His lips.

The declaration is complete.

Guilt:

Taken away.

Sin:

Atoned for.

God does not merely tell Isaiah:

“Try harder.”

He deals with the guilt.

Cross References

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, God is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and cleanse us from every kind of unrighteousness.

Zechariah 3:4

God commanded that Joshua’s filthy garments be removed and declared that his guilt had been taken away, after which he was clothed in clean garments.

Psalm 51:2

David asks God to wash him thoroughly from guilt and cleanse him completely from sin.

Spiritual Principle

God does not call forgiven people to live under guilt He has removed.

Key Truth

Conviction says:

“You have sinned.”

Grace says:

“Your guilt can be taken away.”

VIII. ISAIAH HEARS THE CALL OF GOD

Isaiah 6:8 — “Here Am I. Send Me!”

> **“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’”**

Notice the word:

“Then.”

After:

Vision.

Conviction.

Cleansing.

Then:

Commission.

Isaiah is no longer saying:

“Woe is me.”

Now:

“Send me.”

Forgiven people become available people.

He does not first ask:

Where?

How long?

Will people listen?

Will it be safe?

He says:

Here I am.

Cross References

Exodus 3:11

When God called Moses, Moses asked who he was that he should go to Pharaoh and bring Israel out of Egypt.

Acts 9:15

The Lord declared that Saul was His chosen instrument to carry the name of Jesus before Gentiles, kings, and the people of Israel.

Romans 10:15

People cannot preach God’s message unless they are sent, and Scripture celebrates those who carry the good news to others.

Spiritual Principle

Cleansing should lead to availability.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not merely ask:

“What can God do for me?”

Ask:

“Where can God send me?”

IX. ISAIAH IS COMMISSIONED TO A HARD-HEARTED PEOPLE

Isaiah 6:9 — Hearing Without Understanding

> **“He said, ‘Go and tell this people: “Keep listening, but do not understand; keep looking, but do not perceive.”’”**

Isaiah receives a difficult commission.

His preaching will not initially produce widespread repentance.

The people have repeatedly rejected truth.

Isaiah’s ministry will expose that hardened condition.

This passage does not mean that God delights in people being spiritually blind.

Rather, persistent rejection has reached a point where the proclamation of truth itself becomes part of judicial hardening.

The same Word that softens a receptive heart can confirm a rebellious heart in the path it repeatedly chooses.

Cross References

Matthew 13:14

Jesus explains that Isaiah’s prophecy was being fulfilled in people who continually heard the truth without truly understanding and saw God’s works without spiritually recognizing them.

Mark 4:12

Jesus explains that parabolic teaching both reveals truth to receptive hearers and leaves resistant hearers confronting the consequences of their refusal to receive it.

John 12:40

John applies Isaiah’s words to people who persistently refused to believe despite witnessing Jesus’ signs, describing their blindness and hardness under divine judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Repeatedly rejecting truth can make the heart increasingly resistant to truth.

Key Truth

Do not assume you can continually refuse God today and remain equally sensitive to His voice tomorrow.

X. THE PEOPLE’S HEARTS HAVE BECOME DULL

Isaiah 6:10 — Seeing, Hearing, and Understanding

> **“Make the hearts of this people dull, make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, turn and be healed.”**

Three areas are mentioned:

Eyes.

Ears.

Heart.

The problem is comprehensive spiritual insensitivity.

They see physically.

But not spiritually.

They hear sounds.

But resist truth.

The heart refuses understanding.

Isaiah's preaching will reveal and intensify the consequences of that longstanding resistance.

Cross References

Matthew 13:15

Jesus describes people whose hearts have grown dull, whose ears scarcely hear, and whose eyes they have closed, so that they do not see, hear, understand, turn, and receive healing.

Acts 28:27

Paul quotes Isaiah to describe people who have become spiritually dull, refusing to hear and see in a way that would lead them to understand, turn, and experience God's healing.

John 9:39

Jesus says His coming brings a kind of judgment in which those recognizing their blindness may receive sight while those confidently claiming spiritual sight expose their blindness.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual blindness often deepens when people repeatedly close their eyes to truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every response to God's Word matters because every response helps shape the condition of the heart.

XI. ISAIAH ASKS HOW LONG

Isaiah 6:11 — Faithfulness Through a Long Ministry

> **"Then I asked, 'Lord, how long?' And He answered, 'Until the cities lie ruined and without inhabitant, until the houses are deserted and the land is completely desolate.'"**

Isaiah understands the severity of his assignment.

He asks:

How long?

The answer:

Until judgment runs its course.

This means Isaiah must continue preaching even when:

People reject him.

Visible results are small.

Judgment approaches.

Faithfulness, not popularity, will define his ministry.

Cross References

Psalm 13:1

David cries out to God, asking how long it will seem that the Lord has forgotten him and hidden His face.

Revelation 6:10

The martyrs cry out to the sovereign and holy Lord asking how long it will be until He judges evil and brings justice.

Habakkuk 1:2

Habakkuk asks how long he must cry out about violence and injustice before God visibly intervenes.

Spiritual Principle

God’s servants may not always know how long difficult assignments will last.

Key Truth

Faithfulness is not measured by how quickly circumstances change.

XII. THE PEOPLE WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE LAND

Isaiah 6:12 — The Land Forsaken

> **“Until the Lord has sent everyone far away, and the land is utterly forsaken.”**

Judgment includes:

Exile.

Removal.

Desolation.

The land God had given becomes emptied because the people rejected the covenant Lord who gave it.

Cross References

2 Kings 25:21

After Jerusalem’s fall, the Babylonians executed leading prisoners at Riblah, and Judah was carried away from its land into exile.

Deuteronomy 28:64

Moses warned that continued covenant rebellion could result in Israel being scattered among nations from one end of the earth to the other.

Leviticus 26:33

God warned that persistent disobedience would result in His people being scattered among the nations while their land became desolate.

Spiritual Principle

Persistent rebellion can cost us blessings we once assumed could never be lost.

XIII. A HOLY SEED WILL REMAIN

Isaiah 6:13 — The Stump After the Tree Is Cut Down

> **“Yet a tenth will remain in it, but it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak tree whose stump remains when it is cut down. So the holy seed will be the stump in the land.”**

Judgment is severe.

But not absolute.

A stump remains.

That stump contains:

Life.

Hope.

Future growth.

God preserves:

A remnant.

A holy seed.

The tree is cut down.

But God’s promises are not dead.

Cross References

Romans 11:5

Paul explains that even in times of widespread unbelief, God preserves a remnant chosen according to His grace.

Isaiah 10:22

Though Israel may be as numerous as the sand of the sea, only a remnant will return through the judgment God has appointed.

Ezra 9:8

Ezra recognizes that God had shown grace by preserving a remnant, giving His people a secure place, bringing light to their eyes, and allowing them a measure of revival after bondage.

Spiritual Principle

God can preserve life beneath what looks completely cut down.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never mistake a stump for the end of God’s story.

XIV. SEVEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 6

1. God Remains King When Earthly Kings Die

Uzziah dies.

God remains on His throne.

Principle:

Human instability never produces instability in heaven.

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2. God Is Absolutely Holy

The seraphim proclaim:

> **“Holy, holy, holy.”**

Principle:

Everything about God is morally perfect and completely worthy of reverence.

---

3. Seeing God Clearly Produces Humility

Isaiah does not boast.

He confesses.

Principle:

The closer we come to God’s holiness, the less room remains for spiritual pride.

---

4. Sin Must Be Cleansed Before Service

Isaiah’s lips are cleansed before he is commissioned.

Principle:

God prepares the messenger before sending the message.

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5. Cleansing Should Produce Availability

Isaiah says:

> **“Send me!”**

Principle:

Grace should make us willing servants.

---

6. Faithful Ministry Does Not Guarantee Popular Response

Isaiah will preach to resistant people.

Principle:

Success before God is measured by faithfulness, not merely visible results.

---

7. God Preserves a Remnant

A stump remains.

Principle:

Judgment never causes God to lose control of His redemptive purposes.

XV. WHAT ISAIAH 6 TEACHES ABOUT GOD

Isaiah sees God as:

King.

Lord.

High.

Exalted.

Holy.

Glorious.

Sovereign.

Isaiah’s theology begins with God Himself.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You will never understand yourself correctly until you begin by seeing God correctly.

XVI. WHAT ISAIAH 6 TEACHES ABOUT HOLINESS

The seraphim do not merely say:

Powerful.

Powerful.

Powerful.

They say:

> **“Holy, holy, holy.”**

Holiness stands at the center of the vision.

Spiritual Principle

God’s holiness means He cannot be measured by fallen human standards.

XVII. WHAT ISAIAH 6 TEACHES ABOUT SIN

Isaiah’s immediate response is:

> **“Woe is me.”**

He sees sin differently after seeing God.

Key Truth

We often minimize sin because we compare ourselves with other sinners rather than with the holiness of God.

XVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 6 TEACHES ABOUT CONFESSION

Isaiah names the problem.

He does not say:

“I have made a few mistakes.”

He says:

> **“I am a man of unclean lips.”**

Confession becomes specific.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

General confession can sometimes become a way of avoiding specific repentance.

XIX. WHAT ISAIAH 6 TEACHES ABOUT CLEANSING

God responds to Isaiah’s confession with cleansing.

The coal touches precisely the area Isaiah confessed:

His lips.

Spiritual Principle

God’s grace addresses the real guilt of the sinner.

XX. WHAT ISAIAH 6 TEACHES ABOUT ATONEMENT

The coal comes from the altar.

The altar is connected with sacrifice.

Then Isaiah hears:

> **“Your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.”**

Atonement deals with guilt before a holy God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Forgiveness is not God pretending sin never mattered.

It is God providing a way for guilt to be removed.

XXI. WHAT ISAIAH 6 TEACHES ABOUT CALLING

God asks:

> **“Whom shall I send?”**

Isaiah responds:

> **“Here am I.”**

He makes himself available.

Spiritual Principle

The first qualification for many acts of service is willingness to obey God.

XXII. WHAT ISAIAH 6 TEACHES ABOUT MISSION

Isaiah is not sent with his own message.

God says:

> **“Go and tell.”**

The prophet is:

Sent.

The message is:

God’s.

Key Truth

The servant does not own the message.

He delivers it.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 6 TEACHES ABOUT HARDENING

Verses 9–10 are difficult but important.

The people have repeatedly resisted God.

The prophetic Word now becomes part of their judgment.

Truth reveals what is already in their hearts.

Repeated refusal produces increasing hardness.

This does not make God morally responsible for their rebellion.

Their hardening occurs in the context of persistent resistance to His revelation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The same sunlight that softens wax can harden clay.

The difference is not in the light but in what receives it.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 6 TEACHES ABOUT PREACHING

Isaiah will not preach merely because people respond positively.

He will preach because:

God sent him.

That distinction matters.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness to God cannot be determined solely by audience reaction.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 6 TEACHES ABOUT DISCOURAGEMENT

Isaiah asks:

> **“How long?”**

Faithful servants sometimes become weary.

Scripture does not hide that reality.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Asking “How long?” is not always unbelief.

Sometimes it is the prayer of someone committed to obeying through a difficult assignment.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 6 TEACHES ABOUT JUDGMENT

Judgment is extensive.

Cities:

Ruined.

Houses:

Empty.

Land:

Desolate.

People:

Removed.

God takes persistent rebellion seriously.

Spiritual Principle

The patience of God should never cause us to think His holiness has changed.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 6 TEACHES ABOUT THE REMNANT

The chapter could have ended with:

Desolation.

Instead:

A stump remains.

The holy seed survives.

Key Truth

God always retains sovereignty over the future of His promises.

XXVIII. THE THRONE ABOVE THE EMPTY THRONE

The historical context matters.

Uzziah has died.

Judah may wonder:

What now?

Isaiah sees:

God.

On the throne.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When the throne you can see becomes empty, remember the throne you cannot see is still occupied.

XXIX. “HOLY, HOLY, HOLY”

This is the sound of heaven.

Heaven does not become bored with God’s holiness.

The seraphim continually proclaim it.

Spiritual Principle

If heaven never tires of declaring God’s holiness, God’s people should never reduce worship to routine.

XXX. “WOE IS ME”

Isaiah’s first response is not:

“Look at those sinful people.”

He says:

“I am unclean.”

That is the proper order.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before God sends us to confront sin in others, He often confronts sin in us.

XXXI. THE UNCLEAN LIPS OF A PROPHET

Isaiah identifies his lips.

That is significant.

A prophet serves with words.

The very instrument God intends to use must be purified.

Spiritual Principle

God often cleanses the area He intends especially to use.

XXXII. THE COAL FROM THE ALTAR

The coal is hot.

Cleansing is not pictured as casual.

Yet its purpose is not destruction.

It is purification.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some of God’s cleansing work may be uncomfortable, but His goal is usefulness rather than ruin.

XXXIII. “YOUR GUILT IS TAKEN AWAY”

Isaiah does not cleanse himself.

He receives cleansing.

The declaration comes from heaven.

Spiritual Principle

The authority to remove guilt belongs to God.

XXXIV. “HERE AM I”

Isaiah does not say:

“There he is.”

Or:

“Send someone else.”

He says:

Here I am.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Revival becomes practical when “Lord, bless me” becomes “Lord, use me.”

XXXV. “SEND ME”

Isaiah volunteers before hearing the details of the assignment.

That is surrendered obedience.

Spiritual Principle

True surrender gives God the right to determine the assignment.

XXXVI. MINISTRY WITHOUT APPLAUSE

Isaiah’s commission would not make him popular.

He would speak truth to people who resisted it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse applause with anointing or rejection with failure.

The question is:

Did God send you?

Were you faithful?

XXXVII. THE DANGER OF REPEATED REJECTION

They have:

Eyes.

But will not see.

Ears.

But will not hear.

Hearts.

But will not understand.

Repeated refusal becomes spiritual insensitivity.

Spiritual Principle

Every time God speaks, the heart moves somewhere.

Toward:

Softness.

Or:

Hardness.

XXXVIII. “LORD, HOW LONG?”

Some assignments are:

Long.

Difficult.

Unrewarding by visible measurements.

Isaiah still obeys.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not quit merely because obedience has lasted longer than expected.

XXXIX. THE STUMP STILL LIVES

The tree looks finished.

Cut down.

Burned.

Reduced.

But the stump remains.

And the stump contains:

A holy seed.

Spiritual Principle

God specializes in preserving hope where human eyes see only remains.

XL. CHRIST IN ISAIAH’S VISION

John 12:41 gives the Christian reader an extraordinary perspective on Isaiah 6.

John connects Isaiah’s vision with the glory of Christ.

The King Isaiah sees is therefore deeply significant for New Testament Christology.

Jesus is not merely:

A teacher.

A prophet.

A moral example.

He shares in divine glory.

Key Truth

The Christ revealed in the New Testament is the glorious Lord before whom heaven cries:

> **“Holy, holy, holy.”**

XLI. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What happened in the year King Uzziah died?

Isaiah received an overwhelming vision of the Lord seated upon His heavenly throne.

Question 2

Why is Uzziah’s death significant?

It contrasts the mortality of earthly kings with the unchanging reign of God.

Question 3

What do the seraphim proclaim?

They proclaim that the Lord is holy, holy, holy and that the whole earth is filled with His glory.

Question 4

Why do the seraphim cover their faces?

Their posture communicates profound reverence before God’s overwhelming holiness and majesty.

Question 5

What happens when Isaiah sees God?

He becomes immediately conscious of his own sinfulness and cries:

> **“Woe is me!”**

Question 6

Why does Isaiah mention his lips?

As a prophet, his lips would be central to his ministry, yet he recognizes that even the instrument God will use needs cleansing.

Question 7

Who provides Isaiah’s cleansing?

God does.

The cleansing comes from the altar and is applied by the seraph.

Question 8

What is the result of the cleansing?

Isaiah’s guilt is removed and his sin is atoned for.

Question 9

What happens immediately after Isaiah is cleansed?

He hears God’s call for a messenger.

Question 10

How does Isaiah respond?

He says:

> **“Here am I. Send me!”**

Question 11

Would Isaiah’s ministry produce immediate national repentance?

No.

His message would largely encounter resistance and reveal the people’s hardened spiritual condition.

Question 12

Why does Isaiah ask, “How long?”

He wants to know how long this difficult ministry and coming judgment will continue.

Question 13

What happens to Judah?

Cities are devastated, houses abandoned, the land becomes desolate, and people are removed.

Question 14

Does the chapter end without hope?

No.

A stump remains.

The holy seed shows that God preserves a remnant and His redemptive purposes continue.

XLII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 6 asks several searching questions.

How Big Is My View of God?

Is God merely:

A helper?

An idea?

A religious subject?

Or do I understand Him as:

Holy.

Majestic.

Sovereign.

King?

When I See God’s Holiness, Do I Examine Myself?

Do I immediately think about everyone else’s sins?

Or do I say:

“Woe is me”?

What Area of My Life Needs Cleansing?

My:

Words?

Thoughts?

Attitudes?

Habits?

Motives?

Have I Received God’s Forgiveness?

Am I still carrying guilt God has offered to remove?

Am I Available to God?

If God asks:

“Whom shall I send?”

What is my answer?

Do I Need to Know Every Detail Before I Obey?

Or can I say:

“Send me”?

Can I Remain Faithful When People Do Not Respond?

Do I measure obedience only by visible results?

Has Repeated Exposure to Truth Made Me Softer or Harder?

Do I still tremble at God’s Word?

Am I Discouraged by What Looks Cut Down?

Can I trust that God may still preserve a holy seed in the stump?

XLIII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Before God Uses the Servant’s Lips, He Cleanses the Servant’s Lips”

Isaiah wanted to speak for God.

But first:

God dealt with Isaiah.

Vision came before commission.

Conviction came before service.

Cleansing came before sending.

Principle:

God is concerned not only with the message we deliver but with the condition of the messenger delivering it.

XLIV. SEE GOD FIRST

Many spiritual problems begin because our view of God has become too small.

Isaiah’s transformation begins not by looking more deeply at himself.

It begins by seeing:

The Lord.

Spiritual Principle

A high view of God produces a more accurate view of everything else.

XLV. CONVICTION BEFORE COMMISSION

God does not begin by telling Isaiah:

“Go preach.”

First Isaiah sees:

Holiness.

Then:

Sin.

Then:

Grace.

Only then:

Mission.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Service without holiness can become performance.

Holiness turns service into worship.

XLVI. CLEANSED PEOPLE SHOULD BECOME WILLING PEOPLE

Isaiah’s guilt is removed.

His next words are:

> **“Send me.”**

Grace produces gratitude.

Gratitude produces surrender.

Spiritual Principle

We do not serve God to earn cleansing.

We serve because cleansing has been graciously given.

XLVII. WHEN THE MESSAGE IS REJECTED

Isaiah’s assignment reminds us that not every faithful ministry produces impressive statistics.

A preacher can:

Preach truth.

Love people.

Remain faithful.

And still encounter resistance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Our responsibility is faithfulness to the message.

The response belongs ultimately between the hearer and God.

XLVIII. THE HOLY SEED

The chapter ends with hope hidden in judgment.

A tree can lose:

Branches.

Leaves.

Trunk.

Yet:

A stump remains.

Within it:

Life.

Spiritual Principle

God can begin restoration from what appears to be almost nothing.

XLIX. THE GREAT MOVEMENT OF ISAIAH 6

Isaiah 6 moves through five great stages:

1. Revelation

“I saw the Lord.”

2. Conviction

“Woe is me.”

3. Cleansing

“Your guilt is taken away.”

4. Commission

“Whom shall I send?”

5. Surrender

“Here am I. Send me!”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

This is one of Scripture’s clearest patterns for spiritual service:

See God.

See your sin.

Receive cleansing.

Hear the call.

Go.

L. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 6 begins with the death of a king.

But Isaiah quickly learns:

The true King is not dead.

The Lord remains:

Seated.

High.

Exalted.

Holy.

Glorious.

That truth is still important whenever life becomes uncertain.

Leaders change.

People die.

Institutions fail.

Circumstances shift.

But:

God remains on His throne.

Isaiah then sees himself.

The prophet who has been speaking against Judah's sin suddenly says:

"Woe is me!"

That is what genuine encounters with God do.

They do not first make us proud of how spiritual we are.

They humble us.

They expose what needs cleansing.

Then grace appears.

The coal touches the lips.

Guilt is removed.

Sin is atoned for.

Isaiah is no longer merely:

Convicted.

He is:

Cleansed.

Then he hears:

"Whom shall I send?"

And the man who moments earlier felt ruined now says:

"Here am I. Send me!"

That is the transformation grace produces.

From:

Woe is me.

To:

Send me.

But the assignment will be difficult.

Isaiah must preach whether people listen or not.

That teaches us:

Do not measure faithfulness only by results.

Some people plant.

Some water.

God gives the increase.

Your responsibility is to obey.

And when ministry feels discouraging:

Remember the stump.

When everything seems cut down:

Remember the holy seed.

God is not finished because circumstances look finished.

He preserves His purposes.

Therefore:

See God high and lifted up.

Recognize His holiness.

Confess your sin honestly.

Receive His cleansing gratefully.

Listen for His call.

And when He asks:

> **“Whom shall I send?”**

May your heart be ready to answer:

> **“Here am I. Send me!”**

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are holy.

You are high and exalted.

You are King above every king.

Earthly rulers rise and fall, but Your throne remains forever.

Give us a fresh vision of Your greatness.

Do not allow us to reduce You to something small, ordinary, or manageable.

Teach us to worship You with:

Reverence.

Awe.

Humility.

Love.

Father, when we see Your holiness, help us see ourselves honestly.

Expose what is unclean in us.

Especially cleanse our lips.

Forgive:

Harsh words.

Dishonest words.

Gossip.

Criticism.

Prideful words.

Impure speech.

Careless speech.

Wash us completely.

Thank You that You do not merely expose guilt.

You remove guilt.

Thank You for atonement.

Thank You for forgiveness.

Thank You that cleansing is available through Your grace.

Father, make us available.

When You ask:

“Whom shall I send?”

Give us courage to say:

“Here am I.”

Keep us from requiring every detail before obeying.

Teach us to trust Your assignment.

Give preachers, teachers, missionaries, pastors, and every servant of Your Word strength to remain faithful when people refuse to listen.

Protect us from measuring ministry entirely by:

Numbers.

Popularity.

Applause.

Recognition.

Help us measure by obedience.

Keep our hearts soft.

Never let repeated exposure to Your truth make us spiritually dull.

Give us:

Eyes that see.

Ears that hear.

Hearts that understand.

And when circumstances appear ruined, remind us of the stump.

Remind us of the holy seed.

Remind us that Your purposes remain alive.

Above all, lift our eyes again toward Your throne.

May our lives join heaven in declaring:

Holy.

Holy.

Holy.

Is the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

The whole earth is filled with Your glory.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’” — Isaiah 6:8**

Central Truth

A true encounter with the holiness and glory of God exposes human sin, leads to cleansing and forgiveness, produces willing surrender to God’s call, and enables faithful service even in the face of rejection, because God remains sovereign and preserves a holy remnant through judgment.

Isaiah 6 in One Sentence

Isaiah sees the Lord high and exalted, confesses his uncleanness, receives divine cleansing, willingly answers God’s call to preach to a resistant people, and learns that even through severe judgment God will preserve a holy seed and continue His redemptive purpose.

Isaiah Chapter 7 — The Prophecy of Immanuel

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 7 takes place during a time of national fear.

Judah is threatened by two kings:

Rezin, king of Aram.

Pekah, king of Israel.

Together they plan to attack Jerusalem, overthrow Ahaz, and replace him with another ruler.

The news terrifies:

Ahaz.

The house of David.

The people of Judah.

Isaiah describes their fear vividly:

> **“The heart of Ahaz and the hearts of his people trembled like trees shaking in the wind.”**

Fear had taken control.

Yet God sends Isaiah with a message:

> **“Be careful, stay calm, and do not be afraid.”**

The enemies threatening Judah seem powerful.

God describes them as:

> **“two smoldering stumps of firewood.”**

What looked dangerous from the human perspective was already dying from God’s perspective.

Then comes one of the most important statements in the chapter:

> **“If you do not stand firm in faith, you will not stand at all.”**

Ahaz must decide:

Will he trust God?

Or:

Will he trust political alliances?

God graciously offers Ahaz a sign.

Ahaz refuses.

His words sound spiritual:

> **“I will not test the Lord.”**

But his refusal is not true faith.

He has already chosen another path.

Instead of trusting God, Ahaz turns toward Assyria.

Therefore God gives a sign Himself:

> **“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.”**

The name means:

God with us.

This prophecy has an immediate historical setting connected with the crisis facing Judah, while Matthew 1:23 identifies its climactic fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

The chapter then takes a darker turn.

The very Assyria Ahaz looks to for help will become an instrument of judgment.

What Ahaz trusts instead of God will eventually become a source of trouble.

The central truth of Isaiah 7 is:

Faith stands firm by trusting God's Word rather than fearing human threats or depending on worldly alliances, and the ultimate sign of God's faithfulness is Immanuel—God with us—while unbelief brings consequences through the very powers people trust instead of Him.

I. JUDAH IS THREATENED BY TWO KINGS

Isaiah 7:1 — Jerusalem Under Pressure

> **"During the days of Ahaz son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, Rezin king of Aram (Syria) and Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, marched up to Jerusalem to fight against it, but they could not overpower it."**

Judah faces a military crisis.

Two kingdoms combine against Jerusalem:

Aram.

Israel.

Their goal is conquest.

Yet they are unable to overthrow Jerusalem at that time.

Cross References

2 Kings 16:5

Rezin king of Aram and Pekah king of Israel came against Jerusalem and surrounded Ahaz, but they were unable to conquer the city.

2 Chronicles 28:5

Because of Ahaz's unfaithfulness, God allowed him to suffer defeat before the kings of Aram and Israel, and many people from Judah were taken captive.

2 Kings 15:37

During the days of Jotham, the Lord began allowing Rezin king of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah to move against Judah.

Spiritual Principle

A crisis may be real without being ultimate.

Key Truth

Human threats never become larger than God’s sovereignty.

II. FEAR SHAKES THE HOUSE OF DAVID

Isaiah 7:2 — Hearts Tremble Like Trees

> **“When the house of David was told, ‘Aram has joined forces with Ephraim,’ the heart of Ahaz and the hearts of his people trembled like trees shaking in the wind.”**

The report produces panic.

Fear spreads from:

The king.

To:

The people.

The image is vivid.

Trees shake when wind moves through them.

So:

Ahaz shakes.

Judah shakes.

Fear has taken hold before the battle is decided.

Cross References

2 Kings 16:5

The kings of Aram and Israel joined together against Jerusalem, creating the same crisis Isaiah describes.

Judges 9:15

In Jotham’s parable, the thornbush tells the trees to come under its shadow if they truly intend to make it king, illustrating the danger of misplaced confidence.

Psalm 46:2

God’s people are told not to fear even if the earth gives way and the mountains are moved into the sea.

Spiritual Principle

Fear often reacts to what might happen rather than what God has said will happen.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not let the report of men become louder than the promise of God.

III. GOD SENDS ISAIAH TO MEET AHAZ

Isaiah 7:3 — Isaiah and Shear-jashub

> **“Then the Lord said to Isaiah, ‘Go out to meet Ahaz, you and your son Shear-jashub, at the end of the aqueduct of the upper pool, on the road to the Washer’s Field.’”**

God sends Isaiah personally.

Isaiah brings his son:

Shear-jashub.

The name carries prophetic significance:

A remnant will return.

Even Isaiah’s family becomes part of the prophetic message.

God meets Ahaz in the middle of the crisis.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:17

Later, Assyrian officials would stand near the same upper pool and aqueduct area when threatening Jerusalem during Hezekiah’s reign.

Isaiah 10:21

Isaiah later declares that a remnant will return to the mighty God.

Isaiah 36:2

The Assyrian field commander later stood near the aqueduct of the upper pool on the road to the Washer’s Field.

Spiritual Principle

God often brings His Word to us precisely where fear is strongest.

IV. GOD TELLS AHAZ NOT TO FEAR

Isaiah 7:4 — Two Smoldering Stumps

> **“Tell him, ‘Be careful, stay calm, and do not be afraid. Do not lose heart because of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and the son of Remaliah. They are nothing but two smoldering stumps of firewood.’”**

God gives several commands.

Be careful.

Stay calm.

Do not fear.

Do not lose heart.

What Ahaz sees as blazing danger, God sees as:

Smoldering remains.

Their power is temporary.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:6

God later tells Hezekiah not to fear the threatening words spoken by Assyrian officials because their arrogance will not overturn His purpose.

Isaiah 41:10

God tells His people not to fear because He is with them, will strengthen them, help them, and uphold them with His righteous hand.

Amos 4:11

God reminds Israel that some had been rescued like a burning stick pulled from the fire, yet they still failed to return to Him.

Spiritual Principle

God sees the true condition of what frightens us.

Key Truth

Something can look powerful to us and already be finished in God’s plan.

V. THE ENEMIES PLOT AGAINST JUDAH

Isaiah 7:5 — A Deliberate Conspiracy

> **“Aram, Ephraim, and Remaliah’s son have plotted against you, saying,”**

The threat is organized.

This is not imagination.

There is an actual plan.

The enemy has:

Strategy.

Intention.

Purpose.

But a human plan is still subordinate to God.

Cross References

2 Kings 16:5

Aram and Israel joined forces and moved against Jerusalem during Ahaz’s reign.

Psalm 83:5

Enemies join together with one purpose and form alliances against God’s people.

2 Chronicles 28:6

Pekah defeated Judah severely because Judah had turned away from the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Faith does not deny that opposition exists.

Faith recognizes that opposition is still limited by God.

VI. THEY PLAN TO REPLACE THE DAVIDIC KING

Isaiah 7:6 — The Son of Tabeal

> **“‘Let us attack Judah, tear it apart, and divide it among ourselves. We will install the son of Tabeal as king.’”**

Their goal is not merely attack.

They intend to:

Break Judah.

Divide it.

Replace Ahaz.

This threatens the Davidic dynasty.

But God had made covenant promises concerning David’s line.

The plan therefore collides with God’s larger purpose.

Cross References

Psalm 2:2

Kings and rulers join together against the Lord and against His Anointed, imagining they can overthrow divine authority.

2 Kings 15:37

Rezin and Pekah had already begun pressing Judah during the reign before Ahaz.

Hosea 5:13

When Ephraim saw its sickness and Judah saw its wound, they turned toward foreign political power, but that power could not truly heal them.

Spiritual Principle

Plans against God’s purposes ultimately fail.

VII. GOD SAYS THE PLAN WILL NOT STAND

Isaiah 7:7 — “It Will Not Happen”

> **“But this is what the Sovereign Lord says: ‘It will not happen; it will not take place.’”**

The enemies say:

We will.

God says:

You will not.

The decisive word belongs to:

The Sovereign Lord.

Cross References

Proverbs 19:21

Many plans may fill a person’s mind, but the purpose of the Lord is what ultimately stands.

Isaiah 8:10

People may form plans and make strategies, but they will fail because God is with His people.

Numbers 23:19

God is not like a human being who lies or changes His mind carelessly; what He says He will do, He is able to accomplish.

Spiritual Principle

God’s Word outranks human conspiracy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God says, “It will not stand,” human power cannot make it stand.

VIII. EPHRAIM’S POWER WILL BE BROKEN

Isaiah 7:8 — Sixty-Five Years

> **“For the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin. Within sixty-five years Ephraim will be shattered as a people.”**

God places limits around human kingdoms.

Aram has:

Damascus.

Rezin.

Ephraim has:

Samaria.

Pekah.

But neither possesses ultimate authority.

Ephraim’s national identity will be shattered.

Cross References

2 Kings 17:6

The king of Assyria captured Samaria and carried the Israelites away into exile, scattering them into foreign regions.

Amos 1:5

God warned that Damascus would lose its power and its people would experience exile.

Ezra 4:2

Later populations in the region referred to their relocation there under Assyrian rulers, reflecting the population shifts that followed conquest.

Spiritual Principle

Human kingdoms have boundaries and expiration dates.

IX. FAITH DETERMINES WHETHER AHAZ WILL STAND

Isaiah 7:9 — “Stand Firm in Faith”

> **“The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah’s son. If you do not stand firm in faith, you will not stand at all.””**

This is the theological heart of the first half of the chapter.

Ahaz wants stability.

God tells him where stability is found:

Faith.

Not:

Diplomacy.

Military calculation.

Foreign alliances.

Fear.

Cross References

2 Chronicles 20:20

Jehoshaphat told Judah to trust the Lord and they would be established; trust His prophets and they would succeed in the way God intended.

Hebrews 11:6

Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone approaching Him must believe that He exists and rewards those who earnestly seek Him.

2 Kings 17:6

Samaria eventually fell to Assyria, showing that Ephraim’s apparent strength could not preserve the kingdom.

Spiritual Principle

Faith is not emotional optimism.

It is confidence in God’s Word.

Key Truth

If your foundation is not faith in God, everything else eventually shifts.

X. GOD OFFERS AHAZ A SIGN

Isaiah 7:10 — God Speaks Again

> **“The Lord spoke again to Ahaz,”**

God continues speaking.

Ahaz has not demonstrated trust.

Yet God gives another opportunity.

This is grace.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:8

Hezekiah later asked for a sign confirming that God would heal him and allow him to worship again.

Judges 6:36

Gideon asked God for confirmation concerning the promise that Israel would be delivered through him.

Matthew 12:38

Some religious leaders asked Jesus to show them a miraculous sign.

Spiritual Principle

God may graciously confirm His Word when He chooses.

XI. GOD INVITES AHAZ TO ASK FOR A SIGN

Isaiah 7:11 — As Deep or High as Desired

> **“Ask the Lord your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.”**

God’s offer is extraordinary.

Ahaz can ask for:

A deep sign.

A high sign.

God is effectively saying:

Ask for something unmistakable.

The Lord wants Ahaz to trust Him.

Cross References

Judges 6:37

Gideon asked God to confirm His promise through the sign involving the fleece and dew.

2 Kings 20:9

Isaiah gave Hezekiah a choice concerning a miraculous sign involving the movement of the shadow.

John 20:25

Thomas said he wanted visible evidence of Jesus’ wounds before he would believe the resurrection testimony.

Spiritual Principle

When God Himself offers confirmation, accepting it is not unbelief.

XII. AHAZ REFUSES UNDER THE APPEARANCE OF PIETY

Isaiah 7:12 — “I Will Not Test the Lord”

> **“But Ahaz said, ‘I will not ask; I will not test the Lord.’”**

Ahaz sounds spiritual.

He quotes a biblical principle.

Yet the context reveals the problem.

God commanded him:

Ask.

Refusing a commanded sign is not humility.

It is unbelief.

Ahaz has already turned politically toward Assyria for help.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 6:16

Israel was commanded not to test the Lord rebelliously as they had done in the wilderness.

Matthew 4:7

Jesus quoted this command when refusing Satan’s temptation to manufacture a sign by throwing Himself from the temple.

2 Kings 16:7

Ahaz sent messengers to the king of Assyria, declaring himself a servant and asking Assyria to rescue him from Aram and Israel.

Spiritual Principle

Religious language can sometimes hide unbelief.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Obedience never consists of using one Scripture to avoid another clear command from God.

XIII. AHAZ WEARIES GOD

Isaiah 7:13 — The House of David Rebuked

> **“Then Isaiah said, ‘Hear now, house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of men? Will you also try the patience of my God?’”**

Isaiah no longer says merely:

Your God.

He says:

“my God.”

Ahaz’s refusal reveals distance.

He has rejected divine reassurance.

The house of David is being confronted.

Cross References

Numbers 16:9

Moses rebuked rebellious Levites for treating God’s gracious appointment and service as though it were too small or unimportant.

Malachi 2:17

The people wearied the Lord by distorting moral truth and questioning God’s justice.

2 Kings 16:10

Ahaz traveled to Damascus and became impressed with a pagan altar, ordering a copy made for use in Jerusalem.

Spiritual Principle

Unbelief can disguise itself as religion while resisting God.

XIV. GOD HIMSELF GIVES THE SIGN OF IMMANUEL

Isaiah 7:14 — “God With Us”

> **“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel (which means, ‘God with us’).”**

This is one of the most significant prophecies in Isaiah.

God gives the sign.

A child will be born.

His name:

Immanuel.

Meaning:

God with us.

Within Isaiah’s historical setting, the sign assures the house of David that God’s purpose will not be overturned by Rezin and Pekah.

But the New Testament explicitly identifies the climactic fulfillment of this prophecy in Jesus Christ.

Cross References

Matthew 1:23

Matthew quotes Isaiah’s prophecy and applies it to the birth of Jesus, explaining that the child is called Immanuel, meaning “God with us.”

Luke 1:31

The angel told Mary that she would conceive and give birth to a son whom she was to name Jesus.

Micah 5:2

Micah foretells that a ruler for Israel will come from Bethlehem, whose origins reach back into ancient times.

Spiritual Principle

God’s greatest answer to human fear is ultimately His presence.

Key Truth

Immanuel means that God’s saving purpose is not distant.

God comes near.

XV. THE CHILD WILL LIVE DURING A TIME OF HARDSHIP

Isaiah 7:15 — Curds and Honey

> **“By the time he knows enough to reject wrong and choose right, he will be eating curds and honey.”**

Curds and honey can sound luxurious.

In context, however, the later verses show a land reduced from agricultural abundance to pastoral subsistence.

The child’s development becomes part of the timetable.

Before he reaches a certain age:

Political conditions will change.

Cross References

Isaiah 8:4

Before Isaiah’s child could clearly say “father” or “mother,” the wealth of Damascus and spoil of Samaria would be carried away by Assyria.

2 Kings 16:9

The king of Assyria responded to Ahaz’s appeal, attacked Damascus, captured it, exiled its inhabitants, and killed Rezin.

2 Kings 15:29

Assyria captured several northern territories and carried their inhabitants away into exile.

Spiritual Principle

God’s promises unfold according to His timetable, not human panic.

XVI. THE TWO THREATENING KINGS WILL BE REMOVED

Isaiah 7:16 — The Feared Lands Laid Waste

> **“For before the boy knows to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.”**

Ahaz fears:

Rezin.

Pekah.

God says their power will not last.

The kings who seem overwhelming will soon be removed.

Cross References

2 Kings 16:9

Assyria conquered Damascus and killed Rezin, removing one of the kings Ahaz feared.

2 Chronicles 28:20

Although Ahaz turned to Assyria, the Assyrian king eventually brought trouble rather than true help.

Isaiah 8:4

Before Isaiah’s child grew old enough for basic speech, Assyria would carry off the wealth of Damascus and Samaria.

Spiritual Principle

Today’s great fear may become tomorrow’s forgotten threat.

XVII. ASSYRIA WILL BECOME A GREATER PROBLEM

Isaiah 7:17 — The King of Assyria Comes

> **“The Lord will bring upon you, your people, and your father’s house a time unlike any since Ephraim broke away from Judah—He will bring the king of Assyria.”**

Ahaz looks toward Assyria for salvation.

God says:

Assyria is coming.

But not merely as:

An ally.

It will become:

A judgment.

This is one of the great ironies of the chapter.

The power Ahaz trusts instead of God becomes a source of suffering.

Cross References

2 Kings 16:7

Ahaz appealed to Assyria for help, identifying himself as the Assyrian king's servant and asking to be rescued.

2 Chronicles 28:20

Instead of strengthening Ahaz, the Assyrian king came against him and brought additional distress.

Isaiah 8:7

Isaiah later compares Assyria to a powerful overflowing river that God will bring against the land.

Spiritual Principle

What we trust instead of God can become the very thing that enslaves us.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Be careful whom you ask to save you.

Some rescuers eventually become masters.

XVIII. GOD SUMMONS FOREIGN POWERS

Isaiah 7:18 — The Fly and the Bee

> **"In that day the Lord will whistle for the fly from Egypt's distant streams and for the bee from the land of Assyria."**

God is pictured summoning nations.

Egypt:

Like a fly.

Assyria:

Like a bee.

The imagery communicates:

Numbers.

Persistence.

Invasion.

Once again, God remains sovereign over geopolitical powers.

Cross References

Hosea 11:11

God pictures His scattered people eventually coming from Egypt and Assyria, trembling like birds as He brings them home.

Isaiah 5:26

God raises a signal for a distant nation and whistles for it to come swiftly as an instrument of judgment.

Deuteronomy 28:49

Moses warned that covenant rebellion could bring a distant nation against Israel with the speed of an eagle.

Spiritual Principle

Nations may imagine they act independently, but God remains sovereign over history.

XIX. THE INVADING POWERS WILL FILL THE LAND

Isaiah 7:19 — No Place Untouched

> **“They will come and settle in steep ravines, in rocky crevices, among thornbushes, and in all the watering holes.”**

The picture is comprehensive.

Foreign forces fill:

Ravines.

Crevices.

Thorns.

Watering places.

There is no easy escape.

Cross References

Judges 6:2

When Midian oppressed Israel, the people hid in mountain caves, dens, and strongholds.

Isaiah 2:19

Isaiah describes people hiding in caves and holes because of the terror of the Lord’s judgment.

Revelation 6:15

Kings, rulers, powerful people, and ordinary people alike hide in caves and among the rocks when divine judgment becomes unavoidable.

Spiritual Principle

False security disappears quickly when judgment reaches every hiding place.

XX. ASSYRIA IS GOD’S HIRED RAZOR

Isaiah 7:20 — Humiliation Through Assyria

> **“In that day the Lord will use a razor hired from beyond the Euphrates—the king of Assyria—to shave your head and private parts, and to cut off your beard also.”**

The imagery is intentionally humiliating.

Assyria is:

A razor.

But notice:

The razor is **hired**.

Assyria may think it acts by its own power.

God is sovereignly using it as an instrument of judgment.

The shaving symbolizes:

Humiliation.

Defeat.

Loss of dignity.

Cross References

2 Kings 16:7

Ahaz hired Assyrian help through submission and payment, turning toward foreign power instead of trusting God.

Ezekiel 29:18

A foreign king is described as performing exhausting military labor in the course of accomplishing judgment.

Isaiah 10:5

Assyria is later called the rod of God’s anger, an instrument used in divine judgment.

Spiritual Principle

God can use even ungodly powers as temporary instruments without approving their wickedness.

XXI. THE LAND WILL RETURN TO SIMPLE SURVIVAL

Isaiah 7:21 — A Cow and Two Goats

> **“In that day a man will keep alive a young cow and two goats.”**

The land has been devastated.

Agriculture is reduced.

Instead of expansive vineyards and fields, survivors depend upon:

A few animals.

The picture is one of:

Scarcity.

Simplification.

Survival.

Cross References

Isaiah 7:15

The child will eat curds and honey, food associated here with the changed conditions of the devastated land.

2 Samuel 17:29

During a time of need, David and his men were supplied with food including dairy products and other basic provisions.

Judges 6:4

Midian repeatedly destroyed Israel's crops and livestock, leaving the land impoverished and the people struggling to survive.

Spiritual Principle

War and rebellion can reduce prosperity to subsistence.

XXII. THE SURVIVORS WILL EAT CURDS AND HONEY

Isaiah 7:22 — Provision in a Desolate Land

> **"And because of the abundance of milk they give, he will have curds to eat. All who remain in the land will eat curds and honey."**

Agriculture is diminished.

But livestock graze freely because much of the land is no longer cultivated.

Those who remain eat:

Curds.

Honey.

This is not mainly a picture of luxury.

It is survival in a depopulated land.

Cross References

Isaiah 7:15

The child associated with the sign will eat curds and honey during the period of national upheaval.

Deuteronomy 32:14

God once blessed Israel with rich milk, meat, grain, grapes, and abundant provision from the land.

2 Samuel 17:29

Food including dairy products was supplied to David’s exhausted followers during a difficult period.

Spiritual Principle

Even in judgment, God can preserve survivors.

XXIII. VALUABLE VINEYARDS BECOME THORNS

Isaiah 7:23 — Prosperity Becomes Desolation

> **“In that day, in every place where there used to be a thousand vines worth a thousand silver pieces, there will be only briers and thorns.”**

Formerly valuable land becomes:

Overgrown.

Useless.

Dangerous.

What once represented wealth now displays judgment.

Cross References

Isaiah 5:6

God warned that His vineyard would become a wasteland filled with briers and thorns.

Isaiah 32:13

Thorns and briers will grow over land and places once associated with celebration and prosperity.

Hosea 2:12

God warns that vineyards and fig trees wrongly attributed to false gods would be ruined and turned into wild places.

Spiritual Principle

Material prosperity is never beyond the reach of change.

XXIV. THE LAND BECOMES DANGEROUS

Isaiah 7:24 — Bows and Arrows

> **“Men will go there with bows and arrows, for the land will be covered with briers and thorns.”**

Land once cultivated becomes wild.

People now need weapons to enter areas where agriculture once flourished.

The transformation is dramatic.

Cross References

Isaiah 5:6

God said the vineyard would become uncultivated and overgrown with briers and thorns.

Genesis 3:18

After humanity’s fall, the ground would produce thorns and thistles, showing how sin affects creation and human labor.

Hosea 10:8

Thorns and weeds will grow over places associated with false worship when judgment comes.

Spiritual Principle

Sin turns cultivated places into wilderness.

XXV. CULTIVATED HILLS BECOME GRAZING LAND

Isaiah 7:25 — Agriculture Abandoned

> **“As for the hills once cultivated with a hoe, you will no longer go there for fear of the briers and thorns. They will become places where cattle are turned loose and sheep trample.”**

The chapter ends with abandoned agriculture.

Hills once carefully cultivated become:

Wild pasture.

The judgment is complete.

The land reflects the spiritual condition of the people.

Cross References

Isaiah 5:6

The vineyard becomes uncultivated, overgrown, and abandoned because of judgment.

Isaiah 27:4

God speaks of dealing decisively with briers and thorns that stand against His purposes.

Micah 7:14

Micah asks God to shepherd His people and let them feed in good pasture as in former days.

Spiritual Principle

Rejecting God’s cultivation eventually produces spiritual and material wilderness.

XXVI. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 7

1. Fear Can Distort Perspective

Ahaz sees two unstoppable powers.

God sees:

Two smoking stumps.

Principle:

Fear enlarges threats and shrinks our awareness of God.

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2. God’s Word Is Greater Than Human Plans

The enemies say:

“We will.”

God says:

“It will not happen.”

Principle:

Human conspiracy cannot overturn divine purpose.

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3. Faith Is the Foundation of Stability

God tells Ahaz:

> **“If you do not stand firm in faith, you will not stand at all.”**

Principle:

Spiritual stability begins with confidence in God.

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4. Religious Language Can Hide Unbelief

Ahaz says he will not test God.

But he is actually refusing God’s command.

Principle:

Not every spiritual-sounding statement comes from faith.

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5. Immanuel Is the Great Sign of Hope

God promises:

> **“God with us.”**

Principle:

The greatest assurance is not merely that circumstances will improve but that God is with His people.

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6. False Alliances Carry Consequences

Ahaz trusts Assyria.

Assyria becomes trouble.

Principle:

What replaces trust in God often demands more than we intended to give.

7. God Is Sovereign Over Nations

He whistles.

Nations come.

Principle:

No empire operates outside God’s ultimate authority.

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8. God Preserves a Remnant Even Through Judgment

Some remain in the land.

Principle:

Judgment does not eliminate God’s ability to preserve His purposes.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 7 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

Ahaz’s heart shakes.

Fear is understandable.

But God commands:

Stay calm.

Do not fear.

Do not lose heart.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fear becomes spiritually dangerous when it becomes the basis for decision-making.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 7 TEACHES ABOUT FAITH

Faith means standing upon what God says even when circumstances say something else.

Ahaz sees:

Armies.

God gives:

A promise.

The question is:

Which will define reality for him?

Spiritual Principle

Faith does not ignore circumstances.

It places circumstances beneath God’s Word.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 7 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY

Rezin plots.

Pekah plots.

Ahaz plots.

Assyria acts.

Yet:

God speaks the decisive word.

Key Truth

History contains many human plans but only one ultimate Sovereign.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 7 TEACHES ABOUT SIGNS

Ahaz is invited to ask for a sign.

The offer originates with God.

Therefore asking would have been obedience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A sign sought in unbelief is different from a sign offered by God to strengthen faith.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 7 TEACHES ABOUT HYPOCRISY

Ahaz quotes the principle:

Do not test God.

But he uses it to resist God.

That is religious hypocrisy.

Spiritual Principle

We can misuse correct words to justify incorrect hearts.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 7 TEACHES ABOUT IMMANUEL

Immanuel means:

God with us.

This is the theological center of the chapter.

Judah fears abandonment.

God answers with presence.

The New Testament identifies the fullest realization of this promise in Jesus Christ.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest answer to fear is not:

“Nothing bad will ever happen.”

It is:

“God is with us.”

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 7 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

Matthew directly applies Isaiah 7:14 to Jesus.

Jesus is:

Born through the virgin conception.

The promised Son.

Immanuel.

God with us.

Key Truth

Jesus is not merely a sign from God.

He is God’s saving presence with His people.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 7 TEACHES ABOUT FALSE SECURITY

Ahaz thinks Assyria is the solution.

But Assyria becomes a threat.

This pattern appears repeatedly in Scripture.

People turn from God toward:

Power.

Money.

Influence.

Government.

Human alliances.

Then discover those things cannot provide ultimate security.

Spiritual Principle

Whatever you make your savior may eventually become your master.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 7 TEACHES ABOUT JUDGMENT

The chapter ends with:

Invasion.

Humiliation.

Scarcity.

Thorns.

Desolation.

Unbelief has consequences.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s promises are gracious, but refusing them is never spiritually neutral.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 7 TEACHES ABOUT THE LAND

The land reflects the covenant condition of the people.

Productive vineyards become:

Briers.

Cultivated hills become:

Pasture.

Prosperity becomes:

Scarcity.

Spiritual Principle

Sin can destroy what generations of blessing helped build.

XXXVII. TWO SMOLDERING STUMPS

This is one of the great images of the chapter.

Ahaz sees:

Blazing danger.

God sees:

Dying fire.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Ask not only:

“What does this threat look like to me?”

Ask:

“How does it look from God’s throne?”

XXXVIII. “IT WILL NOT HAPPEN”

These words expose the limitations of human planning.

The enemy has:

A strategy.

A military.

A political goal.

But God has spoken.

Spiritual Principle

When human plans collide with God’s purpose, God’s purpose wins.

XXXIX. “IF YOU DO NOT STAND FIRM IN FAITH”

This is a warning to every generation.

Stability depends upon:

Faith.

When faith disappears, people grasp for substitutes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot build lasting spiritual stability on fear-driven decisions.

XL. THE FALSE HUMILITY OF AHAZ

Ahaz sounds obedient.

But he is disobedient.

This teaches us to examine not merely what we say but why we say it.

Spiritual Principle

God hears the motive beneath the religious sentence.

XLI. GOD GIVES THE SIGN ANYWAY

Ahaz refuses.

God still gives:

Immanuel.

That shows the sign is bigger than Ahaz.

It belongs to:

The house of David.

God’s covenant purpose.

The coming Messiah.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human unbelief cannot cancel God’s redemptive plan.

XLII. THE IRONY OF ASSYRIA

Ahaz pays Assyria to help.

God says Assyria will become a razor against Judah.

This is tragic irony.

Spiritual Principle

The shortcut around faith often becomes the long road into trouble.

XLIII. GOD WITH US

This phrase changes the chapter.

The armies may be near.

But:

God is nearer.

The future may be uncertain.

But:

God is present.

Key Truth

The presence of God is greater than the presence of the enemy.

XLIV. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Why was Judah afraid?

Aram and Israel had joined forces and threatened Jerusalem.

Question 2

How does Isaiah describe their fear?

Their hearts shook like trees moved by the wind.

Question 3

What message did God give Ahaz?

Stay calm.

Do not fear.

Do not lose heart.

Question 4

How did God describe the two enemy kings?

As two smoldering stumps of firewood.

Question 5

What did Rezin and Pekah plan to do?

They intended to invade Judah, divide the land, and install another king.

Question 6

What did God say about their plan?

> **“It will not happen; it will not take place.”**

Question 7

What does verse 9 teach about faith?

Without standing firm in faith, Ahaz would not possess lasting stability.

Question 8

Why did God offer Ahaz a sign?

To confirm His promise and call Ahaz to trust Him.

Question 9

Was Ahaz’s refusal really an act of faith?

No.

His words sounded religious, but he had already chosen political dependence on Assyria.

Question 10

What sign did God give?

A virgin would conceive and bear a son called Immanuel.

Question 11

What does Immanuel mean?

God with us.

Question 12

How does the New Testament understand Isaiah 7:14?

Matthew applies it directly to the birth of Jesus Christ.

Question 13

What happened to the kings Ahaz feared?

Their kingdoms were broken by Assyrian power.

Question 14

What happened because Ahaz depended on Assyria?

The power he trusted became an instrument of trouble and judgment.

Question 15

How does the chapter end?

It ends with Judah’s land devastated, overgrown, and reduced from prosperity to survival.

XLV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 7 asks several searching questions.

What Threat Is Making My Heart Shake?

What am I allowing to control my thoughts?

Am I Seeing the Threat Through Fear or Through Faith?

What does God say about it?

Where Am I Looking for Security?

God?

Money?

People?

Political power?

Influence?

My own ability?

Am I Standing Firm in Faith?

Or am I making fear-driven decisions?

Do I Use Religious Words to Avoid Obedience?

Have I ever made disobedience sound spiritual?

Do I Believe God Is With Me?

How would I respond differently if I truly remembered:

Immanuel?

Am I Trusting Something That Could Eventually Control Me?

What have I chosen as a substitute savior?

Do I Believe God's Plans Are Stronger Than Human Plans?

When people conspire, do I still believe God reigns?

XLVI. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Fear Says, ‘Look at Their Power.’ Faith Says, ‘Listen to God’s Word.’”

Ahaz saw:

Aram.

Israel.

Armies.

Political danger.

God saw:

Two dying fires.

Principle:

The size of the threat is never more important than the certainty of God’s Word.

XLVII. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FEAR AND FAITH

Fear asks:

“What if?”

Faith asks:

“What has God said?”

Fear imagines:

Worst-case scenarios.

Faith rests in:

Divine truth.

Spiritual Principle

Faith does not eliminate every fearful feeling.

It refuses to let fear become lord.

XLVIII. WHEN HUMAN PLANS COLLIDE WITH GOD’S PLAN

Rezin has a plan.

Pekah has a plan.

Ahaz has a plan.

God has a plan.

Guess which one survives.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You may not control what others plan against you.

You can control whether you trust the God who rules over every plan.

XLIX. THE GREATER SIGN

Ahaz is worried about:

A military crisis.

God points ultimately to:

Immanuel.

This teaches us something profound.

Our immediate problem may feel enormous.

But God’s redemptive plan is always larger.

Spiritual Principle

God often answers temporary fear with eternal truth.

L. FROM AHAZ TO CHRIST

Isaiah 7 begins with:

A frightened king.

It points toward:

A promised Son.

Ahaz fails in faith.

Christ embodies the fulfillment of God’s promise.

Key Truth

Where human kings fail, God’s promised King remains faithful.

LI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 7 is a chapter about fear and faith.

Ahaz faces a real crisis.

Two kings have formed an alliance.

Judah is threatened.

The house of David trembles.

Fear spreads.

Then God speaks:

> **“Stay calm.”**
>
> **“Do not be afraid.”**

Why?

Not because the enemy does not exist.

Not because the armies are imaginary.

But because God has already determined the outcome.

Ahaz must decide:

Will he believe what he sees?

Or:

Will he believe what God says?

That same question confronts every believer.

There will be times when circumstances seem louder than Scripture.

Threats appear greater than promises.

Fear feels more real than faith.

In those moments:

Remember Isaiah 7.

The enemies may look like flames.

God may already see:

Smoldering stumps.

Then remember verse 9:

> **“If you do not stand firm in faith, you will not stand at all.”**

Faith is not optional spiritual decoration.

It is foundational.

Ahaz refuses.

He chooses Assyria.

The very power he thinks will save him becomes a source of trouble.

That is one of the great warnings of the chapter.

Be careful what you turn into a substitute savior.

Money can become a master.

Power can become a master.

Politics can become a master.

Relationships can become a master.

Fear can drive us toward solutions that cost more than we imagined.

Then God gives the great sign:

> **“Immanuel.”**

God with us.

That is the answer beyond the immediate crisis.

The Christian looks back and sees its climactic fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

God has not merely shouted encouragement from heaven.

He came near.

Therefore:

Do not let fear rule.

Stand firm in faith.

Trust God’s Word.

Refuse false saviors.

Remember His sovereignty.

And above all:

Remember Immanuel.

Whatever surrounds you:

God is greater.

Whatever threatens you:

God is sovereign.

Whatever changes:

God’s promise remains.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You remain sovereign when circumstances make us afraid.

Forgive us for the times our hearts shake like trees in the wind.

Forgive us when we look more at threats than at You.

Teach us to:

Stay calm.

Stand firm.

Trust Your Word.

Father, when fear comes, remind us that You see more clearly than we do.

What looks like a blazing fire to us may already be only a smoking stump in Your sight.

Give us confidence in Your sovereignty.

Keep us from making fear-driven decisions.

Protect us from trusting:

Money.

Power.

Politics.

People.

Human alliances.

More than we trust You.

Father, expose false humility.

Keep us from using religious words to hide unbelief.

Give us hearts that truly obey.

Thank You for the sign of Immanuel.

Thank You for Jesus Christ.

Thank You that in Him we see:

God with us.

When we feel alone:

Remind us.

When we feel threatened:

Remind us.

When the future feels uncertain:

Remind us.

You are with us.

Father, help us stand firm in faith.

Anchor us in Your Word.

Give us courage to believe Your promises when circumstances argue against them.

And if we are tempted to seek rescue outside Your will, stop us.

Keep our temporary solution from becoming a permanent bondage.

Teach us to wait for You.

Teach us to trust You.

Teach us to remember that every king, every nation, and every plan remains beneath Your authority.

Above all, fix our eyes upon Christ.

Immanuel.

God with us.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel (which means, ‘God with us’).” — Isaiah 7:14**

Central Truth

When fear threatens to control us, God calls us to stand firm in faith, trust His sovereign Word rather than human alliances, and rest in the promise of Immanuel—God with us—because human plans fail, false securities collapse, but God’s redemptive purpose remains certain.

Isaiah 7 in One Sentence

Isaiah confronts fearful King Ahaz with God’s promise that the plans of Aram and Israel will fail, calls him to stand firm in faith, gives the sign of Immanuel as the ultimate assurance of God’s presence, and warns that trusting Assyria instead of the Lord will bring the very judgment Ahaz hoped to escape.

Isaiah Chapter 8 — The Sign of Maher-shalal-hash-baz and the Coming Assyrian Flood

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 8 continues the crisis begun in Chapter 7.

Judah is still living under the shadow of:

Aram.

Israel.

Assyria.

Fear.

Political instability.

God gives Isaiah another prophetic sign.

This time the sign is connected with Isaiah’s own son:

> **Maher-shalal-hash-baz**

The name means:

“Quick to the plunder, swift to the spoil.”

Before the child is old enough to speak clearly, Damascus and Samaria will be stripped by Assyria.

But the chapter quickly reveals a deeper problem.

The people have rejected:

“the gentle waters of Shiloah.”

These gentle waters represent the quiet, dependable provision and rule of God.

Instead, the people place their confidence elsewhere.

Therefore God warns that a much larger river is coming:

The mighty Euphrates.

Assyria.

The gentle stream rejected becomes a devastating flood.

That flood will sweep through the land and rise:

“up to the neck.”

Yet even in this terrifying picture, Isaiah says:

“O Immanuel.”

The land still belongs to the One whose name means:

God with us.

Therefore the nations may:

Plot.

Prepare.

Organize.

Threaten.

But Isaiah declares:

“Their plans will fail.”

Why?

“For God is with us.”

Then God gives Isaiah another command.

Do not think like everyone else.

Do not fear what everyone else fears.

Do not be controlled by conspiracy, rumor, panic, or public anxiety.

Instead:

> **“Honor the Lord Almighty as holy.”**

Fear God.

Trust God.

Wait for God.

Listen to God.

The chapter closes by contrasting two sources of guidance.

One path seeks:

Mediums.

Spiritists.

The dead.

Occult voices.

The other path seeks:

God’s law.

God’s testimony.

God’s Word.

Isaiah’s verdict is unmistakable:

> **“If they do not speak according to this word, there is no light in them.”**

The central truth of Isaiah 8 is:

Those who reject God’s quiet provision and refuse His Word will be overwhelmed by judgment and darkness, but those who sanctify the Lord in their hearts, trust Immanuel, reject false guidance, and remain anchored in God’s revealed truth will find Him to be their sanctuary.

I. GOD COMMANDS ISAIAH TO WRITE THE PROPHECY CLEARLY

Isaiah 8:1 — “Quick to the Plunder, Swift to the Spoil”

> **“The Lord said to me, ‘Take a large scroll and write on it clearly: Maher-shalal-hash-baz (‘Quick to the plunder, swift to the spoil’).”**

God wants the message made:

Public.

Clear.

Visible.

Unmistakable.

The name itself is prophecy.

Judgment is coming quickly.

Cross References

Habakkuk 2:2

The Lord told Habakkuk to write the vision clearly and make it plain so that anyone who read it could understand and carry its message forward.

Isaiah 8:3

Isaiah’s son was later given the prophetic name Maher-shalal-hash-baz as a living sign of the judgment soon to come.

Deuteronomy 19:15

A serious matter was not to be established by only one witness; two or three witnesses were required to confirm testimony.

Spiritual Principle

God’s warnings are not intended to be hidden or deliberately confusing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God gives a serious warning, He gives people enough light to understand what He is saying.

II. THE PROPHECY IS CONFIRMED BY WITNESSES

Isaiah 8:2 — A Public Record

> **“So I called in trustworthy witnesses—Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Jeberechiah—to confirm the record.”**

Isaiah’s prophecy is not given secretly.

Witnesses confirm the written record.

This means that when the prophecy is fulfilled, no one can honestly claim:

“It was written afterward.”

The timing is documented.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 17:6

Serious legal matters required the testimony of more than one witness before judgment could be established.

Isaiah 8:16

Isaiah is later told to preserve the testimony and seal the teaching among his disciples.

Nehemiah 9:38

When the people renewed covenant commitments, they put the agreement into writing and had leaders and priests formally confirm it.

Spiritual Principle

God’s prophetic Word is not vague speculation.

He establishes testimony before fulfillment.

III. ISAIAH’S SON BECOMES A LIVING PROPHECY

Isaiah 8:3 — Maher-shalal-hash-baz Is Born

> **“Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and gave birth to a son. The Lord said to me, ‘Name him Maher-shalal-hash-baz.’”**

Isaiah’s family becomes part of his prophetic ministry.

The child’s name continually announces:

Plunder is coming.

Spoil is coming.

And it is coming quickly.

Every time the boy’s name is spoken, the prophecy is repeated.

Cross References

Isaiah 7:14

God had already promised the sign of a son associated with the name Immanuel, meaning “God with us.”

Isaiah 8:4

Before Isaiah’s child can clearly say “father” or “mother,” Damascus and Samaria will be plundered by Assyria.

Luke 1:31

The angel told Mary that she would conceive and give birth to a son and was instructed concerning His name.

Spiritual Principle

God can use ordinary family life as part of His extraordinary purposes.

IV. DAMASCUS AND SAMARIA WILL FALL QUICKLY

Isaiah 8:4 — Before the Child Can Speak Clearly

> **“For before the boy knows how to say, ‘My father’ or ‘My mother,’ the wealth of Damascus and the plunder of Samaria will be carried off by the king of Assyria.”**

The prophecy has a specific timetable.

The child will still be very young when:

Damascus falls.

Samaria is plundered.

The enemies Judah fears will not remain powerful for long.

Cross References

2 Kings 16:9

The Assyrian king attacked Damascus, captured the city, deported its inhabitants, and killed Rezin.

2 Kings 17:6

Assyria later captured Samaria and carried the people of Israel away into exile.

Isaiah 7:16

Isaiah had already declared that before the child associated with the sign reached moral maturity, the lands of the two kings Ahaz feared would be devastated.

Spiritual Principle

God’s timetable can move faster than human fear expects.

V. GOD SPEAKS AGAIN

Isaiah 8:5 — Another Warning

> **“The Lord spoke to me again, saying,”**

God continues to speak because the people continue to need warning.

The problem is not lack of revelation.

It is rejection of revelation.

Cross References

Isaiah 8:6

God explains that the people rejected the gentle waters of Shiloah.

Jeremiah 2:13

God says His people committed two evils: they abandoned Him, the fountain of living water, and made broken containers that could hold no water.

Isaiah 30:1

God pronounces woe upon rebellious people who make plans without Him and form alliances contrary to His Spirit.

Spiritual Principle

Repeated warnings reveal both human stubbornness and divine patience.

VI. THE PEOPLE REJECT THE GENTLE WATERS OF SHILOAH

Isaiah 8:6 — Rejecting God’s Quiet Provision

> **“Because this people has rejected the gentle waters of Shiloah and rejoices in Rezin and Remaliah’s son,”**

The waters of Shiloah flowed gently.

They picture:

Quiet provision.

God’s presence.

God’s rule.

God’s dependable care.

The people reject the quiet stream.

They prefer political excitement and human alliances.

Cross References

John 9:7

Jesus sent the blind man to wash in the pool of Siloam, and after obeying, the man returned able to see.

Jeremiah 2:18

God asks why His people seek help from foreign nations and their rivers when they should depend upon Him.

Nehemiah 3:15

The pool of Siloam was part of Jerusalem’s water system and was associated with an important section of the city wall.

Spiritual Principle

People often reject God’s quiet faithfulness because worldly power appears more impressive.

Key Truth

Never despise the gentle stream because the roaring river looks stronger.

VII. ASSYRIA WILL COME LIKE A FLOOD

Isaiah 8:7 — The Euphrates Overflows

> **“The Lord will bring against them the mighty floodwaters of the Euphrates—the king of Assyria with all his power. It will overflow its channels and run over all its banks.”**

They rejected:

A gentle stream.

God sends:

A raging river.

Assyria is pictured as floodwater.

Once it begins overflowing, it cannot easily be contained.

Cross References

2 Kings 16:7

Ahaz appealed to the king of Assyria for rescue and placed Judah under foreign dependence.

Isaiah 17:12

The nations are compared to roaring seas and mighty waters, creating an image of overwhelming military force.

Jeremiah 46:8

Egypt is compared to the Nile rising and flooding over the land, symbolizing a military force advancing in pride.

Spiritual Principle

Rejecting God’s way does not leave us without a master.

It often leaves us under a harsher one.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The gentle rule of God is better than the violent flood of the substitute we choose instead.

VIII. THE FLOOD REACHES JUDAH'S NECK

Isaiah 8:8 — "O Immanuel"

> **"It will sweep into Judah, overflowing and passing through. It will reach up to the neck; its outspread wings will cover the breadth of your land, O Immanuel."**

Assyria will not stop with Israel.

Judah will also feel the flood.

It rises:

To the neck.

Judah nearly drowns.

But not completely.

Then comes the remarkable phrase:

> **"O Immanuel."**

The land ultimately belongs to:

God with us.

Judgment comes.

But God's promise remains.

Cross References

Isaiah 7:14

The promised child is called Immanuel, meaning "God with us."

Matthew 1:23

Matthew identifies the Immanuel prophecy with Jesus Christ and explains the name as "God with us."

Isaiah 30:28

God's judgment is described like an overflowing torrent reaching up to the neck and shaking the nations.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment may rise high without overturning God's covenant purpose.

Key Truth

The flood may reach the neck.

It cannot drown Immanuel’s promise.

IX. THE NATIONS MAY PREPARE FOR WAR, BUT THEY WILL FALL

Isaiah 8:9 — Broken Despite Preparation

> **“Raise your battle cry, you nations, and be shattered! Listen, all you distant lands. Prepare for battle—but you will be broken. Prepare for battle—but you will be broken.”**

The repetition emphasizes certainty.

Prepare.

Arm yourselves.

Gather forces.

The result remains:

Broken.

Why?

Because military preparation cannot overcome God’s purpose.

Cross References

Psalm 2:1

The nations rage and peoples form empty plans against the Lord and His purposes.

Psalm 33:10

The Lord frustrates the plans of nations and brings human strategies to nothing when they oppose His will.

Proverbs 21:30

No wisdom, understanding, or counsel can successfully stand against the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Preparation without God is not ultimate security.

X. HUMAN PLANS FAIL BECAUSE GOD IS WITH HIS PEOPLE

Isaiah 8:10 — Immanuel Again

> **“Devise your plans, but they will fail; make your agreements, but they will not stand, for God is with us.”**

This verse explains the previous one.

Why do enemy plans fail?

> **“God is with us.”**

That is:

Immanuel.

The promise of Chapter 7 remains alive.

Cross References

Matthew 1:23

Jesus fulfills the promise of Immanuel, the One whose name declares “God with us.”

Romans 8:31

If God is for us, no opposing power can finally overcome His saving purpose for His people.

Proverbs 19:21

A person may make many plans, but the purpose of the Lord is what ultimately stands.

Spiritual Principle

The presence of God outweighs the plans of enemies.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The decisive question is not:

“How many are against us?”

It is:

“Is God with us?”

XI. GOD WARNS ISAIAH NOT TO FOLLOW THE CROWD

Isaiah 8:11 — A Strong Hand of Warning

> **“The Lord spoke to me with a strong hand and warned me not to follow the way of this people. He said,”**

Isaiah lives among fearful people.

God tells him:

Do not think like them.

Do not react like them.

Do not follow their path.

The pressure of public fear must not control the prophet.

Cross References

Jeremiah 15:19

God tells Jeremiah to remain faithful, separate the precious from the worthless, and refuse to allow rebellious people to turn him from the truth.

Ezekiel 3:8

God promises to make Ezekiel firm enough to stand against stubborn and resistant people.

Numbers 14:9

Joshua and Caleb urged Israel not to rebel against the Lord or fear the people of the land because God was with them.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people must not automatically adopt the emotional climate of the surrounding culture.

XII. DO NOT FEAR WHAT EVERYONE ELSE FEARS

Isaiah 8:12 — Conspiracies and Fear

> **“Do not call conspiracy everything that these people call conspiracy. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be terrified.”**

This is one of the most relevant warnings in Isaiah.

People around Isaiah are consumed with:

Rumors.

Plots.

Political danger.

Fear.

God does not say no conspiracy can ever exist.

He says:

Do not allow the fears and interpretations of the crowd to dominate you.

Cross References

1 Peter 3:14

Even if believers suffer for doing what is right, they are blessed and should not fear human threats or become intimidated.

Numbers 14:9

Israel was told not to fear the inhabitants of the land because the Lord was with His people.

Jeremiah 1:8

God told Jeremiah not to fear those who opposed him because the Lord would be with him and deliver him.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people should not be governed by mass panic.

Key Truth

Fear is contagious.

Faith must be intentional.

XIII. FEAR THE LORD INSTEAD

Isaiah 8:13 — Honor Him as Holy

> **“But honor the Lord Almighty as holy. He is the One you are to fear; He is the One you are to dread.”**

Isaiah does not simply say:

Stop fearing.

He redirects fear.

Fear:

God.

Honor:

God.

Sanctify:

God in your thinking.

When God becomes large in our understanding, human threats become smaller.

Cross References

1 Peter 3:15

Believers are told to honor Christ as Lord in their hearts and remain prepared to explain the hope they possess.

Matthew 10:28

Jesus teaches His followers not to fear those who can only harm the body, but to recognize God’s far greater authority.

Psalm 34:9

God’s people are called to fear the Lord because those who reverence Him lack no truly necessary good thing.

Spiritual Principle

The fear of God breaks the controlling power of the fear of man.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The person who rightly fears God does not have to live terrified of everyone else.

XIV. THE LORD IS EITHER SANCTUARY OR STUMBLING STONE

Isaiah 8:14 — Refuge to Some, Offense to Others

> **“He will be a sanctuary; but for both houses of Israel He will be a stone that makes men stumble and a rock that makes them fall. For the people of Jerusalem He will be a trap and a snare.”**

The same Lord produces two different outcomes.

To those who trust Him:

Sanctuary.

To those who reject Him:

Stumbling stone.

The difference is not in God’s character.

It is in the response to Him.

Cross References

Romans 9:33

Paul combines prophetic passages and applies the stumbling stone imagery to Christ, explaining that those who trust Him will not ultimately be put to shame.

1 Peter 2:8

Peter describes Christ as a stone of stumbling and rock of offense to those who refuse the Word.

Luke 2:34

Simeon tells Mary that Jesus is appointed for the falling and rising of many and will become a sign that exposes hearts.

Spiritual Principle

You cannot remain neutral toward God forever.

Key Truth

The One who is refuge to faith becomes stumbling to unbelief.

XV. MANY WILL STUMBLE AND FALL

Isaiah 8:15 — Snared by Unbelief

> **“Many of them will stumble; they will fall and be broken; they will be snared and captured.”**

The warning becomes personal.

Many will:

Stumble.

Fall.

Break.

Be trapped.

The problem is refusal to trust the Lord.

Cross References

Luke 2:34

Jesus is appointed for the falling and rising of many in Israel, and people’s responses to Him reveal their hearts.

Matthew 21:44

Jesus warns that the one who falls upon the rejected stone will be broken, and the one upon whom it falls will be crushed.

1 Peter 2:8

Those who reject God’s Word stumble over Christ because they refuse the message centered upon Him.

Spiritual Principle

Unbelief turns the foundation God provides into the obstacle people trip over.

XVI. GOD’S TESTIMONY MUST BE PRESERVED

Isaiah 8:16 — Bind and Seal the Teaching

> **“Bind up the testimony and seal the teaching among my disciples.”**

The public may reject Isaiah.

The truth must still be preserved.

God’s revelation is entrusted to:

Disciples.

Faithful hearers.

Future generations.

Cross References

Isaiah 8:20

All teaching and spiritual claims must ultimately be tested by God’s revealed law and testimony.

Daniel 12:4

Daniel is instructed to preserve the prophetic message until the appointed time.

Deuteronomy 6:9

God’s words were to be written visibly upon the homes and gates of His people so His truth remained continually before them.

Spiritual Principle

When society rejects truth, faithful people must preserve it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Truth does not stop being truth because most people refuse it.

XVII. ISAIAH CHOOSES TO WAIT FOR THE LORD

Isaiah 8:17 — Trust While God Seems Hidden

> **“I will wait for the Lord, who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob. I will put my trust in Him.”**

This is mature faith.

God’s favor appears hidden.

Judgment is unfolding.

The people reject the truth.

Still Isaiah says:

I will wait.

I will trust.

Faith is not always:

Immediate answers.

Visible deliverance.

Quick change.

Sometimes faith waits.

Cross References

Habakkuk 2:3

The prophetic vision has an appointed time; even if fulfillment seems delayed, God’s people are told to wait because it will certainly come.

Micah 7:7

Micah declares that he will look to the Lord, wait for the God of his salvation, and trust that God will hear him.

Psalm 27:14

Wait for the Lord, remain courageous, let your heart be strengthened, and continue waiting for Him.

Spiritual Principle

Waiting is not inactivity when it is filled with trust.

Key Truth

Faith continues trusting even when God’s face appears hidden.

XVIII. ISAIAH AND HIS CHILDREN ARE SIGNS

Isaiah 8:18 — A Prophetic Family

> **“Here am I, and the children the Lord has given me. We are signs and symbols in Israel from the Lord Almighty, who dwells on Mount Zion.”**

Isaiah’s family participates in the message.

Shear-jashub:

A remnant will return.

Maher-shalal-hash-baz:

Quick to plunder.

Their names preach.

Isaiah’s household becomes living prophecy.

Cross References

Hebrews 2:13

The New Testament quotes this passage and applies its language in connection with Christ identifying with the children God has given Him.

Isaiah 7:3

Isaiah had already taken his son Shear-jashub with him when delivering God’s message to Ahaz.

Isaiah 20:3

God later describes Isaiah himself as a sign and symbol concerning coming events among the nations.

Spiritual Principle

Sometimes God’s servants do not merely speak the message.

Their lives become part of it.

XIX. GOD’S PEOPLE MUST NOT CONSULT THE OCCULT

Isaiah 8:19 — Why Ask the Dead for the Living?

> **“When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter,
> should not a people ask their God for guidance? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?”**

This question exposes the irrationality of occult guidance.

Why seek:

The dead.

Spiritists.

Mediums.

Whispering voices.

When the living God has spoken?

God’s people should seek:

God.

Cross References

Leviticus 19:31

God commands His people not to turn to mediums or spiritists because seeking them brings spiritual defilement.

Deuteronomy 18:11

Israel was forbidden to use spells, consult mediums or spiritists, or seek information from the dead.

1 Samuel 28:7

Saul, after rejecting God’s Word, sought a medium at Endor in desperation, showing how far he had fallen from faithful dependence upon God.

Spiritual Principle

Seeking supernatural guidance is not automatically spiritual or godly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The supernatural must always be tested by whether it comes from the God who has revealed Himself in Scripture.

XX. GOD’S WORD IS THE STANDARD

Isaiah 8:20 — “To the Law and to the Testimony”

> **“Look to God’s law and testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, there is no light in them.”**

This is one of the most important principles in the chapter.

The test is not:

How impressive does it sound?

How supernatural does it appear?

How popular is the speaker?

How emotional does it feel?

The test is:

Does it agree with God’s revealed Word?

Cross References

Deuteronomy 13:3

Even if a supposed prophet produces an impressive sign, God’s people must not follow teaching that leads them away from the true God.

Acts 17:11

The Bereans listened carefully to Paul but examined the Scriptures daily to determine whether what they were hearing was true.

2 Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, correcting error, exposing wrong, and training people in righteous living.

Spiritual Principle

Scripture judges spiritual claims.

Spiritual claims do not judge Scripture.

Key Truth

If a message contradicts God’s Word, no amount of spiritual appearance can turn darkness into light.

XXI. REBELLION PRODUCES ANGER AND HUNGER

Isaiah 8:21 — They Curse Rather Than Repent

> **“Distressed and hungry, they will roam through the land. When they are famished, they will become enraged and look upward, cursing their king and their God.”**

The people suffer.

But instead of repenting:

They rage.

They curse.

They blame.

Suffering does not automatically soften the heart.

Sometimes rebellion becomes even more bitter.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:53

Israel was warned that severe covenant judgment could produce desperate hunger during enemy siege.

Revelation 16:10

Under judgment, people experience anguish but continue in rebellion rather than humbling themselves before God.

Isaiah 5:30

Isaiah had already pictured the land under judgment as filled with darkness, distress, and gloom.

Spiritual Principle

Pain alone does not create repentance.

The heart must turn toward God.

XXII. WITHOUT GOD THERE IS ONLY DARKNESS

Isaiah 8:22 — Driven into Deep Darkness

> **“Then they will look toward the earth and see only distress and darkness, fearful gloom, and they will be driven into deep darkness.”**

They look:

Upward.

And curse.

Then:

Toward earth.

And find darkness.

Why?

They rejected:

God’s Word.

God’s guidance.

God’s quiet waters.

God’s sanctuary.

The chapter ends where rejection of light must end:

Darkness.

Cross References

Revelation 16:11

Under severe judgment, rebellious people curse God because of their suffering yet refuse to repent of their evil deeds.

Deuteronomy 28:29

Israel was warned that rebellion could lead to groping in confusion like a blind person in darkness, without success or deliverance.

Zephaniah 1:15

The day of divine judgment is described as a day of wrath, distress, darkness, gloom, clouds, and deep obscurity.

Spiritual Principle

Rejecting God’s light eventually leaves no other true light.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If you turn away from the Source of light, do not be surprised when every other direction becomes dark.

XXIII. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 8

1. God Gives Clear Warnings

Maher-shalal-hash-baz was a visible prophetic sign.

Principle:

God warns before judgment.

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2. Rejecting God’s Gentle Rule Leads to Harsher Consequences

The gentle waters of Shiloah are rejected.

The Euphrates comes flooding.

Principle:

The way of God is always better than the substitutes we choose against Him.

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3. God Is With His People

Immanuel remains the great assurance.

Principle:

Human plans cannot defeat the presence and purpose of God.

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4. Do Not Fear What the Crowd Fears

Isaiah is warned not to follow public panic.

Principle:

God’s people should think biblically rather than merely emotionally.

---

5. Fear the Lord Above All

The answer to the fear of man is reverence for God.

Principle:

A large view of God makes human threats smaller.

---

6. The Lord Is Sanctuary or Stumbling Stone

Our response to God matters.

Principle:

Faith finds refuge in the One unbelief trips over.

---

7. God’s Word Must Test Every Spiritual Claim

Mediums and spiritists are rejected.

Principle:

True guidance agrees with Scripture.

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8. Rejecting God Ends in Darkness

The chapter closes with distress and gloom.

Principle:

There is no lasting light apart from God.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S WORD

God’s Word is:

Written.

Witnessed.

Sealed.

Preserved.

Tested.

It is the authoritative standard.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A generation may reject Scripture.

It cannot replace Scripture with an equal authority.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

The people fear:

War.

Conspiracy.

Foreign powers.

Political instability.

God tells Isaiah:

Do not fear what they fear.

Spiritual Principle

Fear becomes idolatrous when it receives the reverence and controlling power that belongs to God.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT IMMANUEL

The name appears again.

Assyria floods Immanuel’s land.

Enemy nations plot.

But:

God is with us.

Key Truth

Immanuel does not mean God’s people never face danger.

It means danger never removes God’s presence or overturns His purpose.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT ASSYRIA

Assyria is pictured as:

A flood.

A mighty river.

An instrument under God’s control.

The empire is dangerous.

But not sovereign.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may use powers far greater than us without those powers ever becoming greater than Him.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT CONSPIRACY

Isaiah is specifically warned:

Do not call everything conspiracy.

The people are consumed with fear and political intrigue.

God redirects Isaiah’s attention toward:

Himself.

Spiritual Principle

Not every alarming report deserves control over your mind.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT THE FEAR OF GOD

God says:

Fear Me.

This is not the fear of a helpless victim before cruelty.

It is profound recognition of:

God’s holiness.

Authority.

Majesty.

Judgment.

Sovereignty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fear of God puts every other fear into proper proportion.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

The New Testament uses Isaiah 8:14 in reference to Christ.

Jesus becomes:

A sanctuary to believers.

A stumbling stone to unbelievers.

Key Truth

The question is not merely:

“What do you think about Jesus?”

The question is:

“Will you trust the Rock or stumble over Him?”

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT WAITING

Isaiah says:

> **“I will wait for the Lord.”**

Even while judgment unfolds.

Even while God seems hidden.

He waits.

Spiritual Principle

Waiting upon God is an expression of faith, not wasted time.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT THE OCCULT

God forbids His people from seeking supernatural guidance through forbidden spiritual sources.

The dead cannot become a substitute for the living God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual curiosity is never a justification for spiritual disobedience.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT DISCERNMENT

Verse 20 provides the test:

> **“Look to God’s law and testimony!”**

Discernment asks:

Does this agree with God’s Word?

Spiritual Principle

Discernment is not suspicion of everything.

It is testing everything by truth.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT DARKNESS

The chapter ends in deep darkness because the people rejected:

God.

His Word.

His guidance.

His sanctuary.

Darkness is not accidental.

It is the outcome of rejecting light.

Key Truth

You cannot continually reject light and still expect to see clearly.

XXXV. THE GENTLE STREAM AND THE RAGING FLOOD

This contrast summarizes much of the chapter.

God offers:

Shiloah.

Gentle water.

The people reject it.

Judgment comes like:

The Euphrates.

Floodwater.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s way may seem quiet, but quiet should never be confused with weak.

XXXVI. WHEN FEAR BECOMES THE VOICE OF THE CROWD

Everyone is talking about:

Danger.

Plots.

Conspiracy.

Isaiah receives a separate word from God.

Do not walk their way.

Spiritual Principle

The loudest voice in society is not automatically the truest voice.

XXXVII. SANCTUARY OR STUMBLING STONE

The Lord does not change.

To faith:

Sanctuary.

To rebellion:

Rock of offense.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

How you respond to God determines whether His truth becomes refuge or resistance.

XXXVIII. “I WILL WAIT FOR THE LORD”

This statement deserves emphasis.

Isaiah cannot control:

Kings.

Armies.

Public opinion.

National judgment.

But he can choose:

Trust.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness begins with doing the part God has actually placed in your hands.

XXXIX. ISAIAH’S FAMILY AS A SERMON

Isaiah’s children have prophetic names.

His household itself becomes testimony.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some of the strongest messages we preach are communicated through the life we live before others.

XL. WHY CONSULT THE DEAD?

Isaiah’s question exposes spiritual absurdity.

God is:

Living.

Speaking.

Present.

Yet people seek:

The dead.

This is not greater spirituality.

It is deeper darkness.

Spiritual Principle

When God has spoken, seeking forbidden alternatives is rebellion, not revelation.

XLI. TO THE LAW AND TO THE TESTIMONY

This principle must govern:

Teaching.

Prophecy.

Tradition.

Experience.

Spiritual claims.

Religious leadership.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Experience must bow to Scripture.

Scripture must never bow to experience.

XLII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What does Maher-shalal-hash-baz mean?

It means:

“Quick to the plunder, swift to the spoil.”

Question 2

Why was the name written publicly before the child’s birth?

So trustworthy witnesses could confirm the prophecy before its fulfillment.

Question 3

What did the child’s birth signify?

It signified that Damascus and Samaria would soon be plundered by Assyria.

Question 4

What are the gentle waters of Shiloah?

They represent Jerusalem’s quiet provision and, in the prophetic picture, the dependable rule and care of God that the people rejected.

Question 5

What does the flooding Euphrates represent?

It represents the overwhelming power of Assyria coming in judgment.

Question 6

How far would Assyria’s flood reach?

It would sweep into Judah and rise figuratively to the neck.

Question 7

Why would enemy plans ultimately fail?

Because:

> **“God is with us.”**

Question 8

What was Isaiah told not to fear?

He was not to adopt the conspiracy fears and terrors dominating the surrounding people.

Question 9

Who should Isaiah fear?

The Lord Almighty.

Question 10

How can the Lord be both sanctuary and stumbling stone?

Those who trust Him find safety, while those who reject Him stumble over the very truth meant to save them.

Question 11

What does Isaiah say he will do while God appears hidden?

He will wait for the Lord and trust Him.

Question 12

Why were Isaiah and his children called signs?

Their names and lives communicated prophetic messages to Israel.

Question 13

What does Isaiah say about mediums and spiritists?

God’s people must not seek guidance from them but should seek the living God.

Question 14

What is the standard for testing spiritual teaching?

God’s law and testimony—His revealed Word.

Question 15

How does the chapter end?

With those who reject God wandering in distress, anger, gloom, and deep darkness.

XLIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 8 asks several searching questions.

Am I Rejecting God’s Gentle Waters?

Do I overlook quiet faithfulness because dramatic alternatives look more powerful?

What Flood Have I Invited by Rejecting God’s Way?

What substitute has become harder than the obedience I refused?

What Am I Afraid Of?

People?

Politics?

Conspiracies?

Loss?

The future?

Am I Fearing What Everyone Else Fears?

Does public anxiety determine my own emotional state?

Do I Honor God as Holy?

Is He bigger in my thinking than the threats around me?

Is God My Sanctuary?

When fear rises, do I run:

Toward Him?

Or away from Him?

Am I Willing to Wait?

Can I trust God when I cannot yet see what He is doing?

What Sources Do I Consult for Guidance?

Scripture?

Prayer?

Godly wisdom?

Or spiritually dangerous substitutes?

Do I Test Everything by God’s Word?

Or do I accept teaching because it sounds impressive?

XLIV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Fear What the World Fears—Fear the Lord and Let Him Become Your Sanctuary”

Isaiah lived in fearful times.

Military danger was real.

Political instability was real.

Conspiracies were real.

Yet God told him:

Do not become like everyone else.

Principle:

Faith does not require peaceful circumstances; it requires a heart anchored in a holy God.

XLV. THE POWER OF IMMANUEL

The phrase:

> **“God is with us”**

does not make Assyria disappear immediately.

The flood still comes.

But the flood cannot destroy God’s purpose.

Spiritual Principle

God’s presence does not always mean absence of trouble.

It means trouble is never ultimate.

XLVI. THE DANGER OF FOLLOWING THE CROWD

God explicitly tells Isaiah:

> **“Do not follow the way of this people.”**

There are moments when faithfulness requires standing apart.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If the crowd is walking away from God, being outnumbered may be evidence that you are standing where you should.

XLVII. THE RIGHT FEAR

Human fear produces:

Panic.

Confusion.

Compromise.

The fear of God produces:

Reverence.

Stability.

Wisdom.

Faithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

The fear of God does not enslave the soul.

It frees the soul from slavery to lesser fears.

XLVIII. THE WORD BEFORE THE WORLD

Isaiah does not say:

Check public opinion.

Ask the spiritist.

Follow rumors.

He says:

> **“Look to God’s law and testimony!”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before asking what everyone else is saying, ask what God has already said.

XLIX. LIGHT OR DARKNESS

The chapter ends with two paths.

God’s Word:

Light.

Occult guidance:

Darkness.

Trust:

Sanctuary.

Unbelief:

Stumbling.

Waiting:

Hope.

Rebellion:

Despair.

Spiritual Principle

The direction of life is shaped by the source from which we receive our light.

L. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 8 is about where we turn when we are afraid.

The people of Judah live in anxious times.

Military threats surround them.

Political alliances shift.

Rumors spread.

Conspiracies dominate conversation.

Foreign armies grow stronger.

God gives Isaiah a different path.

Do not think like everyone else.

Do not fear what everyone else fears.

Do not allow public panic to become your personal master.

Instead:

> **“Honor the Lord Almighty as holy.”**

Fear God.

Trust God.

Wait for God.

Listen to God.

The chapter also gives a warning.

The people reject:

The gentle waters of Shiloah.

They do not trust God’s quiet provision.

So a flood comes.

This teaches us:

Do not reject God’s way simply because it seems too quiet.

God’s obedience may appear:

Slow.

Simple.

Ordinary.

Unimpressive.

But His stream gives life.

The substitute may look powerful.

Then become a flood.

Isaiah also reminds us:

Immanuel still stands.

The flood reaches:

The neck.

But God’s promise is not drowned.

Enemy nations may organize.

They may make plans.

They may sign agreements.

But:

“They will not stand, for God is with us.”

Then comes the question of guidance.

Where do you turn when confused?

Isaiah says:

Not to occult voices.

Not to forbidden spiritual sources.

Not to the dead.

Instead:

“Look to God’s law and testimony!”

That must remain the standard.

Test:

Teachers.

Messages.

Prophecies.

Experiences.

Spiritual claims.

By:

God’s Word.

If something contradicts Scripture:

Reject it.

Finally, Isaiah says:

> **“I will wait for the Lord.”**

That may be one of the hardest acts of faith.

Wait when:

Nothing changes.

God seems hidden.

Others panic.

Answers seem delayed.

Still:

Wait.

Trust.

Stand.

Because:

God is with us.

And the person who takes refuge in Him discovers that the Stone others stumble over becomes:

A sanctuary.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You are with Your people.

Thank You that when nations rage, kings plan, and fear spreads, You remain sovereign.

Forgive us for rejecting Your gentle waters.

Forgive us when we choose dramatic human solutions over quiet obedience.

Teach us to value:

Your Word.

Your guidance.

Your presence.

Your timing.

Father, protect us from fear.

Do not let us fear everything the world fears.

Protect us from:

Rumors.

Conspiracies.

Panic.

Speculation.

Anxiety.

Teach us to honor You as holy.

May our fear of You become greater than our fear of man.

Be our sanctuary.

Be our refuge.

Be our safe place.

Father, thank You for Immanuel.

Thank You for Jesus Christ.

Thank You that God is with us.

When trouble rises like a flood:

Remind us.

When plans are made against us:

Remind us.

When we feel surrounded:

Remind us.

You are with us.

Give us patience to wait.

When Your face seems hidden, help us still say:

“I will trust Him.”

Father, protect us from false spiritual guidance.

Keep us from mediums, spiritists, occult practices, and every forbidden attempt to seek supernatural knowledge outside Your will.

Anchor us in Scripture.

Help us test every message by Your Word.

Give us discernment.

Give us wisdom.

Give us courage to reject anything that contradicts Your truth.

Do not let us be driven into darkness.

Keep us walking in Your light.

And when the world around us is filled with fear, may our lives quietly testify:

God is with us.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“Devise your plans, but they will fail; make your agreements, but they will not stand, for God is with us.” — Isaiah 8:10**

Central Truth

Those who reject God’s gentle provision and revealed Word will eventually encounter judgment and darkness, but those who fear the Lord, trust Immanuel, wait upon Him, reject false spiritual guidance, and test everything by Scripture will find God Himself to be their sanctuary.

Isaiah 8 in One Sentence

Isaiah uses the birth of Maher-shalal-hash-baz to announce Assyria's swift advance, warns that rejecting God's gentle rule brings an overwhelming flood, and calls God's people to reject fear, conspiracy, and occult guidance, trust Immanuel, wait upon the Lord, and test everything by His Word.

Isaiah Chapter 9 — The Great Light and the Prince of Peace

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 9 begins in darkness.

The land has suffered.

Zebulun and Naphtali have been humbled.

Foreign powers have brought fear and oppression.

The previous chapter ended with:

Distress.

Gloom.

Deep darkness.

But Isaiah 9 opens with one of the Bible's great reversals.

Darkness will not have the final word.

A light is coming.

The people walking in darkness will see:

> **"A great light."**

Those living under the shadow of death will experience:

A dawning.

Hope.

Joy.

Deliverance.

Freedom.

Then Isaiah explains why.

A Child will be born.

A Son will be given.

The government will rest upon His shoulders.

He will be called:

Wonderful Counselor.

Mighty God.

Everlasting Father.

Prince of Peace.

His kingdom will not be temporary.

His peace will not expire.

His throne will be connected with David.

His rule will be established through:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Forever.

The first section of Isaiah 9 therefore presents one of the clearest messianic pictures in the Old Testament.

The chapter then turns sharply.

After the glorious prophecy of the coming King, Isaiah returns to the sin of Israel.

The people are:

Proud.

Unrepentant.

Misled.

Corrupt.

Violent.

Divided.

They experience judgment but refuse to return to God.

Therefore the repeated statement appears:

> **“Yet for all this, His anger is not turned away; His hand is still stretched out.”**

The people respond to discipline not with repentance but with greater pride.

They say, in effect:

We will rebuild.

We will recover.

We will come back stronger.

But they speak without God.

They trust:

Their own determination.

Their leaders.

Their strength.

Their pride.

As a result, wickedness spreads like fire.

The nation begins consuming itself.

The central truth of Isaiah 9 is:

Into the darkness of human oppression, sin, pride, and failed leadership, God promises the coming Messiah—the great Light and Prince of Peace—whose righteous kingdom will endure forever, while those who reject God and persist in arrogance experience the consuming consequences of their own rebellion.

I. GLOOM WILL NOT LAST FOREVER

Isaiah 9:1 — Galilee Will Be Honored

> **“Nevertheless, the gloom will not be as great as it was in the past, when the Lord humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali. In the future He will honor Galilee of the nations, the land along the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan.”**

The word:

“Nevertheless”

is important.

Isaiah 8 ended with darkness.

Isaiah 9 says:

Nevertheless.

God is not finished.

Zebulun and Naphtali had suffered greatly under foreign invasion.

Yet the very region that experienced humiliation would later experience extraordinary honor.

The place of darkness becomes the place where light appears.

Cross References

Matthew 4:15

Matthew quotes Isaiah and identifies the lands of Zebulun and Naphtali, along the way of the sea and in Galilee, as the region connected with Jesus' public ministry.

2 Kings 15:29

During Pekah's reign, the king of Assyria captured northern territories including regions associated with Naphtali and carried many inhabitants into exile.

Matthew 4:13

Jesus left Nazareth and lived in Capernaum near the Sea of Galilee, in the region associated with Zebulun and Naphtali.

Spiritual Principle

God can bring His greatest light into places that have known deep darkness.

Key Truth

Past humiliation does not prevent future grace.

II. A GREAT LIGHT DAWNS

Isaiah 9:2 — Light in the Shadow of Death

> **"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death, a light has dawned."**

Darkness represents:

Sin.

Oppression.

Fear.

Confusion.

Judgment.

Hopelessness.

Then:

Light appears.

The people do not create the light.

It dawns upon them.

Cross References

Matthew 4:16

Matthew declares that people living in spiritual darkness saw a great light when Jesus began ministering in Galilee.

Luke 1:79

Zechariah speaks of God’s coming salvation as light shining upon those living in darkness and under the shadow of death, guiding them into the way of peace.

John 8:12

Jesus declares Himself to be the Light of the world and promises that those who follow Him will not continue walking in darkness but will have the light of life.

Spiritual Principle

Christ does not merely show people where the light is.

He is the Light.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God sends light, darkness no longer has the right to define the future.

III. GOD MULTIPLIES JOY

Isaiah 9:3 — Joy Like Harvest

> **“You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before You as people rejoice at harvest time, as warriors rejoice when dividing plunder.”**

The emotional atmosphere changes.

Chapter 8:

Fear.

Gloom.

Darkness.

Chapter 9:

Joy.

The joy is compared to:

Harvest.

Victory.

Abundance.

Cross References

Psalm 126:5

Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy, showing how God can transform sorrow into celebration.

Psalm 4:7

God can place greater joy in the heart than people experience merely from material abundance.

Luke 1:14

The birth connected with God’s saving work would bring joy and gladness, and many would rejoice because of what God was doing.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation produces joy deeper than circumstances alone can create.

IV. GOD BREAKS THE YOKE OF OPPRESSION

Isaiah 9:4 — Like the Day of Midian

> **“For You have broken the yoke of their burden, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor—just as You did in the day of Midian’s defeat.”**

The people were burdened.

God breaks:

The yoke.

The bar.

The rod.

Isaiah points back to Gideon’s victory over Midian.

That victory was remarkable because God deliberately reduced Gideon’s army.

The lesson was clear:

Deliverance came from God.

Cross References

Judges 7:22

When Gideon’s small force sounded its trumpets, God caused confusion in the Midianite camp so that the enemy turned against itself and fled.

Isaiah 10:27

Isaiah promises that the burden and yoke of the oppressor will eventually be removed from God’s people.

Judges 6:1

Israel suffered under Midian because of rebellion, and the nation experienced severe oppression before God brought deliverance.

Spiritual Principle

God does not need overwhelming human strength to break overwhelming oppression.

Key Truth

The same God who defeated Midian can break modern yokes.

V. THE EQUIPMENT OF WAR WILL BE BURNED

Isaiah 9:5 — The End of Battle

> **“Every warrior’s boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, fuel for the fire.”**

The picture is not merely victory in one battle.

It points toward the ending of war.

Military equipment becomes unnecessary.

Boots:

Burned.

Bloodstained garments:

Burned.

Why?

Because the coming King brings peace.

Cross References

Judges 7:22

God brought supernatural confusion upon Midian so that the enemy army destroyed itself and Israel was delivered.

Nahum 2:3

Nahum describes warriors, weapons, chariots, and the violent appearance of an army prepared for battle.

Ezekiel 39:9

After divine victory, weapons are gathered and burned because they are no longer needed for war.

Spiritual Principle

God’s final peace is not merely the pause between wars.

It is the end of the machinery of war.

VI. THE PROMISED CHILD IS BORN

Isaiah 9:6 — Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace

> **“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will rest on His shoulders. And He will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”**

This is one of the greatest messianic prophecies in Scripture.

A child is:

Born.

A Son is:

Given.

He is genuinely human.

Yet His titles point beyond ordinary humanity.

The government rests upon:

His shoulders.

Not:

Ahaz.

Not:

Assyria.

Not:

Any earthly empire.

His names reveal His character.

Wonderful Counselor

His wisdom is beyond human limitation.

He gives perfect counsel.

Mighty God

The coming King possesses divine strength and identity.

Everlasting Father

This title speaks of His enduring, father-like care and royal protection toward His people.

It does not collapse the distinction between the Son and God the Father.

Rather, it describes the Messiah’s eternal, compassionate rule.

Prince of Peace

He brings the peace humanity cannot produce for itself.

Cross References

Luke 2:11

The angels announce that a Savior has been born who is Christ the Lord.

Luke 1:32

The angel tells Mary that her Son will be great, will be called the Son of the Most High, and will receive the throne of David.

John 14:27

Jesus promises His disciples a peace unlike the peace the world gives and tells them not to let their hearts remain troubled or afraid.

Spiritual Principle

The answer to the world's darkness is not ultimately a program.

It is a Person.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The government of the universe rests safely upon shoulders strong enough to carry it.

VII. HIS KINGDOM WILL NEVER END

Isaiah 9:7 — The Throne of David Forever

> **"Of the greatness of His government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord of Heaven's Armies will accomplish this."**

Every human government ends.

This kingdom does not.

Its foundation is:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Its duration is:

Forever.

Its guarantee is:

God Himself.

Isaiah does not say:

Human determination will accomplish this.

He says:

> **“The zeal of the Lord of Heaven’s Armies will accomplish this.”**

Cross References

Luke 1:33

The angel declares that Jesus will reign over the house of Jacob forever and that His kingdom will never end.

2 Samuel 7:13

God promised David that his royal line would be connected with an enduring kingdom and throne.

Daniel 7:14

The Son of Man receives authority, glory, and a kingdom over all peoples, and His dominion is everlasting and cannot be destroyed.

Spiritual Principle

Christ’s kingdom does not depend upon human permission for its survival.

Key Truth

Every earthly kingdom expires.

The kingdom of Christ does not.

VIII. GOD SENDS A WORD OF JUDGMENT AGAINST ISRAEL

Isaiah 9:8 — The Message Falls on Jacob

> **“The Lord has sent a message against Jacob; it will fall on Israel.”**

Isaiah shifts from messianic hope back to present rebellion.

The same God who promises salvation also speaks judgment.

His Word is not empty.

It:

Falls.

Accomplishes.

Exposes.

Cross References

Amos 6:1

Woe is pronounced upon those who live carelessly and confidently while ignoring approaching judgment.

Hosea 5:5

Israel’s pride testifies against the nation, and that pride contributes to its downfall.

Proverbs 16:18

Pride comes before destruction, and arrogance prepares the way for collapse.

Spiritual Principle

God’s promises should comfort the faithful and warn the rebellious.

IX. ISRAEL RESPONDS WITH PRIDE

Isaiah 9:9 — Arrogance in Samaria

> **“All the people will know it—Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria—who say with pride and arrogance of heart:”**

God sends judgment.

But instead of humility:

Pride rises.

The problem is not merely external confidence.

Isaiah identifies:

> **“arrogance of heart.”**

Cross References

Proverbs 16:18

Pride moves directly toward destruction when it refuses correction.

Hosea 7:10

Israel’s pride testifies openly against the nation, yet the people still refuse to return to the Lord or seek Him.

Obadiah 1:3

Pride deceives those who feel secure and convinces them that no one can bring them down.

Spiritual Principle

Pride can turn warning into defiance instead of repentance.

X. THEY PROMISE TO REBUILD WITHOUT GOD

Isaiah 9:10 — “We Will Rebuild”

> **“The bricks have fallen down, but we will rebuild with dressed stone; the sycamore trees have been cut down, but we will replace them with cedars.”**

This sounds like resilience.

But in context:

It is rebellion.

They do not say:

We will repent.

We will seek God.

We will humble ourselves.

Instead:

We will rebuild bigger.

Better materials.

Greater strength.

Their response to judgment is self-confidence.

Cross References

Amos 5:11

Those who built impressive houses through oppression were warned that they would not enjoy what they constructed.

Job 40:12

God challenges Job to look upon everyone who is proud, humble them, and bring the wicked low, demonstrating that only God possesses complete authority over arrogance.

Isaiah 2:12

The Lord has appointed a day against everything proud, arrogant, and self-exalted, and all of it will be brought low.

Spiritual Principle

Rebuilding without repentance only rebuilds the conditions that produced the collapse.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Resilience without humility can become another form of rebellion.

XI. GOD STRENGTHENS THEIR ENEMIES

Isaiah 9:11 — Judgment from Multiple Directions

> **“But the Lord will strengthen Rezin’s foes against them and join their enemies together.”**

Israel assumes it can recover by its own strength.

God says:

Enemies will rise.

Again:

God remains sovereign over nations.

Cross References

2 Chronicles 28:18

Philistine forces attacked towns in Judah and occupied territory during the period of national weakness.

2 Kings 16:6

Rezin recovered territory and drove Judean influence away from an important strategic area.

Judges 2:14

Because Israel repeatedly abandoned the Lord, He allowed enemies to overpower them and permitted raiders to plunder them.

Spiritual Principle

Human confidence cannot shield people from consequences God has appointed.

XII. ISRAEL IS ATTACKED FROM EAST AND WEST

Isaiah 9:12 — God’s Hand Is Still Stretched Out

> **“Arameans from the east and Philistines from the west will devour Israel with open mouth. Yet for all this, His anger is not turned away; His hand is still stretched out.”**

Israel is surrounded.

Enemies come from:

East.

West.

Then comes the repeated refrain:

> **“His hand is still stretched out.”**

Here the outstretched hand is a hand of continuing judgment.

Why?

The people remain unrepentant.

Cross References

2 Chronicles 28:18

Philistines invaded towns and surrounding regions, exploiting Judah’s weakness.

Isaiah 9:21

The chapter later repeats that God’s anger remains because internal violence and rebellion continue.

Judges 10:9

Israel’s enemies crossed into the land and oppressed the people severely because of continuing rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

Consequences that do not produce repentance may be followed by stronger consequences.

XIII. THE PEOPLE STILL DO NOT RETURN TO GOD

Isaiah 9:13 — Discipline Without Repentance

> **“But the people have not returned to Him who struck them, nor have they sought the Lord Almighty.”**

This verse explains the repeated judgment.

God’s discipline has a purpose:

Return.

Seek.

Repent.

But they refuse.

Cross References

Amos 4:6

God brought hardship upon Israel, yet repeatedly says that the people still did not return to Him.

Hosea 7:10

Israel’s pride stands against them, but despite their distress they do not return to the Lord or seek Him.

Jeremiah 5:3

God disciplined the people, but they refused correction, hardened themselves, and would not return.

Spiritual Principle

Pain does not automatically produce repentance.

Key Truth

The right response to divine correction is not greater stubbornness.

It is return.

XIV. GOD WILL REMOVE HEAD AND TAIL

Isaiah 9:14 — Leadership Judged in One Day

> **“So the Lord will cut off from Israel both head and tail, both palm branch and reed, in a single day.”**

The imagery includes:

High and low.

Influential and insignificant.

Leadership structures will collapse.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:44

Under covenant judgment, Israel would fall from a position of strength until others rose above them.

Isaiah 9:15

Isaiah immediately identifies the head as respected elders and the tail as false prophets.

Amos 2:14

Under judgment, even the swift, strong, and powerful would lose their ability to escape.

Spiritual Principle

No social position creates immunity from God’s judgment.

XV. FALSE PROPHETS ARE PART OF THE PROBLEM

Isaiah 9:15 — The Head and the Tail

> **“The elders and honored men are the head, the prophets who teach lies are the tail.”**

Isaiah interprets the symbolism.

The leaders:

Head.

The lying prophets:

Tail.

False spiritual leadership is especially destructive because it gives religious authority to error.

Cross References

Micah 3:11

Judges take bribes, priests teach for payment, and prophets speak for financial gain while falsely assuming God guarantees their security.

Jeremiah 5:31

Prophets speak lies, priests misuse their authority, and the people actually prefer the corrupt arrangement.

Jeremiah 14:14

God says false prophets are speaking lies in His name even though He did not send, command, or speak to them.

Spiritual Principle

A lie becomes especially dangerous when it is preached in God’s name.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not assume a spiritual title guarantees a truthful message.

XVI. MISLEADING LEADERS DESTROY PEOPLE

Isaiah 9:16 — Leaders Confuse the Path

> **“Those who guide this people mislead them, and those who are guided are destroyed.”**

Leadership has consequences.

Bad guidance is not harmless.

It affects the people who follow.

Cross References

Matthew 15:14

Jesus describes blind guides leading blind people, warning that when both lack true sight, both eventually fall into the same pit.

Jeremiah 23:1

God pronounces judgment upon shepherds who destroy and scatter the flock entrusted to their care.

Micah 3:5

False prophets lead the people astray, shaping their message according to personal advantage instead of truth.

Spiritual Principle

Following the wrong guide can still lead to real destruction even when the follower is sincere.

Key Truth

Sincerity cannot make false direction safe.

XVII. CORRUPTION HAS SPREAD THROUGHOUT SOCIETY

Isaiah 9:17 — Every Mouth Speaks Folly

> **“Therefore the Lord takes no pleasure in the young men, nor does He show compassion to the fatherless and widows; for everyone is ungodly and wicked, every mouth speaks folly. Yet for all this, His anger is not turned away; His hand is still stretched out.”**

Ordinarily:

Orphans.

Widows.

Vulnerable people.

Receive special emphasis in divine compassion.

The language here underscores how thoroughly corruption has spread through the society under judgment.

Isaiah says:

Everyone is ungodly.

Every mouth speaks folly.

This is a description of widespread rebellion, not a denial of God’s general compassion toward the vulnerable.

Cross References

Jeremiah 9:6

The people live surrounded by deceit and refuse to know the Lord because deception has become normal.

Job 8:13

Those who forget God and live without genuine faith eventually discover that false hope cannot endure.

Jeremiah 23:11

God says both prophet and priest have become corrupt and that wickedness has even entered places associated with worship.

Spiritual Principle

Sin can spread until corruption becomes socially normal.

XVIII. WICKEDNESS BURNS LIKE FIRE

Isaiah 9:18 — Sin Becomes Its Own Conflagration

> **“Surely wickedness burns like a fire; it consumes briers and thorns, it sets the forest thickets ablaze, so that it rolls upward in a column of smoke.”**

This is one of Isaiah’s great pictures of sin.

Wickedness is not static.

It spreads.

Like fire:

It catches.

Consumes.

Expands.

Destroys.

Cross References

Malachi 4:1

The coming day of judgment is compared to a burning furnace in which arrogance and wickedness become like dry material consumed by fire.

Isaiah 10:17

The Holy One is compared to a flame that will burn and consume what stands under judgment.

Jeremiah 21:14

God warns that He will kindle a fire of judgment according to the fruit of the people's actions, and that fire will consume what surrounds them.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is rarely content to remain small.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A tolerated spark can become a consuming fire.

XIX. THE LAND IS SCORCHED UNDER JUDGMENT

Isaiah 9:19 — People Become Fuel for the Fire

> **"By the wrath of the Lord Almighty the land will be scorched, and the people will be fuel for the fire; they will not spare one another."**

Judgment and human wickedness combine in devastating consequences.

The people turn upon one another.

Social unity collapses.

Cross References

Jeremiah 15:2

God describes severe forms of judgment including death, sword, famine, and captivity.

Micah 7:2

Faithfulness disappears, violence fills society, and people begin hunting and exploiting one another.

Zephaniah 1:18

Silver and gold will not rescue people in the day of divine judgment, when the land is consumed under God's righteous wrath.

Spiritual Principle

A society that abandons love and truth eventually begins devouring itself.

XX. EVEN CONSUMPTION DOES NOT SATISFY

Isaiah 9:20 — Hungry After Devouring

> **“On the right they will devour, but still be hungry; on the left they will eat, but not be satisfied. Each will feed on the flesh of their own offspring.”**

This is horrifying imagery.

The central point is:

Insatiability.

They consume.

Still:

Hungry.

They devour.

Still:

Unsatisfied.

Extreme judgment and social breakdown lead to unimaginable conditions.

Cross References

Leviticus 26:29

God warned that severe covenant judgment and siege could become so desperate that people would consume even their own children.

Ezekiel 5:10

Ezekiel warns Jerusalem of horrifying conditions under siege because of persistent rebellion.

Lamentations 4:10

During Jerusalem’s devastation, hunger became so severe that conditions reached horrifying extremes.

Spiritual Principle

Sin promises satisfaction but repeatedly increases hunger.

Key Truth

What cannot satisfy spiritually will always demand more.

XXI. THE TRIBES TURN AGAINST ONE ANOTHER

Isaiah 9:21 — Manasseh Against Ephraim

> **“Manasseh will attack Ephraim, and Ephraim will attack Manasseh; together they will turn against Judah. Yet for all this, His anger is not turned away; His hand is still stretched out.”**

The chapter ends with:

Brother against brother.

Tribe against tribe.

Then:

Together against Judah.

Sin has destroyed:

Unity.

Compassion.

Loyalty.

The repeated refrain closes the chapter:

> **“His hand is still stretched out.”**

Cross References

Galatians 5:15

Paul warns that if people continually bite and devour one another, they should take care that they are not eventually consumed by one another.

Isaiah 9:12

Earlier in the chapter, God declared that judgment had not ended because rebellion continued.

Isaiah 9:17

The same refrain appears again because widespread wickedness remains unrepented.

Spiritual Principle

Division becomes self-destructive when sin replaces covenant love.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A people that continually devours one another eventually becomes too weak to stand together.

XXII. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 9

1. Darkness Does Not Have the Final Word

Galilee moves from humiliation to light.

Principle:

God can bring hope into the very place where suffering has been deepest.

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2. Christ Is the Great Light

Matthew applies Isaiah’s prophecy to Jesus.

Principle:

Humanity’s deepest darkness requires more than information; it requires Christ.

---

3. The Messiah Breaks Oppression

The yoke is shattered.

Principle:

God’s salvation brings true freedom.

---

4. The Promised Son Is the Prince of Peace

His names reveal:

Wisdom.

Divine power.

Enduring care.

Peace.

Principle:

Everything humanity ultimately needs is found in the righteous King God provides.

---

5. Christ’s Kingdom Is Eternal

His government has no end.

Principle:

Do not build ultimate hope on governments that cannot last.

---

6. Pride Prevents Repentance

Israel wants to rebuild without returning to God.

Principle:

Self-confidence can become a barrier to spiritual recovery.

---

7. False Leaders Multiply Destruction

Corrupt leaders and lying prophets mislead the people.

Principle:

Bad leadership can turn personal sin into national disaster.

---

8. Wickedness Eventually Consumes Itself

Sin burns like fire and turns people against one another.

Principle:

Rebellion eventually destroys the community it promised to liberate.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 9 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

Isaiah presents the Messiah as:

Child.

Son.

King.

Counselor.

Mighty God.

Everlasting Father in royal care.

Prince of Peace.

The prophecy combines:

Human birth.

Divine identity.

Davidic kingship.

Eternal rule.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Child born in Bethlehem is the King whose government reaches eternity.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 9 TEACHES ABOUT LIGHT

Light is not merely:

Knowledge.

Optimism.

Human progress.

The New Testament identifies this light with:

Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Principle

Christ enters darkness rather than merely commenting on it from a distance.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 9 TEACHES ABOUT JOY

God increases joy like:

Harvest.

Victory.

The joy comes after:

Darkness.

Oppression.

Fear.

Key Truth

God’s joy is not dependent upon pretending sorrow never existed.

It can arise from deliverance through sorrow.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 9 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE

The Messiah is:

Prince of Peace.

Peace flows from His righteous government.

It is not merely the absence of conflict.

It is the presence of:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Order.

Wholeness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Peace cannot be permanently separated from righteousness.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 9 TEACHES ABOUT GOVERNMENT

Government rests on the Messiah’s shoulders.

He rules with:

Justice.

Righteousness.

No human government perfectly achieves this.

His will.

Spiritual Principle

Every human ruler should be measured beneath, not beside, the righteous rule of Christ.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 9 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

Israel experiences loss.

Instead of repentance:

They boast.

“We will rebuild.”

Pride turns warning into self-assertion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before rebuilding what fell, ask why God allowed it to fall.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 9 TEACHES ABOUT REPENTANCE

Verse 13 explains the continuing judgment:

> **“The people have not returned.”**

The issue is not merely that judgment happened.

It is that repentance did not.

Spiritual Principle

God’s correction should move us toward Him, not make us more defiant.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 9 TEACHES ABOUT LEADERSHIP

Leaders can either:

Guide.

Or:

Mislead.

False prophets can:

Speak truth.

Or:

Teach lies.

Leadership matters because followers are affected.

Key Truth

The quality of leadership often becomes the direction of the people.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 9 TEACHES ABOUT FALSE PROPHECY

The false prophet is called:

The tail.

Why?

He follows corruption instead of leading people toward truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A prophet who tells people only what they want to hear has stopped leading and started following.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 9 TEACHES ABOUT WICKEDNESS

Wickedness burns like fire.

It begins:

Somewhere.

Then spreads:

Everywhere.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is never as private as it first appears.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 9 TEACHES ABOUT DIVISION

Manasseh fights Ephraim.

Ephraim fights Manasseh.

Both attack Judah.

This is what happens when:

Self-interest.

Hatred.

Fear.

Sin.

Overtake covenant loyalty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When people lose their common devotion to God, they often turn their strength against one another.

XXXIV. THE GREAT LIGHT AFTER GREAT DARKNESS

The chapter begins beautifully.

Darkness:

Then light.

Humiliation:

Then honor.

Oppression:

Then freedom.

War:

Then peace.

This is the pattern of messianic hope.

Spiritual Principle

God often introduces His greatest promises against the darkest backgrounds.

XXXV. THE GOVERNMENT ON HIS SHOULDERS

Human leaders sometimes speak of carrying heavy responsibility.

Isaiah pictures the Messiah carrying:

Government itself.

He does not collapse under its weight.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You do not have to carry what belongs on Christ’s shoulders.

XXXVI. WONDERFUL COUNSELOR

Human counsel can be:

Limited.

Biased.

Mistaken.

Christ’s counsel is:

Perfect.

Wise.

True.

Spiritual Principle

Bring decisions first to the wisdom of the One who cannot be confused.

XXXVII. MIGHTY GOD

This title sets the promised Son apart.

He is not merely:

Strong king.

Gifted leader.

Great teacher.

The prophecy assigns Him a title of divine power.

Key Truth

The Messiah’s ability to save is rooted in who He is.

XXXVIII. EVERLASTING FATHER

In ancient royal language, a righteous king could be described as a fatherly protector of his people.

Here the Messiah’s care is:

Enduring.

Faithful.

Protective.

The title describes His relationship to those under His reign, not a confusion of the distinct persons of the Trinity.

Spiritual Principle

Christ rules His people with enduring care, not cold authority.

XXXIX. PRINCE OF PEACE

Humanity seeks peace through:

Treaties.

Power.

Diplomacy.

Weapons.

Economics.

The final and perfect peace comes through:

The Prince of Peace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Peace is secure when the Prince of Peace is on the throne.

XL. NO END TO HIS KINGDOM

Every empire in history has:

Risen.

Expanded.

Declined.

Ended.

Not Christ’s kingdom.

Spiritual Principle

The wisest eternal investment is in the kingdom that cannot expire.

XLI. THE DANGER OF “WE WILL REBUILD”

There is nothing inherently wrong with rebuilding.

The problem is rebuilding:

Without repentance.

Without God.

With greater pride.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not rebuild the wall while preserving the crack that caused it to fall.

XLII. THE HAND STILL STRETCHED OUT

This phrase repeats.

Judgment continues because:

Rebellion continues.

God’s discipline has not produced repentance.

Spiritual Principle

Do not force God to repeat a lesson by refusing to learn from the first warning.

XLIII. THE FIRE OF WICKEDNESS

Sin burns through:

Individuals.

Families.

Communities.

Nations.

What people call freedom can become destruction when it abandons God’s moral order.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never warm yourself beside a fire that is burning down your own house.

XLIV. CHRIST AND THE DARKNESS

Matthew sees Isaiah 9 fulfilled when Jesus ministers in Galilee.

This matters.

The great Light is not abstract.

It has:

A face.

A voice.

A name.

Jesus.

Spiritual Principle

Christian hope is centered not merely in better conditions but in Christ Himself.

XLV. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What region had previously experienced humiliation?

The lands associated with Zebulun and Naphtali.

Question 2

What would happen to that region in the future?

It would receive special honor and become associated with the dawning of a great light.

Question 3

How does Matthew understand this prophecy?

Matthew connects it directly with Jesus' ministry in Galilee.

Question 4

What does the great light represent?

In the New Testament fulfillment, it points to Jesus Christ bringing salvation into spiritual darkness.

Question 5

Why does the nation rejoice?

God brings deliverance, freedom, and blessing like the joy of harvest and victory.

Question 6

What does the reference to Midian mean?

It recalls Gideon's victory, in which God demonstrated that deliverance came through His power rather than superior human strength.

Question 7

Who is the Child of verse 6?

The prophecy points to the coming Messiah and finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

Question 8

What four titles are given to Him?

Wonderful Counselor.

Mighty God.

Everlasting Father.

Prince of Peace.

Question 9

How long will His government last?

Forever.

There will be no end to the increase of His government and peace.

Question 10

What guarantees the fulfillment of this promise?

The zeal of the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

Question 11

What was Israel’s response to judgment?

Pride rather than repentance.

Question 12

What did they mean by rebuilding with dressed stone and cedar?

They confidently intended to recover through their own strength and improve what had been destroyed without humbling themselves before God.

Question 13

Why did God continue His judgment?

The people refused to return to Him or seek Him.

Question 14

Who were responsible for misleading the people?

Corrupt elders, leaders, and false prophets.

Question 15

How does Isaiah describe wickedness?

Like a spreading fire that consumes everything around it.

Question 16

How does the chapter end?

With violent division between the tribes and the repeated warning that God’s judging hand remains stretched out.

XLVI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 9 asks several searching questions.

Where Is There Darkness in My Life?

Do I believe Christ can bring light there?

Am I Looking to Christ as My Counselor?

Or am I making major decisions without His Word?

Do I Believe He Is Mighty Enough?

What problem have I mentally made bigger than Christ?

Am I Resting in the Prince of Peace?

Or am I seeking peace only through circumstances?

What Am I Rebuilding?

Am I rebuilding with repentance?

Or merely with greater determination?

How Do I Respond to Correction?

Humility?

Or:

Pride?

Who Is Guiding Me?

Are my spiritual leaders faithful to Scripture?

Am I Following Someone Merely Because They Sound confident?

Do I test their teaching?

Is Wickedness Spreading Anywhere in My Life?

What spark needs to be extinguished before it becomes a fire?

Am I Contributing to Unity or Devouring Others?

What do my words produce?

Peace?

Or conflict?

XLVII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“When Darkness Is Deepest, Look for the Light God Has Promised”

Isaiah does not deny the darkness.

He names it.

But then:

A light dawns.

Principle:

Biblical hope does not pretend darkness is absent; it declares that darkness is not final.

XLVIII. FROM GALILEE TO THE KINGDOM

The prophecy begins in:

Galilee.

Then expands to:

A kingdom without end.

Christ’s ministry begins in what many considered an insignificant region.

Yet His reign reaches eternity.

Spiritual Principle

Never judge the importance of God’s work merely by how small its beginning appears.

XLIX. A CHILD BORN, A SON GIVEN

Two phrases.

A child:

Born.

A Son:

Given.

The language beautifully presents both:

Humanity.

Gift.

The Messiah enters history through birth.

Yet He is also given by God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Christmas is not merely the birth of a remarkable child.

It is God giving the promised Son.

L. THE THRONE OF DAVID

God made promises to David.

Isaiah says:

The Messiah will sit upon David’s throne.

The promise is not abandoned.

Spiritual Principle

God remembers covenant promises long after humans have forgotten them.

LI. JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS FOREVER

Human rulers often struggle to combine:

Power.

Justice.

Righteousness.

Christ does so perfectly.

Key Truth

The kingdom of Christ is powerful without being corrupt and righteous without being weak.

LII. PRIDE THAT MISREADS JUDGMENT

Israel sees fallen bricks.

Instead of saying:

“We sinned.”

They say:

“We will build better.”

That is spiritual blindness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A stronger replacement is useless if the original rebellion remains untouched.

LIII. LEADERS WHO MISLEAD

Isaiah places responsibility upon:

Leaders.

And:

Followers.

Leaders mislead.

Followers are destroyed.

Spiritual Principle

Choose teachers carefully because direction eventually becomes destination.

LIV. WHEN SIN BECOMES A WILDFIRE

Wickedness consumes:

Briers.

Thorns.

Forests.

Then:

People.

This imagery shows escalation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Deal with sin while it is still a spark.

LV. THE GREAT CONTRAST OF ISAIAH 9

The chapter contains two kingship pictures.

One:

The perfect King.

Christ.

The other:

Corrupt human leadership.

One brings:

Light.

Peace.

Justice.

Righteousness.

The other produces:

Misleading.

Pride.

Violence.

Destruction.

Spiritual Principle

Isaiah is teaching us where final confidence belongs:

Not in human rulers.

In the Messiah.

LVI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 9 begins where many people sometimes feel they are living:

In darkness.

The land has been humbled.

Fear has spread.

Oppression has been heavy.

The future looks uncertain.

Then God says:

Light is coming.

That light is ultimately revealed in:

Jesus Christ.

The New Testament takes Isaiah’s ancient prophecy and points directly to Jesus ministering in Galilee.

The people walking in darkness:

See Him.

The Light has dawned.

Then Isaiah gives us the reason for hope:

> **“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.”**

A Child.

A Son.

A King.

Wonderful Counselor.

When you do not know what to do:

Look to Him.

Mighty God.

When the burden is too heavy:

Trust His strength.

Everlasting Father.

When you need enduring care:

Rest under His rule.

Prince of Peace.

When your heart is troubled:

Come to Him.

His government has:

No expiration date.

His peace has:

No final boundary.

His justice cannot be corrupted.

His righteousness cannot decay.

His kingdom cannot collapse.

That is the hope of Isaiah 9.

But the chapter also gives a warning.

It is possible to experience correction and refuse repentance.

Israel says:

“We will rebuild.”

That sounds courageous.

But courage without humility can become pride.

Do not merely rebuild what sin damaged.

Deal with the sin.

Do not say:

“I will recover.”

Without also asking:

“Lord, what must change?”

The chapter also warns us about leadership.

False leaders can destroy people.

False prophets can sound spiritual while teaching lies.

Therefore:

Test those you follow.

Test the message.

Stay anchored in God’s Word.

Finally:

Remember that sin burns.

One tolerated spark can become a forest fire.

Deal with:

Bitterness.

Greed.

Pride.

Falsehood.

Hatred.

Division.

Before they spread.

And when darkness seems strongest:

Look again toward Galilee.

The Light has dawned.

When the world appears unstable:

Look toward the throne.

The government rests on His shoulders.

When peace seems impossible:

Remember the Prince of Peace.

And when every earthly kingdom changes:

Remember:

His kingdom has no end.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for sending light into our darkness.

Thank You for Jesus Christ.

Thank You that the people walking in darkness have seen a great Light.

When our lives feel dark:

Turn our eyes toward Christ.

When we do not know what to do:

Remind us that He is our Wonderful Counselor.

When we feel weak:

Remind us that He is Mighty God.

When we feel abandoned:

Remind us of His everlasting care.

When our hearts are troubled:

Remind us that He is the Prince of Peace.

Father, thank You that the government rests upon His shoulders.

Forgive us for trying to carry what belongs to Him.

Teach us to trust His rule.

Thank You that His kingdom is built upon:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Peace.

And that His kingdom will never end.

Father, protect us from pride.

When You correct us, help us repent instead of merely becoming more determined to rebuild in our own strength.

Give us humility to ask:

What are You teaching us?

What must change?

Father, protect us from false leaders.

Give pastors, teachers, and leaders courage to speak truth.

Expose lies spoken in Your name.

Give Your people discernment.

Keep us from following blind guides.

Father, put out the fires of wickedness in our hearts.

Extinguish:

Hatred.

Bitterness.

Pride.

Jealousy.

Greed.

Lust.

Division.

Do not let small sins become consuming flames.

Make us people of:

Light.

Truth.

Peace.

Righteousness.

And when the world around us seems dark, may our lives point clearly toward Christ.

The Child born.

The Son given.

The King forever.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will rest on His shoulders. And He will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” — Isaiah 9:6**

Central Truth

God answers the darkness of sin, oppression, fear, and failed human leadership with the promised Messiah—Jesus Christ, the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace—whose righteous kingdom will never end, while unrepentant pride and wickedness ultimately consume those who refuse to return to God.

Isaiah 9 in One Sentence

Isaiah announces that a great Light will dawn in Galilee through the promised Messiah, whose eternal government will bring justice, righteousness, and peace, while warning that Israel’s pride, false leadership, refusal to repent, and spreading wickedness will bring continuing judgment and self-destruction.

Isaiah Chapter 10 — Woe to Oppressors, Judgment on Assyria, and the Remnant of Israel

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 10 deals with three major truths:

God judges injustice.

God rules over nations.

God preserves a faithful remnant.

The chapter opens with a severe warning against leaders who use law itself as an instrument of oppression.

They write:

Unjust laws.

Oppressive decrees.

They rob:

The poor.

Widows.

The fatherless.

God asks them:

“What will you do on the day of judgment?”

Power will not protect them.

Wealth will not rescue them.

Government position will not provide refuge.

Then Isaiah turns toward Assyria.

Assyria is one of the most powerful empires on earth.

Yet God describes the empire as:

“the rod of My anger.”

This is one of the clearest statements in Isaiah concerning divine sovereignty over nations.

Assyria believes:

It conquers by its own strength.

Its kings boast:

We conquered.

We plundered.

We destroyed.

We subdued kingdoms.

But God says Assyria is only:

An axe.

A saw.

A rod.

A club.

A tool cannot boast against the one using it.

God may sovereignly use a nation for His purposes while still holding that nation accountable for its:

Pride.

Violence.

Cruelty.

Arrogance.

Assyria intends to destroy nations for its own glory.

God uses Assyria within His judgment.

The same historical event therefore contains:

Human intention.

Divine purpose.

Then the chapter turns to hope.

A remnant will return.

They will no longer depend upon the power that struck them.

Instead:

> **“They will truly rely on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.”**

Finally, Assyria marches toward Jerusalem.

City after city trembles.

The enemy reaches Nob and shakes his fist toward Zion.

It appears unstoppable.

Then God acts.

The great forest is cut down.

The tall trees fall.

The lofty are humbled.

Lebanon falls:

> **“before the Mighty One.”**

The central truth of Isaiah 10 is:

God judges leaders who use power to oppress the weak, sovereignly uses nations as instruments of His purposes without approving their pride or cruelty, humbles every power that exalts itself, and preserves a faithful remnant who learns to rely upon the Holy One of Israel rather than human strength.

I. WOE TO THOSE WHO MAKE UNJUST LAWS

Isaiah 10:1 — Oppression Written into Law

> **“Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who write oppressive decrees.”**

Isaiah begins with:

Woe.

The problem is not merely individual wrongdoing.

Injustice has entered the legal system.

People with authority use:

Law.

Policy.

Decrees.

To protect oppression.

This is especially serious because law should defend justice.

Instead:

It becomes a weapon against the weak.

Cross References

Amos 2:6

God condemns Israel because they sell the righteous for money and treat the poor as though their lives were worth no more than a pair of sandals.

Exodus 23:6

God commands His people not to twist justice against a poor person simply because that person lacks social power or influence.

Micah 2:1

Woe belongs to those who lie awake planning evil and then carry it out when morning comes because they possess the power to do it.

Spiritual Principle

Something does not become righteous merely because it becomes legal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human law remains accountable to divine justice.

II. THE POOR ARE ROBBED OF THEIR RIGHTS

Isaiah 10:2 — Widows and Orphans Become Prey

> **“To deprive the poor of their rights and rob My people of justice, to make widows their prey and plunder the fatherless!”**

God identifies specific victims:

The poor.

Widows.

The fatherless.

These are people who often possess less political and economic power.

Instead of protecting them, corrupt leaders exploit them.

Notice God calls them:

> **“My people.”**

God takes their oppression personally.

Cross References

Micah 2:2

The wicked covet fields and steal them, desire houses and seize them, and oppress families by taking away their property and inheritance.

Psalm 94:6

The wicked murder widows and foreigners and even kill the fatherless without fear of accountability.

James 5:4

The unpaid wages of workers cry out against those who cheated them, and the cries of the oppressed reach the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

Spiritual Principle

God hears the cries that powerful people try to ignore.

Key Truth

How a society treats people with little power reveals much about its moral condition.

III. WHAT WILL OPPRESSORS DO WHEN JUDGMENT COMES?

Isaiah 10:3 — Wealth Cannot Be Hidden

> **“What will you do on the day of judgment, when disaster comes from afar? To whom will you run for help? Where will you leave your wealth?”**

Isaiah asks three devastating questions.

What will you do?

Where will you run?

Where will you leave your wealth?

Everything the oppressor trusted suddenly becomes useless.

Power:

Cannot save.

Money:

Cannot save.

Connections:

Cannot save.

Cross References

Hosea 9:7

The days of punishment and accountability arrive, and Israel will learn that judgment cannot be avoided forever.

Luke 19:44

Jesus warns Jerusalem that judgment will come because the people failed to recognize the time when God graciously visited them.

Jeremiah 5:31

Prophets speak falsely, priests misuse authority, and the people prefer it that way; yet God asks what they will do when the end finally comes.

Spiritual Principle

Every form of earthly power eventually meets a day when it cannot provide rescue.

IV. NOTHING REMAINS BUT DEFEAT

Isaiah 10:4 — Captivity or Death

> **“Nothing remains but to bow among the captives or fall among the slain. Yet for all this, His anger is not turned away; His hand is still stretched out.”**

The repeated refrain from Isaiah 9 appears again.

Judgment continues because rebellion continues.

Those who once stood proudly over others now:

Bow among captives.

Fall among the dead.

Cross References

Isaiah 9:12

Even after Israel experienced attack from surrounding enemies, God’s judging anger continued because the people still refused repentance.

Isaiah 5:25

God’s anger burned because of persistent rebellion, and even after severe judgment His hand remained raised.

2 Kings 17:6

Assyria captured Samaria and carried Israel away into exile, demonstrating the historical reality of the judgment Isaiah announced.

Spiritual Principle

Pride stands tall until judgment forces it down.

V. ASSYRIA IS THE ROD OF GOD’S ANGER

Isaiah 10:5 — A Powerful Nation Is Still a Tool

> **“Woe to the Assyrian, the rod of My anger, in whose hand is the club of My wrath!”**

This verse contains a remarkable tension.

Assyria is:

Powerful.

Cruel.

Imperial.

But God calls Assyria:

My rod.

God is sovereign even over nations that do not worship Him.

Assyria is an instrument.

Not:

The ultimate ruler.

Cross References

Isaiah 10:15

Isaiah later compares Assyria to an axe or saw that foolishly boasts against the person using the tool.

Habakkuk 1:6

God tells Habakkuk that He is raising up the fierce Babylonian nation to carry out judgment across the land.

Jeremiah 51:20

God describes a powerful kingdom as His war club and weapon through which He breaks nations and kingdoms.

Spiritual Principle

God can use a nation without approving everything that nation does.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A tool may be powerful, but it is never greater than the hand directing it.

VI. GOD SENDS ASSYRIA AGAINST A GODLESS NATION

Isaiah 10:6 — Judgment Through a Foreign Power

> **“I send him against a godless nation; I dispatch him against a people who have provoked My wrath, to seize loot, take plunder, and trample them down like mud in the streets.”**

God clearly states His purpose.

Assyria is sent as an instrument of judgment.

Israel’s rebellion has provoked God.

The invasion is therefore not outside divine sovereignty.

Cross References

Isaiah 5:25

God’s anger burns against His rebellious people because they rejected His truth and continued in sin.

Micah 7:10

Those who mocked God’s people would eventually experience humiliation themselves when God acted in justice.

2 Kings 17:7

Israel’s exile came because the people sinned against the Lord who had rescued them from Egypt and because they turned toward other gods.

Spiritual Principle

God may use historical events as instruments of discipline.

VII. ASSYRIA HAS ITS OWN WICKED INTENTION

Isaiah 10:7 — God’s Purpose and Man’s Purpose

> **“But this is not what he intends; this is not what he has in mind. His purpose is to destroy, to put an end to many nations.”**

This verse is essential for understanding divine sovereignty and human responsibility.

God has one purpose.

Assyria has another.

God uses Assyria for judgment.

Assyria seeks:

Conquest.

Destruction.

Glory.

Its motives are sinful.

God’s sovereignty does not excuse human wickedness.

Cross References

Genesis 50:20

Joseph tells his brothers that they intended evil against him, but God intended the same events for good in order to preserve many lives.

Habakkuk 1:7

The invading nation is terrifying and self-exalting, establishing its own authority and acting according to its own proud standards.

Acts 2:23

Jesus was handed over according to God’s determined purpose and foreknowledge, yet those who crucified Him remained morally responsible for their wicked actions.

Spiritual Principle

God can sovereignly accomplish His righteous purpose even through people whose intentions are evil.

Key Truth

Divine sovereignty never turns human sin into righteousness.

VIII. ASSYRIA BOASTS IN ITS COMMANDERS

Isaiah 10:8 — “Are Not My Commanders Kings?”

> **“He says: ‘Are not my commanders all kings?’”**

Assyria’s confidence grows.

Its military commanders seem as powerful as kings.

The empire evaluates itself by:

Military strength.

Conquest.

Political dominance.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:33

The Assyrian spokesman mocked the gods of conquered nations and claimed that none had been able to rescue their lands from Assyria.

Isaiah 36:18

Assyria warns Judah not to trust the Lord, arguing that other nations’ gods had failed to save them.

Isaiah 37:12

The Assyrian king boasts that earlier nations and their gods could not escape destruction.

Spiritual Principle

Repeated success can tempt people to confuse temporary dominance with ultimate sovereignty.

IX. ASSYRIA LISTS ITS CONQUESTS

Isaiah 10:9 — One City After Another

> **“Has not Calno fared like Carchemish? Is not Hamath like Arpad, and Samaria like Damascus?”**

Assyria keeps a record of victories.

City after city has fallen.

The implied argument is:

Jerusalem will be no different.

But Assyria fails to recognize one critical difference:

Jerusalem is under the covenant purposes of the living God.

Cross References

Isaiah 37:13

The Assyrian challenge lists previously defeated kings and cities as evidence of supposedly unstoppable power.

2 Kings 19:12

Assyria points to earlier conquered nations and asks whether their gods were able to rescue them.

Isaiah 36:19

The Assyrian spokesman mocks the gods of conquered regions and compares them with Jerusalem’s God.

Spiritual Principle

Past victories do not guarantee future victory when human power collides with God’s purpose.

X. ASSYRIA BOASTS OVER IDOLATROUS KINGDOMS

Isaiah 10:10 — False Comparisons

> **“As my hand seized the kingdoms of the idols, kingdoms whose carved images were greater than those of Jerusalem and Samaria—”**

Assyria makes a theological mistake.

It assumes:

The Lord is merely another regional god.

It compares Him with idols.

This is arrogance combined with spiritual blindness.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:34

Assyria lists conquered nations and asks where their gods were when their cities fell.

Isaiah 37:23

God rebukes Assyria for mocking and blaspheming the Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 36:19

The Assyrian spokesman compares the Lord with powerless idols from defeated nations.

Spiritual Principle

Never judge the living God by the failures of false gods.

XI. ASSYRIA THINKS JERUSALEM WILL FALL THE SAME WAY

Isaiah 10:11 — The Ultimate Miscalculation

> **“Shall I not deal with Jerusalem and her idols as I dealt with Samaria and her idols?”**

Assyria assumes:

Jerusalem is simply next.

But Jerusalem’s idols are not the same as:

The Lord.

Judah may have been guilty of idolatry.

Yet the living God remains sovereign.

Cross References

Isaiah 36:20

Assyria asks which god among the nations has delivered its land and arrogantly assumes Jerusalem’s God will fail as well.

Isaiah 37:23

The Lord identifies Assyria’s boast as an insult directed against the Holy One of Israel Himself.

2 Kings 18:35

The Assyrian commander asks who among all the gods of the lands has rescued a country from Assyria’s power.

Spiritual Principle

Arrogance often overreaches because it cannot distinguish between human weakness and divine weakness.

XII. GOD WILL JUDGE ASSYRIA’S PRIDE

Isaiah 10:12 — The Instrument Will Be Judged

> **“When the Lord has finished all His work against Mount Zion and Jerusalem, He will punish the king of Assyria for the fruit of his arrogant heart and the pride of his haughty eyes.”**

God will finish His work.

Then:

He will judge the tool He used.

Assyria is accountable for:

Arrogance.

Pride.

Cruelty.

Self-exaltation.

Cross References

Isaiah 37:36

The angel of the Lord struck the Assyrian camp, causing an enormous military defeat in a single night.

2 Kings 19:35

God brought devastating judgment against the Assyrian army outside Jerusalem.

Isaiah 14:25

God promises to crush Assyria and remove its yoke from His people.

Spiritual Principle

Being used by God does not exempt anyone from being judged by God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s usefulness of a person is never permission for that person’s pride.

XIII. ASSYRIA TAKES CREDIT FOR EVERYTHING

Isaiah 10:13 — “By My Strength”

> **“For he says: ‘By the strength of my hand I have done this, and by my wisdom, because I have understanding. I removed the boundaries of nations, I plundered their treasures; like a mighty one I subdued their kings.’”**

Listen to the repeated language:

My hand.

My wisdom.

My understanding.

I removed.

I plundered.

I subdued.

There is no acknowledgment of God.

This is the vocabulary of pride.

Cross References

Daniel 4:30

Nebuchadnezzar looked at Babylon and boasted that he had built the great city by his own power for his own glory.

Deuteronomy 8:17

God warns His people not to say that their own power and strength created their wealth.

Habakkuk 1:16

A conquering nation worships its own military strength because that strength has produced wealth and victory.

Spiritual Principle

Pride takes personal credit for gifts, opportunities, and abilities that ultimately came under God’s providence.

XIV. ASSYRIA THINKS THE WORLD IS A NEST

Isaiah 10:14 — No One Dared Resist

> **“As one reaches into a nest, so my hand reached for the wealth of nations. As people gather abandoned eggs, so I gathered the whole earth; no one flapped a wing, opened a mouth, or chirped.”**

Assyria views nations as helpless nests.

It sees itself as unstoppable.

No resistance.

No opposition.

No challenge.

This confidence becomes arrogance.

Cross References

Habakkuk 1:15

The conqueror gathers nations like fish caught in nets and rejoices over military success.

Deuteronomy 8:17

God warns against imagining that human strength alone produced prosperity.

Ezekiel 29:3

Pharaoh is condemned for boasting in his own greatness and acting as though Egypt’s resources belonged to him independently of God.

Spiritual Principle

When success encounters no resistance, humility becomes especially important.

XV. THE AXE CANNOT BOAST AGAINST THE WOODCUTTER

Isaiah 10:15 — Tool Versus User

> **“Does the axe raise itself above the one who swings it, or the saw boast against the one who uses it? As if a rod could wield the one who lifts it up, or a club could raise the one who is not wood!”**

This is the central image of the chapter.

Assyria is:

An axe.

God is:

The One using it.

How absurd for the axe to boast.

The tool has:

No independent glory.

Cross References

Romans 9:20

Paul asks who the human being is to argue arrogantly with God, like a created object challenging the One who formed it.

Isaiah 29:16

Isaiah condemns the absurdity of reversing Creator and creature, as though pottery could claim superiority over the potter.

Isaiah 45:9

Woe belongs to the one who quarrels with the Creator, like a piece of clay challenging the Potter who shapes it.

Spiritual Principle

Created power never becomes Creator power.

Key Truth

The tool should never take the glory that belongs to the hand using it.

XVI. GOD WILL WEAKEN ASSYRIA’S STRONG MEN

Isaiah 10:16 — Fire Beneath the Pomp

> **“Therefore the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, will send a wasting disease among his strong warriors; under his pomp a fire will be kindled, like a blazing flame.”**

Assyria appears:

Healthy.

Strong.

Magnificent.

God sees beneath the pomp.

Judgment will burn under the glory.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:35

The Lord struck the Assyrian army during the night and left its military power devastated.

Isaiah 37:36

God’s angel destroyed an enormous portion of the Assyrian force outside Jerusalem.

Malachi 4:1

The coming day of judgment is pictured as a furnace consuming arrogant and wicked people like dry stubble.

Spiritual Principle

Outward strength can conceal approaching collapse.

XVII. THE LIGHT OF ISRAEL BECOMES A FIRE

Isaiah 10:17 — The Holy One Consumes Assyria

> **“The Light of Israel will become a fire, their Holy One a flame; in a single day it will burn and consume his thorns and his briers.”**

God is:

Light to His people.

Fire to arrogant opposition.

The Holy One whom Assyria mocked becomes the One who destroys its power.

Cross References

Isaiah 37:36

The Lord brought sudden destruction upon the Assyrian army.

2 Kings 19:35

In one night God struck the invading army and shattered its apparent invincibility.

Zechariah 12:6

God pictures His people under His power like fire among wood and flame among dry material, consuming surrounding enemies.

Spiritual Principle

The God who comforts His people can also judge those who oppose His holy purposes.

XVIII. ASSYRIA’S SPLENDOR WILL WITHER

Isaiah 10:18 — Forest and Field Destroyed

> **“The splendor of his forests and fertile fields it will completely destroy, both soul and body, as when a sick man wastes away.”**

The empire is compared to:

A forest.

A fertile field.

Both are devastated.

Military splendor disappears.

Cross References

Isaiah 37:36

God’s judgment dramatically reduced Assyria’s military force.

2 Kings 19:35

The Assyrian camp experienced catastrophic loss in a single night.

Nahum 1:14

God announces the end of Assyria’s power and declares that its name and idolatrous legacy will not continue indefinitely.

Spiritual Principle

No empire possesses permanent splendor.

XIX. SO FEW WILL REMAIN THAT A CHILD CAN COUNT THEM

Isaiah 10:19 — The Mighty Forest Reduced

> **“And the trees left standing in his forest will be so few that a child could count them.”**

The great forest becomes:

A handful.

The empire that boasted of countless conquests becomes countable.

Cross References

Isaiah 6:13

Isaiah earlier pictured judgment reducing a people like a tree cut down until only a stump remains.

2 Kings 19:35

Assyria’s enormous army was suddenly reduced by divine judgment.

Nahum 2:13

God declares Himself against Nineveh and promises to destroy its military strength and silence its messengers.

Spiritual Principle

God can reduce what appears immeasurably powerful to almost nothing.

XX. THE REMNANT WILL RELY ON THE LORD

Isaiah 10:20 — No Longer Trusting the One Who Struck Them

> **“In that day the remnant of Israel, the survivors of Jacob, will no longer depend on him who struck them down but will truly rely on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.”**

This is one of the great restoration verses in the chapter.

Judgment teaches the remnant where not to trust.

They had leaned upon foreign power.

That power hurt them.

Now:

They return to God.

Cross References

Micah 4:7

God promises to make the weak and scattered remnant into a people over whom the Lord Himself will reign.

Zephaniah 3:12

God promises to leave a humble and lowly people who will seek refuge in the name of the Lord.

Romans 9:27

Paul quotes Isaiah and explains that although Israel may be numerous, only a remnant will experience the promised preservation.

Spiritual Principle

Sometimes painful experience teaches us to stop leaning on what cannot truly hold us.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A remnant is formed not merely by surviving judgment but by learning to trust God through it.

XXI. A REMNANT WILL RETURN TO THE MIGHTY GOD

Isaiah 10:21 — Shear-jashub Fulfilled

> **“A remnant will return, a remnant of Jacob will return to the Mighty God.”**

Isaiah’s son Shear-jashub carried this message in his name:

A remnant will return.

Return means more than:

Geographical movement.

It also carries the idea of:

Spiritual return.

The remnant comes back to:

The Mighty God.

Cross References

Romans 9:27

Paul uses Isaiah’s remnant language to explain that physical descent alone does not mean everyone participates in the saving promise.

Isaiah 7:3

Isaiah’s son Shear-jashub—whose name means “a remnant will return”—accompanied him as a living sign.

Isaiah 11:11

Isaiah later promises that God will again gather the surviving remnant of His people from the places where they were scattered.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration always points people back to Himself.

XXII. ONLY A REMNANT WILL RETURN

Isaiah 10:22 — Numerous as Sand, Yet Reduced

> **“Though your people, Israel, be as numerous as the sand on the seashore, only a remnant will return. Destruction has been decreed, overwhelming and righteous.”**

Large numbers do not cancel judgment.

Israel may be numerous.

But only a remnant returns.

Judgment is described as:

Righteous.

God is not acting unjustly.

Cross References

Romans 9:27

Paul quotes this verse to emphasize that only a remnant of Israel participates in the promised saving work.

Genesis 22:17

God promised Abraham that his descendants would become as numerous as the stars and the sand along the seashore.

Hosea 1:10

Hosea also declares that Israel’s descendants will become countless like the sand, yet the prophecy ultimately includes restoration after judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Numbers do not determine faithfulness.

XXIII. GOD WILL COMPLETE HIS DECREED JUDGMENT

Isaiah 10:23 — God Finishes What He Announces

> **“The Lord, the Lord of Hosts, will carry out the destruction decreed upon the whole land.”**

God’s judgment is not impulsive.

It is:

Decreed.

Purposed.

Measured.

He will accomplish what He has announced.

Cross References

Romans 9:28

Paul explains that the Lord will carry out His Word upon the earth fully and decisively.

Daniel 9:27

Daniel speaks of decreed judgment continuing until God’s appointed purpose is fulfilled.

Isaiah 28:22

Isaiah warns that God has determined a work of judgment against the land and calls people not to harden themselves against the warning.

Spiritual Principle

God’s warnings should be taken seriously because His Word does not expire through human unbelief.

XXIV. ZION IS TOLD NOT TO FEAR ASSYRIA

Isaiah 10:24 — The Rod Will Not Last Forever

> **“Therefore, this is what the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, says: ‘My people who live in Zion, do not be afraid of the Assyrian, who strikes you with a rod and lifts up a club against you, as Egypt did.’”**

Assyria is dangerous.

God does not deny the danger.

But He says:

Do not fear.

Why?

Because Assyria’s authority is:

Temporary.

Limited.

Subordinate.

The reference to Egypt recalls another oppressor God defeated.

Cross References

Exodus 14:13

Moses told the terrified Israelites not to fear but to stand firm and watch the Lord bring deliverance from Egypt.

2 Kings 19:6

God told Hezekiah not to be afraid of the blasphemous threats spoken by Assyria’s representatives.

Isaiah 37:6

Isaiah assured the king that he should not fear the words by which Assyria had insulted the living God.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people should never confuse temporary oppression with permanent defeat.

Key Truth

The rod is real.

But the hand holding history is greater.

XXV. GOD’S ANGER AGAINST HIS PEOPLE WILL END

Isaiah 10:25 — Judgment Has a Limit

> **“Very soon My anger against you will end, and My wrath will be directed to their destruction.”**

This is hope.

Discipline has:

A purpose.

A limit.

God’s judgment upon His people is not endless destruction.

The instrument of discipline will itself be judged.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:7

God promised that the Assyrian king would receive troubling news, return to his own land, and ultimately fall there.

Isaiah 37:7

God assures Hezekiah that Assyria’s threat will be turned back and the arrogant king will not accomplish what he boasts.

Nahum 1:9

God declares that Assyria’s affliction will not continue indefinitely because He will bring its power to a decisive end.

Spiritual Principle

God’s discipline of His people has a redemptive purpose and does not last forever.

XXVI. GOD WILL DEFEAT ASSYRIA AS HE DEFEATED MIDIAN AND EGYPT

Isaiah 10:26 — Remember Earlier Deliverance

> **“The Lord Almighty will lash them with a whip, as when He struck Midian at the rock of Oreb; and He will raise His staff over the waters, as He did in Egypt.”**

God reminds His people of:

Midian.

Egypt.

Past deliverance becomes fuel for present faith.

If God delivered before:

He can deliver again.

Cross References

Judges 7:25

Israel captured and killed Midianite leaders, including Oreb, after God gave Gideon victory over a far larger enemy force.

Exodus 14:27

When Moses stretched out his hand, the sea returned and overwhelmed the Egyptian forces pursuing Israel.

Isaiah 9:4

Isaiah compares God's future deliverance with the day He shattered Midian's oppressive yoke.

Spiritual Principle

Remembered deliverance strengthens present faith.

XXVII. THE YOKE WILL BE BROKEN

Isaiah 10:27 — The Burden Removed

> **"In that day their burden will be lifted from your shoulders, their yoke from your neck; the yoke will be broken because of the anointing."**

Assyria's oppression is pictured as:

A burden.

A yoke.

God removes both.

The power that once controlled Judah will be broken.

Cross References

Isaiah 14:25

God promises to crush Assyria and remove its burden from His people.

Nahum 1:13

God promises to break the oppressor's yoke and tear away the bonds that held His people.

Jeremiah 30:8

God promises to break the foreign yoke from His people's necks so they will no longer remain enslaved.

Spiritual Principle

No yoke remains unbreakable when God determines to remove it.

XXVIII. THE ASSYRIAN ARMY ADVANCES

Isaiah 10:28 — Aiath, Migron, Michmash

> **“They enter Aiath, pass through Migron; they store their supplies at Michmash.”**

The prophecy now becomes geographically vivid.

The enemy advances town by town.

The movement toward Jerusalem feels relentless.

Cross References

Nehemiah 11:31

Aiath and nearby locations are listed among the settlements associated with the people of Benjamin.

1 Samuel 13:5

Philistine forces once gathered at Michmash with a massive military force, causing Israel great fear.

1 Samuel 14:31

Israel later fought its enemies across the same broader region.

Spiritual Principle

A threat can move closer without ever moving beyond God’s limit.

XXIX. RAMAH TREMBLES AND GIBEAH FLEES

Isaiah 10:29 — Fear Spreads Toward Jerusalem

> **“They cross the pass and say, ‘We will camp at Geba for the night.’ Ramah trembles; Gibeah of Saul flees.”**

The invading force draws nearer.

Cities react with:

Fear.

Flight.

Panic.

Cross References

1 Samuel 22:6

Saul once stayed in Gibeah with his officials while exercising royal authority there.

Joshua 18:24

Geba is listed among the towns belonging to Benjamin.

1 Samuel 10:26

After Saul was publicly recognized as king, he returned to his home in Gibeah.

Spiritual Principle

Places associated with former strength can become places of fear when human security fails.

XXX. NEARBY TOWNS CRY OUT

Isaiah 10:30 — Gallim, Laishah, and Anathoth

> **“Cry out, Daughter of Gallim! Listen, Laishah! Poor Anathoth!”**

The advancing army spreads terror.

One town after another hears the danger.

The prophetic description creates the feeling of an enemy moving rapidly toward Zion.

Cross References

1 Samuel 25:44

Gallim is mentioned as the home of the man to whom Saul gave David’s wife Michal.

Joshua 15:44

Laish-related geographic names appear among settlements in the land, illustrating the broader network of towns vulnerable to invasion.

Jeremiah 1:1

Jeremiah came from Anathoth, a priestly town in Benjamin located near Jerusalem.

Spiritual Principle

National judgment touches ordinary communities, not merely kings and armies.

XXXI. PEOPLE FLEE AND TAKE COVER

Isaiah 10:31 — Madmenah and Gebim

> **“Madmenah is in flight; the people of Gebim take cover.”**

Fear continues to spread.

Flight.

Hiding.

Evacuation.

The empire appears unstoppable.

Cross References

Jeremiah 6:1

Jeremiah calls people to flee from Jerusalem’s region because disaster and destruction are approaching.

Nehemiah 11:34

Gebim is listed among settlements occupied after the return from exile, reminding us that towns devastated by judgment could later be inhabited again.

Joshua 18:21

Benjamin’s towns are carefully identified within the inheritance God gave the tribe.

Spiritual Principle

Human fear sees the advancing army.

Faith must also remember the God who determines where it stops.

XXXII. ASSYRIA SHAKES ITS FIST AT ZION

Isaiah 10:32 — The Enemy Reaches Nob

> **“This very day he will halt at Nob; he will shake his fist at the mountain of Daughter Zion, at the hill of Jerusalem.”**

The enemy comes extremely close.

From Nob:

Jerusalem is threatened.

Assyria shakes its fist.

It appears that nothing remains between:

The empire.

The city.

But this is where human advance meets divine boundary.

Cross References

2 Samuel 5:7

David captured the stronghold of Zion, which became known as the City of David.

Nehemiah 11:32

Nob is listed among the towns associated with the restored population around Jerusalem.

Joshua 18:25

The surrounding Benjaminite towns demonstrate how near the enemy's advance has come toward Jerusalem.

Spiritual Principle

Sometimes God allows the enemy to come frighteningly close before revealing the limit He has established.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Nearness is not victory.

XXXIII. GOD CUTS DOWN THE LOFTY TREES

Isaiah 10:33 — Pride Brought Low

> **"See, the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, will lop off the boughs with great power. The tall trees will be cut down, the lofty will be brought low."**

The image shifts.

Assyria was like:

A massive forest.

Now:

God becomes the woodsman.

Tall trees fall.

Height cannot save them.

Strength cannot save them.

Pride cannot save them.

Cross References

Isaiah 2:12

God has appointed a day against everything proud, arrogant, and lifted up, and all such pride will be brought low.

Isaiah 37:24

Assyria boasts of climbing mountains and cutting down the tallest trees, but God exposes this arrogance.

Ezekiel 31:3

A powerful empire is compared to a magnificent cedar towering above surrounding trees.

Spiritual Principle

God cuts down what pride continually lifts up.

XXXIV. LEBANON FALLS BEFORE THE MIGHTY ONE

Isaiah 10:34 — The Great Forest Comes Down

> **“He will cut down the forest thickets with an axe; Lebanon will fall before the Mighty One.”**

The chapter ends with one decisive image.

Assyria:

A forest.

God:

The Mighty One.

Who wins?

Not Assyria.

The great forest falls.

The proud empire that believed itself unstoppable is cut down.

This ending prepares for Isaiah 11.

After the proud forest is felled:

A shoot will come from the stump of Jesse.

Human pride falls.

God’s Messiah rises.

Cross References

Isaiah 37:24

Assyria boasts that it has cut down the great trees and conquered lofty places, but its pride is confronted by God.

Ezekiel 31:12

A mighty tree representing imperial greatness is cut down by foreign powers under divine judgment.

Daniel 4:14

Nebuchadnezzar’s greatness is pictured as a tree ordered to be cut down as judgment upon his pride.

Spiritual Principle

The forest of human pride falls before the Mighty One.

Key Truth

The chapter does not end with Assyria standing over Jerusalem.

It ends with God standing over Assyria.

XXXV. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 10

1. God Judges Injustice

Leaders who use laws to oppress the weak answer to God.

Principle:

Authority is never permission to abuse people.

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2. God Defends the Vulnerable

The poor, widows, and fatherless matter deeply to Him.

Principle:

God notices injustice that institutions ignore.

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3. God Is Sovereign Over Nations

Assyria is called:

> **“The rod of My anger.”**

Principle:

Empires are never independent of God’s sovereign authority.

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4. Human Intention and Divine Purpose Can Differ

Assyria intends evil.

God uses its actions within His righteous purpose.

Principle:

God’s sovereignty is powerful enough to accomplish His purpose without making evil morally good.

---

5. Pride Brings Judgment

Assyria boasts:

My strength.

My wisdom.

My victories.

Principle:

The tool that steals the Craftsman’s glory will eventually be humbled.

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6. God Preserves a Remnant

A remnant returns.

Principle:

Judgment does not destroy God’s covenant purposes.

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7. God Tells His People Not to Fear

Assyria is powerful.

God is greater.

Principle:

The temporary rod should never be feared above the eternal Lord.

---

8. The Mighty Are Humbled by the Mighty One

The forest falls.

Principle:

No earthly power remains too large for God to cut down.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 10 TEACHES ABOUT JUSTICE

The chapter begins with unjust law.

That matters.

God does not evaluate only:

Personal morality.

He also evaluates how systems treat people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A society can have many laws and still lack justice.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 10 TEACHES ABOUT LEADERSHIP

Those making oppressive decrees possess authority.

They misuse it.

God holds them accountable.

Spiritual Principle

The greater the authority, the greater the responsibility to use it justly.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 10 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY

Assyria thinks:

It acts independently.

God says:

I sent it.

Yet God also judges Assyria.

This reveals a profound biblical truth:

God reigns over history without becoming morally responsible for the sinful intentions of human agents.

Key Truth

God is sovereign enough to use what He does not approve.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 10 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY

Assyria cannot say:

“God used us, therefore our cruelty does not matter.”

God judges:

Its motives.

Its pride.

Its violence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine sovereignty never becomes an excuse for human sin.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 10 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

Assyria repeatedly says:

I.

My.

Me.

This is the language of self-exaltation.

Pride forgets:

God.

Dependence.

Providence.

Limits.

Spiritual Principle

Pride interprets God’s gifts as proof of our independence from God.

XLI. WHAT ISAIAH 10 TEACHES ABOUT SUCCESS

Assyria succeeds repeatedly.

That success becomes spiritually dangerous.

Victory produces arrogance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Success can test the soul just as deeply as failure.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 10 TEACHES ABOUT THE REMNANT

The remnant does more than survive.

It learns.

It no longer relies upon:

The one who struck it.

Instead:

It relies on the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical restoration changes the object of trust.

XLIII. WHAT ISAIAH 10 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

God says:

> **“Do not be afraid of the Assyrian.”**

This does not mean:

Assyria is harmless.

It means:

Assyria is limited.

Key Truth

Faith does not deny the rod.

Faith remembers who controls the rod.

XLIV. WHAT ISAIAH 10 TEACHES ABOUT DELIVERANCE

God reminds His people of:

Egypt.

Midian.

Why?

Because memory strengthens faith.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When facing a new enemy, remember old deliverances.

XLV. WHAT ISAIAH 10 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN POWER

Assyria reaches:

Nob.

It shakes its fist toward Jerusalem.

Then:

It stops.

Why?

Because human power reaches boundaries established by God.

Spiritual Principle

No human power can cross every line.

XLVI. THE AXE AND THE WOODCUTTER

This is one of the chapter's most memorable pictures.

Assyria is an axe.

God is the One who swings it.

Imagine an axe saying:

"Look what I did."

That is the absurdity of pride.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never boast in the power God merely allowed you to possess.

XLVII. THE DANGER OF TAKING CREDIT

Assyria says:

My hand.

My wisdom.

My understanding.

The same danger exists personally.

We can say:

My career.

My intelligence.

My ministry.

My business.

My success.

My achievement.

But Scripture asks:

Where did:

Life.

Ability.

Opportunity.

Strength.

Come from?

Spiritual Principle

Gratitude protects achievement from turning into arrogance.

XLVIII. WHEN THE ROD BECOMES PROUD

God uses Assyria.

Then Assyria becomes proud of being used.

This is spiritually dangerous.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Being useful to God is never the same as being approved by God in every area of life.

XLIX. THE REMNANT’S NEW TRUST

Verse 20 says they will no longer rely on the one who struck them.

That is profound.

Some people repeatedly return to the very thing that wounds them.

God teaches the remnant:

Stop leaning there.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration often requires changing what you trust.

L. THE ENEMY COMES CLOSE

Verses 28–32 read like footsteps approaching Jerusalem.

Aiath.

Migron.

Michmash.

Geba.

Ramah.

Gibeah.

Gallim.

Anathoth.

Nob.

Closer.

Closer.

Closer.

Then:

God intervenes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may allow a trial to come much closer than we would choose without ever allowing it to move beyond His purpose.

LI. THE FOREST FALLS

Assyria looks like:

A vast forest.

God cuts it down.

One moment:

Tall trees.

Next:

Fallen timber.

Spiritual Principle

What appears permanent to us may require only one act of God to remove.

LII. FROM ISAIAH 10 TO ISAIAH 11

Isaiah 10 ends with trees being cut down.

Isaiah 11 will begin with:

> **A shoot from the stump of Jesse.**

That contrast is intentional.

Human greatness is cut down.

God’s Messiah grows from what looks small.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God often removes the proud forest before revealing the humble Branch.

LIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What sin is condemned first in Isaiah 10?

The use of law and authority to oppress people and deprive the poor of justice.

Question 2

Which vulnerable groups are specifically mentioned?

The poor.

Widows.

The fatherless.

Question 3

What question does God ask oppressive leaders?

What will they do when judgment comes, where will they run, and what will happen to their wealth?

Question 4

How does God describe Assyria?

As the rod of His anger and the club of His wrath.

Question 5

Did Assyria understand that it was serving God’s purpose?

No.

Assyria intended conquest and destruction for its own glory.

Question 6

How can God use Assyria and still judge it?

God sovereignly uses its actions within His righteous purposes while Assyria remains responsible for its proud, violent motives.

Question 7

What was Assyria’s central sin?

Pride.

It credited its victories to its own strength and wisdom.

Question 8

What illustration does God use to expose Assyria’s pride?

An axe boasting against the person swinging it and a saw boasting against the one using it.

Question 9

What happens to Assyria?

God judges its military power and brings its pride down.

Question 10

What happens to Israel after judgment?

A remnant returns.

Question 11

What does the remnant learn?

They stop relying on the power that wounded them and truly rely upon the Lord.

Question 12

Why are God’s people told not to fear Assyria?

Because Assyria’s authority is temporary and God will eventually judge it.

Question 13

What earlier deliverances does God mention?

Midian and Egypt.

Question 14

How close does Assyria come to Jerusalem?

The army reaches Nob and threatens Zion directly.

Question 15

How does Isaiah 10 end?

The Lord cuts down the proud forest, and Lebanon falls before the Mighty One.

LIV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 10 asks several searching questions.

Am I Using Authority Justly?

If God has given me influence:

How am I using it?

How Do I Treat People With Less Power?

Do I protect?

Serve?

Ignore?

Exploit?

What Will I Do When Wealth Cannot Help?

Have I made money a refuge it can never truly become?

Do I Recognize God’s Sovereignty?

Do I believe He remains Lord over nations and history?

Am I Taking Credit for God’s Gifts?

How often do I say:

“My strength.”

“My wisdom.”

“My accomplishment.”

Has Success Made Me Proud?

Has blessing increased:

Gratitude?

Or:

Self-importance?

Am I Relying on Something That Has Already Hurt Me?

What false support do I need to stop leaning upon?

Do I Fear Temporary Power More Than God?

What “Assyria” feels too large in my life?

Do I Remember Past Deliverance?

What has God already brought me through?

Can I Trust God When the Enemy Seems Very Close?

Do I believe He still determines the boundary?

LV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Never Fear the Axe More Than the Hand That Controls It”

Assyria looked unstoppable.

But Assyria was:

A tool.

God was:

The Sovereign.

Principle:

Temporary powers may affect your circumstances, but only God rules history.

LVI. WHEN LAW BECOMES AN INSTRUMENT OF INJUSTICE

Isaiah does not excuse injustice merely because government approves it.

God says:

Woe.

This means biblical justice stands above:

Human decrees.

Political convenience.

Personal profit.

Spiritual Principle

Right and wrong are not created by legislation.

LVII. GOD AND THE OPPRESSED

God repeatedly identifies with:

The poor.

Widows.

The fatherless.

The vulnerable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never assume God overlooks someone simply because society does.

LVIII. GOD CAN USE EVEN ASSYRIA

This chapter demonstrates staggering sovereignty.

God does not need Assyria to believe in Him before He remains sovereign over Assyria.

Spiritual Principle

God’s throne does not depend upon human recognition.

LIX. DIFFERENT INTENTIONS, ONE EVENT

Assyria invades.

Assyria intends:

Destruction.

God intends:

Judgment.

One event.

Different purposes.

This resembles Joseph’s words:

“You intended evil.”

“God intended good.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s sovereignty is so complete that evil intentions cannot prevent His righteous purpose.

LX. SUCCESS WITHOUT HUMILITY

Assyria’s mistake was not merely victory.

It was interpreting victory as proof of personal greatness.

Spiritual Principle

Success should increase gratitude, not eliminate dependence.

LXI. A REMNANT WILL RETURN

This is not merely hopeful poetry.

It is a repeated theme in Isaiah.

God preserves:

A people.

A promise.

A future.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may reduce numbers without losing purpose.

LXII. DO NOT FEAR ASSYRIA

Fear says:

Look how strong they are.

Faith says:

Look how temporary they are before God.

Spiritual Principle

Fear evaluates power by size.

Faith evaluates power by sovereignty.

LXIII. THE YOKE WILL BREAK

The oppressor’s yoke appears permanent.

God says:

It will break.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never call permanent what God has already declared temporary.

LXIV. THE LAST STOP IS NOB

Assyria advances.

Town after town.

Then Nob.

The enemy can see Jerusalem.

But seeing the city is not the same as conquering it.

Spiritual Principle

Proximity to victory is not possession of victory.

LXV. THE MIGHTY ONE CUTS THE FOREST

Assyria considers itself mighty.

Isaiah ends by revealing:

The Mighty One.

That title settles the comparison.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There will always be a difference between those who are mighty and the One who is Almighty.

LXVI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 10 begins with powerful people abusing weak people.

It ends with the most powerful empire of the day being cut down by God.

That is intentional.

The chapter teaches:

Power matters.

But power is never ultimate.

Leaders can write laws.

Kings can move armies.

Empires can conquer nations.

But every authority remains beneath:

God.

The first warning is therefore to leaders.

Do not use power to:

Oppress.

Exploit.

Rob.

Silence.

Take advantage of the weak.

Because God asks:

> **“What will you do on the day of judgment?”**

Then comes Assyria.

Assyria is terrifying.

But God calls it:

A rod.

An axe.

A saw.

A club.

Those are tools.

Assyria does not know it is a tool.

It says:

I did this.

My strength.

My wisdom.

My victories.

That pride becomes its downfall.

We should learn from this.

Whenever God gives:

Ability.

Position.

Success.

Influence.

Opportunity.

Never say:

“I did all this myself.”

Instead:

Give thanks.

Remain humble.

Remember the hand above the tool.

Isaiah also gives hope.

A remnant will return.

And their greatest change will not merely be geographic.

They will change what they trust.

They will no longer rely on the one who struck them.

They will rely:

“on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.”

That is restoration.

Maybe that is the lesson some of us need most.

Stop leaning on what keeps hurting you.

Stop putting ultimate trust in:

Money.

People.

Power.

Institutions.

Your own strength.

Return to:

The Mighty God.

Finally, Assyria moves toward Jerusalem.

Closer.

Closer.

Closer.

Until it reaches Nob.

Then Isaiah changes the picture.

The army becomes a forest.

And suddenly:

God begins cutting.

Tall trees fall.

Lofty trees come down.

The great forest collapses.

Why?

Because Lebanon falls:

“before the Mighty One.”

Therefore:

Do justice.

Use authority humbly.

Protect the vulnerable.

Do not boast in success.

Do not fear temporary power.

Trust God’s sovereignty.

Remember His past deliverance.

And when the forest standing against you seems enormous:

Remember the Axe is still in the hand of the Mighty One.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are the Lord over:

Kings.

Governments.

Nations.

Armies.

History.

Forgive us when we forget that every human power remains under Your authority.

Father, give justice to those who are oppressed.

Protect:

The poor.

Widows.

Orphans.

The vulnerable.

Those who have little influence.

Judge corruption.

Expose unjust systems.

Give leaders wisdom and righteousness.

And if You give us authority, keep us from abusing it.

Teach us to use influence as:

Stewardship.

Service.

Responsibility.

Father, protect us from pride.

When You give success:

Make us thankful.

When You give strength:

Keep us dependent.

When You give wisdom:

Keep us teachable.

When You give influence:

Keep us humble.

Never let us become like Assyria, saying:

“My strength did this.”

“My wisdom accomplished this.”

Remind us that every gift ultimately comes from You.

Father, thank You that You preserve a remnant.

Teach us to rely fully upon You.

If we are leaning upon something that continues to wound us, give us courage to release it.

Bring us back to:

The Holy One of Israel.

Father, deliver us from fear.

When the enemy looks powerful:

Remind us that it is still limited.

When trouble moves closer:

Remind us that nearness is not victory.

When human power shakes its fist at us:

Remind us that You are still the Mighty One.

Break every yoke You never intended us to carry forever.

Lift every burden according to Your will.

And give us confidence that no forest of pride can stand indefinitely before You.

May we live:

Justly.

Humbly.

Faithfully.

Dependently.

Always giving You the glory.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"In that day the remnant of Israel, the survivors of Jacob, will no longer depend on him who struck them down but will truly rely on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel." — Isaiah 10:20**

Central Truth

God judges injustice, sovereignly rules over nations, uses human powers without approving their sinful motives, humbles those who boast in their own strength, and preserves a remnant who learns to abandon false dependence and rely completely upon the Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 10 in One Sentence

Isaiah condemns oppressive rulers, reveals Assyria as a temporary instrument in God's hand, announces judgment upon the empire's arrogance, promises that a faithful remnant will return to the Mighty God, and assures Zion that even the greatest human forest will fall before the Mighty One.

Isaiah Chapter 11 — The Branch from Jesse and the Peaceable Kingdom

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 11 begins with what appears to be:

A stump.

Something cut down.

Something reduced.

Something that seems finished.

Isaiah 10 ended with the proud forest of human power being cut down before the Mighty One.

Then Isaiah 11 begins:

“Out of the stump of Jesse will come a shoot.”

Human kingdoms fall.

But God’s promise continues.

The reference to Jesse deliberately points back to:

David.

The Davidic line.

The covenant promises.

From what looks like a dead stump comes:

A living Shoot.

A fruitful Branch.

This Branch is the Messiah.

He will be completely equipped by:

The Spirit of the Lord.

Wisdom.

Understanding.

Counsel.

Might.

Knowledge.

The fear of the Lord.

Unlike corrupt human rulers, He will not judge superficially.

He will judge with:

Righteousness.

Fairness.

Truth.

He will defend:

The poor.

The meek.

The vulnerable.

Then Isaiah describes an extraordinary kingdom.

The wolf lives with the lamb.

The leopard rests with the goat.

The lion eats straw.

A child plays safely near once-dangerous creatures.

Violence is removed.

Fear is removed.

Destruction is removed.

Why?

Because:

> **“The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”**

The Messiah's reign transforms not only:

Government.

But:

Creation.

Relationships.

Nations.

Israel.

The scattered remnant.

Even ancient divisions between Ephraim and Judah are healed.

The chapter concludes with a new exodus.

God makes a highway for His people.

The same God who made a way through the sea before will make a way again.

The central truth of Isaiah 11 is:

The promised Messiah from the line of Jesse will rule in the fullness of the Spirit with perfect righteousness and justice, establish a kingdom of peace and safety, draw the nations to Himself, gather God's scattered people, heal ancient divisions, and make a way for the faithful remnant to return.

I. A SHOOT COMES FROM JESSE'S STUMP

Isaiah 11:1 — Life from What Appeared Dead

> **“Out of the stump of Jesse will come a shoot; from his roots a Branch will grow and bear fruit.”**

The image is powerful.

A tree has been cut down.

Only:

A stump.

Remains.

Yet:

Life is still present.

From Jesse's family line comes:

A Shoot.

A Branch.

A fruitful King.

The reference to Jesse rather than David may intentionally take the reader back before royal glory.

The Messiah does not arise from human pomp.

He comes from the covenant root.

Cross References

Romans 15:12

Paul quotes Isaiah and declares that the Root of Jesse will rise to rule the nations, and the Gentiles will place their hope in Him.

Revelation 5:5

Jesus is identified as the Lion from the tribe of Judah and the Root of David, the victorious One worthy to accomplish God's purposes.

Jeremiah 23:5

God promises to raise up a righteous Branch from David's line, a King who will reign wisely and practice justice and righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

God can bring new life from circumstances that appear completely finished.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse a stump with the death of God's promise.

II. THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD RESTS UPON THE MESSIAH

Isaiah 11:2 — Perfectly Equipped for His Reign

> **“The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him—the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.”**

The Messiah does not rule according to fallen human limitations.

The Spirit rests upon Him.

Isaiah describes:

Wisdom.

Understanding.

Counsel.

Might.

Knowledge.

Fear of the Lord.

He possesses everything necessary for perfect kingship.

Cross References

Luke 4:18

Jesus reads the prophecy declaring that the Spirit of the Lord is upon Him because He has been anointed to proclaim good news, freedom, recovery, and God's gracious deliverance.

John 3:34

The One sent by God speaks God's words because God gives Him the Spirit without measure.

Isaiah 61:1

The Spirit of the Lord is upon the Anointed One to preach good news, bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim freedom, and announce God's favor.

Spiritual Principle

God's King is not lacking any wisdom, power, or discernment necessary to rule.

III. THE MESSIAH DELIGHTS IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD

Isaiah 11:3 — He Does Not Judge Superficially

> **“He will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make decisions by what His ears hear.”**

Human judges can be deceived by:

Appearance.

Rumor.

False testimony.

Public pressure.

The Messiah cannot.

He judges with perfect knowledge.

His delight is in:

The fear of the Lord.

Cross References

John 5:30

Jesus says His judgment is righteous because He does not pursue an independent selfish will but carries out the will of the Father who sent Him.

Hebrews 5:8

Although He was the Son, Christ experienced obedience through the suffering He endured.

1 Samuel 16:7

God told Samuel not to judge by outward appearance because people look at what is visible, while the Lord sees the heart.

Spiritual Principle

Perfect judgment requires seeing beyond appearances.

Key Truth

Christ cannot be manipulated by image, reputation, or public opinion.

IV. THE MESSIAH DEFENDS THE POOR AND JUDGES THE WICKED

Isaiah 11:4 — Perfect Justice

> **“But with righteousness He will judge the poor, and with fairness He will give justice to the meek of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.”**

The Messiah protects those easily ignored by corrupt systems.

He judges:

Righteously.

Fairly.

He also judges evil decisively.

His weapon is:

His Word.

Cross References

Psalm 72:2

The righteous King will judge God's people with righteousness and administer justice faithfully to the afflicted.

2 Thessalonians 2:8

The lawless one will be destroyed by the breath of the Lord Jesus' mouth and brought to nothing by the manifestation of His coming.

Revelation 19:15

From the victorious Messiah's mouth comes a sharp weapon of judgment by which He rules the nations with absolute authority.

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah's compassion for the poor does not weaken His judgment against wickedness.

V. RIGHTEOUSNESS AND FAITHFULNESS DEFINE HIS RULE

Isaiah 11:5 — The Character of the King

> **“Righteousness will be His belt, and faithfulness the sash around His waist.”**

The Messiah does not merely perform righteous acts.

Righteousness characterizes Him.

Faithfulness surrounds His rule.

Cross References

Ephesians 6:14

Believers are told to stand firm with truth around them like a belt and righteousness protecting them.

Isaiah 59:17

God is pictured clothing Himself with righteousness and salvation as He comes to judge and deliver.

Revelation 19:11

Christ appears as the One called Faithful and True, judging and making war in righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

Character is the foundation of righteous leadership.

VI. NATURAL ENEMIES LIVE TOGETHER IN PEACE

Isaiah 11:6 — The Wolf and the Lamb

> **“The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf, the lion, and the yearling will be together, and a little child will lead them.”**

Isaiah describes a transformed order.

Predator and prey no longer exist in their former hostility.

The picture communicates:

Peace.

Safety.

Harmony.

Restoration.

Cross References

Isaiah 65:25

Isaiah later again pictures the wolf and lamb feeding together, the lion eating straw, and violence disappearing from God's holy mountain.

Hosea 2:18

God promises a covenant of peace involving animals and the removal of warfare so His people may live securely.

Romans 8:21

Creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom associated with God's redeemed children.

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah's kingdom reaches farther than human politics.

It touches creation itself.

VII. THE LION EATS STRAW LIKE THE OX

Isaiah 11:7 — Hostility Removed from Creation

> **“The cow and the bear will feed together; their young will lie down together. The lion will eat straw like the ox.”**

Again:

Predation gives way to peace.

Dangerous relationships are transformed.

Cross References

Isaiah 65:25

God again describes the future order in which former natural enemies live peacefully and no longer destroy.

Genesis 1:30

At creation, God provided green plants as food for the animals, describing an original order centered on provision rather than bloodshed.

Job 5:23

Job is told of a condition of peace in which even the natural world is no longer hostile toward the person under God's care.

Spiritual Principle

God's redemptive purpose ultimately addresses the disorder that entered creation.

VIII. CHILDREN WILL LIVE WITHOUT FEAR OF DEADLY CREATURES

Isaiah 11:8 — Perfect Safety

> **“Infants will play near the hole of the cobra, and young children will put their hands into the viper's nest.”**

The imagery emphasizes complete safety.

What now represents:

Danger.

Venom.

Death.

Will no longer produce harm.

Cross References

Psalm 91:13

God's protection is pictured as triumph over dangerous animals, including lions and serpents.

Mark 16:18

Jesus speaks of divine protection in the mission of His servants, including situations involving serpents and deadly dangers.

Luke 10:19

Jesus tells His disciples that He has given them authority over the power of the enemy, using serpents and scorpions as imagery of dangerous opposition.

Spiritual Principle

Where the Messiah fully reigns, fear and destruction lose their dominion.

IX. THE EARTH WILL BE FILLED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD

Isaiah 11:9 — No Harm on God's Holy Mountain

> **“They will neither harm nor destroy on all My holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”**

Why does peace fill the earth?

Because:

Knowledge of God fills the earth.

Ignorance of God produces:

Sin.

Violence.

Idolatry.

Corruption.

Knowledge of the Lord transforms the world.

Cross References

Habakkuk 2:14

The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord's glory as completely as waters cover the sea.

Numbers 14:21

God declares that His glory will fill the whole earth despite human rebellion.

Psalm 72:19

God's glorious name is blessed forever, and the prayer is that the entire earth be filled with His glory.

Spiritual Principle

True peace cannot be separated from knowing God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The deepest cure for the world's darkness is the knowledge of the Lord.

X. THE ROOT OF JESSE WILL DRAW THE NATIONS

Isaiah 11:10 — A Banner for All Peoples

> **“In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to Him, and His resting place will be glorious.”**

The Messiah is not only:

Israel's King.

He becomes:

A banner for the nations.

Gentiles seek Him.

His kingdom reaches beyond ethnic and national boundaries.

Cross References

Romans 15:12

Paul quotes this prophecy and explains that the Root of Jesse will rule the nations and become the hope of the Gentiles.

Revelation 5:5

Jesus is identified as the victorious Root of David, worthy to accomplish God's redemptive plan.

John 12:32

Jesus declares that when He is lifted up, He will draw people to Himself.

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah's saving reign extends to every nation.

XI. GOD GATHERS THE REMNANT AGAIN

Isaiah 11:11 — The Second Gathering

> **“In that day the Lord will reach out His hand a second time to bring back the remnant of His people from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.”**

God's people have been scattered widely.

Yet distance does not defeat God's ability to gather.

The list emphasizes:

Every direction.

Many nations.

Wide dispersion.

God reaches out again.

Cross References

Isaiah 10:21

Isaiah had already promised that a remnant of Jacob would return to the Mighty God.

Jeremiah 23:3

God promises to gather the surviving members of His flock from the lands where they had been scattered and bring them back into safety.

Ezekiel 37:21

God promises to gather Israel from among the nations, bring them from every direction, and restore them to their land.

Spiritual Principle

No scattering is too extensive for God to reverse.

XII. THE EXILES ARE GATHERED FROM THE EARTH

Isaiah 11:12 — A Banner for the Nations

> **“He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; He will assemble the scattered of Judah from the four corners of the earth.”**

God gathers:

Israel.

Judah.

The scattered.

The exiles.

His restoration is intentional.

Cross References

Isaiah 49:22

God raises His signal among the nations, and they participate in bringing His scattered sons and daughters home.

John 11:52

John explains that Jesus would die not only for one nation but also to gather together God's scattered children.

Jeremiah 31:10

The nations are told that the One who scattered Israel will gather and keep His people like a shepherd caring for a flock.

Spiritual Principle

The God who knows every scattered person also knows how to bring them home.

XIII. OLD RIVALRIES WILL DISAPPEAR

Isaiah 11:13 — Ephraim and Judah Reconciled

> **“Ephraim's jealousy will vanish, and Judah's enemies will be cut off. Ephraim will not envy Judah, and Judah will not oppress Ephraim.”**

The northern and southern kingdoms had experienced:

Jealousy.

Conflict.

Division.

Under God's restoration:

Rivalry ends.

Unity returns.

Cross References

Ezekiel 37:19

God promises to join the divided houses of Israel together like two sticks becoming one in His hand.

Hosea 1:11

Judah and Israel will again be gathered together under one head rather than remaining permanently divided.

Jeremiah 3:18

God promises that Judah and Israel will walk together and return from the lands of dispersion.

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah does not merely defeat external enemies.

He heals internal division.

Key Truth

God's kingdom replaces rivalry with reconciliation.

XIV. THE RESTORED PEOPLE WILL NO LONGER BE HELPLESS

Isaiah 11:14 — Former Enemies Brought Under Control

> **“Together they will swoop down on the Philistines to the west; they will plunder the people of the east. They will lay hands on Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites will be subject to them.”**

The emphasis is reversal.

The people once oppressed by surrounding nations will no longer remain helpless.

God restores strength and security.

Cross References

2 Chronicles 26:6

During Uzziah's reign, Judah successfully fought Philistine cities and broke through their defenses.

Zephaniah 2:5

God announces judgment against the Philistine coast and declares that its proud settlements will be brought low.

Obadiah 1:19

God promises restored possession of territories formerly controlled by hostile neighboring peoples.

Spiritual Principle

God can reverse long-standing patterns of defeat.

XV. GOD MAKES A WAY THROUGH IMPOSSIBLE BARRIERS

Isaiah 11:15 — Waters Divided

> **“The Lord will dry up the gulf of the Egyptian sea; with His mighty wind He will strike the River into seven streams so that men can cross over in sandals.”**

The imagery recalls:

The Exodus.

The Red Sea.

God removing an impossible barrier.

The lesson is clear:

If God needs a road where none exists:

He makes one.

Cross References

Exodus 14:21

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord drove the waters back by a powerful wind, making dry ground for Israel.

Zechariah 10:11

God promises to bring His people through distress and strike the waters so that barriers to restoration are removed.

Revelation 16:12

The great Euphrates is dried in preparation for events connected with God's final purposes.

Spiritual Principle

God is not limited by barriers that appear impossible to us.

XVI. GOD BUILDS A HIGHWAY FOR THE REMNANT

Isaiah 11:16 — A New Exodus

> **“There will be a highway for the remnant of His people who are left from Assyria— just as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt.”**

Isaiah ends with:

A highway.

The Exodus becomes the pattern.

God made a way before.

He will make a way again.

Cross References

Isaiah 35:8

Isaiah later describes a holy highway prepared for God's redeemed people, a path set apart for their safe return.

Exodus 14:29

Israel walked through the sea on dry ground while walls of water stood on either side.

Isaiah 51:10

God is praised as the One who dried the sea and made its depths into a pathway for the redeemed to cross.

Spiritual Principle

God's past deliverance becomes a pattern of hope for future deliverance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who made one road through the sea has not forgotten how to make another.

XVII. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 11

1. God Brings Life from What Looks Dead

A shoot comes from Jesse's stump.

Principle:

God's promise can survive what looks like total collapse.

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2. Christ Is the Spirit-Anointed King

The Spirit rests upon Him in perfect fullness.

Principle:

The Messiah possesses every quality needed for perfect rule.

---

3. Christ Judges Righteously

He cannot be deceived by appearances.

Principle:

The perfect King sees what human judges cannot see.

---

4. God's Kingdom Brings True Peace

Predator and prey live together.

Principle:

Messianic peace reaches deeper than political agreement.

---

5. The Knowledge of God Transforms the Earth

Peace exists because the world knows the Lord.

Principle:

True transformation begins with knowing God.

---

6. The Messiah Draws the Nations

The Root of Jesse becomes hope for Gentiles.

Principle:

God's salvation reaches beyond one nation to all peoples.

---

7. God Heals Division

Ephraim and Judah are reconciled.

Principle:

God's kingdom brings unity where sin created rivalry.

---

8. God Makes a Way for His People

The highway appears like a new Exodus.

Principle:

No obstacle is too great when God determines to bring His people home.

XVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 11 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

Isaiah presents Christ as:

Shoot.

Branch.

Root.

Spirit-filled King.

Righteous Judge.

Defender of the poor.

Universal ruler.

Source of peace.

Hope of nations.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every failure of human government points toward humanity's need for the perfect King.

XIX. WHAT ISAIAH 11 TEACHES ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Spirit rests upon the Messiah.

The Spirit supplies:

Wisdom.

Understanding.

Counsel.

Might.

Knowledge.

Fear of the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

God's work is accomplished by God's Spirit, not merely human ability.

XX. WHAT ISAIAH 11 TEACHES ABOUT JUSTICE

The Messiah gives justice to:

The poor.

The meek.

He cannot be bribed.

He cannot be deceived.

Key Truth

Perfect justice requires a perfect Judge.

XXI. WHAT ISAIAH 11 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE

Peace includes:

People.

Animals.

Creation.

Nations.

Former rivals.

This is comprehensive peace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Biblical peace means more than stopping conflict.

It means restoration of right order.

XXII. WHAT ISAIAH 11 TEACHES ABOUT CREATION

Creation currently experiences:

Death.

Predation.

Fear.

Decay.

Isaiah presents a future transformed order.

Spiritual Principle

God's redemptive plan is bigger than individual human experience.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 11 TEACHES ABOUT THE NATIONS

The nations come to:

The Root of Jesse.

God's Messiah becomes:

Their hope.

Key Truth

The Messiah is not merely Israel's national deliverer.

He is the hope of the world.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 11 TEACHES ABOUT THE REMNANT

The remnant is:

Scattered.

Preserved.

Gathered.

Restored.

God knows exactly where His people are.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Scattered does not mean forgotten.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 11 TEACHES ABOUT UNITY

Ephraim and Judah had centuries of rivalry.

God promises:

Jealousy ends.

Oppression ends.

Spiritual Principle

God's restoring power can heal divisions that have existed for generations.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 11 TEACHES ABOUT DELIVERANCE

The imagery of the Exodus appears again.

God:

Dries waters.

Creates passages.

Builds highways.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If obedience requires a road, God is able to provide one.

XXVII. THE STUMP AND THE BRANCH

Isaiah 10 ended with:

Trees falling.

Isaiah 11 begins with:

A Branch growing.

That contrast is deliberate.

Human pride is cut down.

God's Messiah rises.

Spiritual Principle

God may cut down what is proud before raising what is righteous.

XXVIII. THE KING WHO CANNOT BE FOOLED

Human rulers depend upon:

Evidence.

Reports.

Witnesses.

Advisers.

The Messiah possesses perfect discernment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You never need to convince Christ of the truth.

He already knows it completely.

XXIX. THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD

Isaiah does not say merely:

The earth will know religion.

It will know:

The Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Information about God is not identical with knowing God.

XXX. A LITTLE CHILD WILL LEAD THEM

A child safely leads creatures once considered dangerous.

That image communicates:

Complete security.

No fear.

No violence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Where Christ perfectly reigns, vulnerability no longer means danger.

XXXI. THE NATIONS RALLY TO HIM

The Messiah is:

Banner.

Center.

Hope.

The nations gather not around:

An ideology.

An empire.

A human ruler.

But:

Him.

Spiritual Principle

The unity of God's kingdom is centered in the King.

XXXII. GOD GATHERS WHAT WAS SCATTERED

Sin scatters.

War scatters.

Judgment scatters.

God gathers.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's ability to restore is greater than humanity's ability to scatter.

XXXIII. A NEW EXODUS

The final verses intentionally sound like Exodus.

This is salvation language.

The God who once delivered:

Israel from Egypt.

Will act again.

Spiritual Principle

Past salvation teaches us how to interpret future hope.

XXXIV. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who is the Shoot from Jesse's stump?

The prophecy points to the Messiah, Jesus Christ, who comes from David's family line.

Question 2

Why is Jesse mentioned instead of only David?

It emphasizes the Messiah's root in David's family even when the royal dynasty appears reduced and cut down.

Question 3

What rests upon the Messiah?

The Spirit of the Lord in perfect wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and reverence for God.

Question 4

How will His judgment differ from human judgment?

He will not be limited by outward appearances, rumors, or incomplete information.

Question 5

Who receives special attention under His justice?

The poor and meek.

Question 6

What do the peaceful animals represent?

They depict the profound peace, safety, and restoration associated with the Messiah's reign.

Question 7

Why will there be no harm on God's holy mountain?

Because the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

Question 8

Who will seek the Root of Jesse?

The nations.

Question 9

What will God do with the scattered remnant?

He will gather them from many lands.

Question 10

What happens between Ephraim and Judah?

Their historic jealousy and hostility end.

Question 11

What does the drying of the waters recall?

Israel's Exodus from Egypt and God's ability to remove impossible barriers.

Question 12

What does the highway represent?

God preparing a clear way for His remnant to return.

XXXV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 11 asks several searching questions.

Do I Trust the Branch?

Is Christ truly the King of my life?

Am I Discouraged by a Stump?

Have I assumed something is over when God may still bring new growth?

Am I Seeking the Spirit's Wisdom?

Or relying only upon my own understanding?

How Do I Judge Others?

By appearance?

Rumor?

Reputation?

Or truth?

Do I Care About Justice?

Do I notice the poor and meek?

Is Christ Producing Peace in Me?

What relationships remain controlled by:

Jealousy?

Competition?

Bitterness?

Do I Believe God Can Restore What Has Been Divided?

What rivalry have I assumed can never be healed?

Do I Believe God Can Make a Way?

What obstacle seems impossible?

XXXVI. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God's Messiah Grows from the Stump Human Eyes Would Have Called Finished”

The royal line appears cut down.

Yet God says:

A Shoot will grow.

Principle:

God's promises do not die when human circumstances collapse.

XXXVII. THE KING AND THE SPIRIT

Christ's reign is marked by the fullness of the Spirit.

That means His leadership is never:

Confused.

Weak.

Ignorant.

Unwise.

Spiritual Principle

Everything lacking in fallen leadership is present perfectly in Christ.

XXXVIII. THE PEACEABLE KINGDOM

Isaiah pictures a world where danger is transformed.

The wolf no longer devours.

The lion no longer hunts.

The child no longer fears.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Christ does not merely restrain chaos.

He restores order.

XXXIX. THE ROOT AND THE NATIONS

The Root of Jesse becomes a banner for:

Peoples.

Nations.

Gentiles.

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah's kingdom is larger than ethnicity, geography, and human borders.

XL. HEALING OLD DIVISIONS

Ephraim and Judah had reasons to remember:

History.

Conflict.

Jealousy.

But God's kingdom creates a new future.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can heal relationships that history says must remain divided.

XLI. GOD MAKES A HIGHWAY

A highway means:

Access.

Direction.

Return.

No wandering.

God prepares the route.

Spiritual Principle

God's call to return is accompanied by God's ability to make return possible.

XLII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 11 begins with:

A stump.

That may be where some lives feel today.

Cut down.

Reduced.

Disappointed.

Finished.

But Isaiah says:

Look again.

A Shoot is growing.

God is not finished.

The promised Messiah comes from Jesse's line.

He is everything fallen rulers are not.

He is:

Wise.

Understanding.

Strong.

Knowledgeable.

Righteous.

Faithful.

Just.

He cannot be deceived by appearances.

He does not ignore the poor.

He does not protect wickedness.

He rules perfectly.

Then His kingdom transforms the world.

Predator lies beside prey.

Children are safe.

Violence disappears.

Why?

Because:

The earth knows the Lord.

That is the heart of the chapter.

The deepest human problem is not merely:

Bad economics.

Bad politics.

Bad education.

Bad circumstances.

The deepest problem is alienation from God.

When the knowledge of the Lord fills the earth:

Peace follows.

Isaiah also gives hope to scattered people.

God gathers.

He gathers from:

Assyria.

Egypt.

Cush.

Elam.

Shinar.

Islands.

The four corners of the earth.

No distance is too far.

No scattering is too complete.

Then God heals old divisions.

Ephraim and Judah stop envying and oppressing one another.

This teaches us:

God's kingdom does not preserve our favorite rivalries.

It heals them.

Finally:

God makes a road.

He dries waters.

Creates crossings.

Builds highways.

He did it at the Exodus.

He can do it again.

Therefore:

Trust the Branch.

Follow the King.

Seek His righteousness.

Live as a peacemaker.

Release old rivalries.

And when you see nothing but a stump:

Remember.

God sees the Branch.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for the promised Branch from Jesse.

Thank You for Jesus Christ, our righteous King.

When circumstances look cut down and hopeless, remind us that You can bring life from the stump.

Fill us with wisdom through Your Spirit.

Give us:

Understanding.

Counsel.

Strength.

Knowledge.

Reverence for You.

Teach us not to judge people merely by outward appearances.

Make us people of righteousness and justice.

Give us compassion for:

The poor.

The meek.

The vulnerable.

Father, bring peace into our hearts and relationships.

Where there is:

Jealousy.

Competition.

Bitterness.

Division.

Bring reconciliation.

Thank You that Christ's kingdom will not forever contain:

Violence.

Fear.

Destruction.

Thank You for the promise of a world filled with the knowledge of You.

Gather those who are scattered.

Restore those who feel forgotten.

Make highways where there seem to be no roads.

Remove barriers that appear impossible.

And above all:

Fix our eyes on Jesus.

The Shoot.

The Branch.

The Root of Jesse.

The King whose righteousness never fails.

In His name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“Out of the stump of Jesse will come a shoot; from his roots a Branch will grow and bear fruit.” — Isaiah 11:1**

Central Truth

Jesus Christ, the promised Branch from Jesse, will rule in the fullness of the Spirit with perfect righteousness, justice, and faithfulness, establish a kingdom of extraordinary peace, draw the nations to Himself, gather God's scattered people, heal division, and make a way for the redeemed to return.

Isaiah 11 in One Sentence

Isaiah reveals the coming Messiah as the Spirit-filled Branch from Jesse who will judge perfectly, establish a peaceable kingdom, fill the earth with the knowledge of God, gather the remnant and the nations, heal Israel's divisions, and create a new highway of deliverance for His people.

Isaiah Chapter 12 — A Song of Salvation

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 12 is a song.

After:

Judgment.

Fear.

Invasion.

Scattering.

Discipline.

And the glorious promises of the Messiah in Isaiah 11,

Isaiah now gives God's people words to sing.

The chapter is only six verses long.

Yet it summarizes some of the greatest truths of salvation.

God's anger has turned away.

God comforts His people.

God becomes:

Salvation.

Strength.

Song.

Fear is replaced by:

Trust.

Thirst is replaced by:

Water from the wells of salvation.

Silence is replaced by:

Public praise.

God's people are called to proclaim His deeds among the nations.

The chapter ends with the greatest source of joy:

> **“Great is the Holy One of Israel among you.”**

The blessing is not merely:

What God gives.

The blessing is:

God Himself among His people.

Isaiah 12 therefore serves as the joyful response to the restoration described in Isaiah 11.

The people who were:

Scattered.

Judged.

Afraid.

Oppressed.

Now sing.

The central truth of Isaiah 12 is:

Salvation turns God's righteous anger into comfort, replaces fear with trust, fills His people with joy, creates public praise, and centers their deepest celebration in the presence of the Holy One of Israel among them.

I. GOD'S ANGER TURNS TO COMFORT

Isaiah 12:1 — “I Will Praise You”

> **“In that day you will say: ‘O Lord, I will praise You. Though You were angry with me, Your anger has turned away, and You have comforted me.’”**

The speaker does not deny that God was angry.

God's anger was righteous.

Sin had brought:

Judgment.

Discipline.

Consequences.

But anger does not have the final word.

Now:

Comfort comes.

The proper response is:

Praise.

Cross References

Psalm 30:5

God's anger lasts only for a limited time, while His favor brings life; weeping may remain through the night, but joy comes with the morning.

Micah 7:18

There is no God like the Lord, who forgives sin, passes over rebellion, does not remain angry forever, and delights in faithful mercy.

Hosea 14:4

God promises to heal His people's unfaithfulness and love them freely because His anger has turned away.

Spiritual Principle

God's discipline is not the final destination for His restored people.

Key Truth

The God who corrects is also the God who comforts.

II. GOD HIMSELF IS SALVATION

Isaiah 12:2 — “I Will Trust and Not Be Afraid”

> **“Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. For the Lord, the Lord Himself, is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation.”**

Notice what Isaiah does not say.

God merely:

Gives salvation.

He says:

> **“God is my salvation.”**

Salvation is deeply personal because God Himself is the Savior.

The result is:

Trust.

Fearlessness.

Strength.

Song.

Cross References

Exodus 15:2

After crossing the sea, Israel sang that the Lord was their strength and song and had become their salvation; He was their God and worthy of praise.

Psalm 118:14

The psalmist declares that the Lord Himself is his strength and song and has become his salvation.

Psalm 27:1

The Lord is the psalmist's light and salvation; therefore there is no ultimate reason to fear, because the Lord is the stronghold of life.

Spiritual Principle

Fear loses power when salvation becomes personal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith does not merely say:

“God can save.”

Faith says:

“God is my salvation.”

III. SALVATION IS LIKE WATER DRAWN WITH JOY

Isaiah 12:3 — Wells of Salvation

> **“With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.”**

Water represents:

Life.

Refreshment.

Cleansing.

Satisfaction.

In a dry land, a well means survival.

Isaiah pictures salvation as an abundant source from which God's people draw:

Joyfully.

Repeatedly.

Freely.

Cross References

John 4:14

Jesus promises that the water He gives becomes within the recipient a spring continually rising toward eternal life.

John 7:38

Jesus declares that whoever believes in Him will experience rivers of living water flowing from within.

Psalm 36:9

God is the fountain of life, and in His light people receive true light.

Spiritual Principle

God's salvation is not a dry doctrine.

It refreshes the soul.

Key Truth

What God gives in salvation is sufficient for the deepest thirst of the human heart.

IV. GOD'S SAVING WORK MUST BE PROCLAIMED

Isaiah 12:4 — Make His Deeds Known Among the Nations

> **“In that day you will say: ‘Give thanks to the Lord, call on His name; make known His deeds among the nations; proclaim that His name is exalted.’”**

Salvation produces:

Thanksgiving.

Prayer.

Witness.

Proclamation.

God's deeds are not to remain private.

The nations must hear.

Cross References

Psalm 105:1

Give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name, and make His deeds known among the peoples.

1 Chronicles 16:8

God's people are commanded to thank Him, call upon Him, and tell the nations what He has done.

Psalm 148:13

All creation is called to praise the name of the Lord because His name alone is exalted and His glory stands above heaven and earth.

Spiritual Principle

Grace received becomes testimony shared.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If salvation is good enough to celebrate, it is good enough to proclaim.

V. SING BECAUSE GOD HAS DONE GLORIOUS THINGS

Isaiah 12:5 — Let the Whole Earth Know

> **“Sing to the Lord, for He has done glorious things; let this be known to all the earth.”**

Worship has a reason.

God has:

Acted.

Saved.

Delivered.

Restored.

His works deserve:

Song.

Proclamation.

Global witness.

Cross References

Psalm 98:1

Sing a new song to the Lord because He has performed marvelous works and accomplished salvation by His own power.

Exodus 15:21

Miriam called Israel to sing to the Lord because He had triumphed gloriously over their enemies.

Psalm 96:3

God's people are commanded to declare His glory among the nations and tell every people about His marvelous works.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical praise is rooted in what God has done.

VI. THE HOLY ONE IS GREAT AMONG HIS PEOPLE

Isaiah 12:6 — God's Presence Is the Greatest Joy

> **“Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.”**

The chapter reaches its climax.

Why rejoice?

Because:

God is among His people.

This echoes the great theme already seen in:

Immanuel.

God with us.

The greatest gift is:

His presence.

Cross References

Zephaniah 3:14

Zion is called to sing, shout, rejoice, and celebrate wholeheartedly because of God's saving presence.

Zechariah 2:10

Zion is told to sing and rejoice because the Lord promises to come and dwell among His people.

Psalm 89:18

The Lord is the true defender of His people, and the Holy One of Israel is their King.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation reaches its greatest joy when the saved person delights in the Savior Himself.

Key Truth

Heaven is glorious because God is there.

VII. SEVEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 12

1. God's Anger Is Not the Final Word for the Restored

God turns from judgment to comfort.

Principle:

Grace brings restoration after discipline.

---

2. God Himself Is Salvation

The believer does not merely receive something from God.

The believer receives God as Savior.

Principle:

Salvation is relational before it is merely experiential.

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3. Trust Replaces Fear

> **“I will trust and not be afraid.”**

Principle:

Faith and fear compete for the same heart.

---

4. Salvation Produces Joy

Water is drawn from the wells of salvation:

With joy.

Principle:

Grace gives the soul reason to celebrate.

---

5. Salvation Produces Worship

The saved sing.

Principle:

A silent heart has not fully considered the greatness of salvation.

---

6. Salvation Produces Witness

God's deeds are proclaimed among the nations.

Principle:

Grace turns recipients into witnesses.

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7. God's Presence Is the Greatest Blessing

> **“Great is the Holy One of Israel among you.”**

Principle:

The highest joy is not merely God's gifts but God Himself.

VIII. WHAT ISAIAH 12 TEACHES ABOUT SALVATION

Salvation is described as:

God Himself.

Strength.

Song.

Water.

Joy.

Comfort.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Biblical salvation does not merely rescue from danger.

It restores relationship with God.

IX. WHAT ISAIAH 12 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S ANGER

God's anger is:

Real.

Righteous.

Not arbitrary.

But for His restored people:

It turns away.

Spiritual Principle

God's holiness takes sin seriously, and His mercy takes restoration seriously.

X. WHAT ISAIAH 12 TEACHES ABOUT COMFORT

God does not merely stop judging.

He comforts.

That means He moves toward His restored people with:

Care.

Reassurance.

Presence.

Key Truth

God's restoration includes emotional and spiritual comfort.

XI. WHAT ISAIAH 12 TEACHES ABOUT TRUST

Isaiah says:

> **“I will trust.”**

Trust is an intentional response.

Because God is salvation:

Fear no longer has final authority.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Trust grows when we focus more upon who God is than upon what frightens us.

XII. WHAT ISAIAH 12 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

The believer says:

> **“I will not be afraid.”**

This does not mean:

Nothing fearful exists.

It means:

God is greater.

Spiritual Principle

Courage is not the absence of threatening circumstances.

It is confidence in God in the middle of them.

XIII. WHAT ISAIAH 12 TEACHES ABOUT JOY

Joy comes from salvation.

Not:

Possessions.

Status.

Circumstances.

The deepest joy comes from knowing:

God has saved.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Salvation gives joy that circumstances cannot manufacture.

XIV. WHAT ISAIAH 12 TEACHES ABOUT WORSHIP

The chapter is full of worship verbs:

Praise.

Give thanks.

Call.

Proclaim.

Sing.

Shout.

Rejoice.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation should engage:

The heart.

The mouth.

The life.

XV. WHAT ISAIAH 12 TEACHES ABOUT WITNESS

God's works are announced:

Among the nations.

To the earth.

Salvation is never intended to become private possession only.

Key Truth

People who know God's salvation should want others to know God's Savior.

XVI. WHAT ISAIAH 12 TEACHES ABOUT THE NATIONS

The message is outward-looking.

God's deeds must be known:

Beyond Zion.

Beyond Israel.

Among the nations.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Biblical worship naturally moves toward mission.

XVII. WHAT ISAIAH 12 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S PRESENCE

The chapter ends:

> **“The Holy One of Israel among you.”**

God's presence is:

Near.

Personal.

Central.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest answer to loneliness, fear, and exile is the presence of God.

XVIII. FROM ANGER TO COMFORT

Isaiah 12 begins with contrast.

God was angry.

Now:

He comforts.

This movement summarizes restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's discipline is never meant to make His repentant people believe they are beyond His comfort.

XIX. “GOD IS MY SALVATION”

This is personal language.

Not:

Their salvation.

A salvation.

Possible salvation.

But:

My salvation.

Spiritual Principle

Faith receives God's promise personally.

XX. “I WILL TRUST”

Trust does not happen accidentally.

The believer chooses to rest in God's character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fear asks you to surrender your peace.

Faith says:

“I will trust.”

XXI. “THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH”

Human strength is limited.

God's strength is not.

Spiritual Principle

When personal strength is exhausted, divine strength is not.

XXII. “THE LORD IS MY SONG”

God becomes:

The subject.

Reason.

Center.

Of worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When salvation fills the heart, worship finds its voice.

XXIII. THE WELLS OF SALVATION

A well provides water repeatedly.

Isaiah does not picture salvation as:

One drop.

But:

A well.

Spiritual Principle

The resources of God's grace are not exhausted by our need.

XXIV. MAKE HIS DEEDS KNOWN

Worship moves outward.

Tell others:

What God has done.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A testimony does not need to make us impressive.

It should make God impressive.

XXV. HIS NAME IS EXALTED

God's people do not proclaim:

Their own greatness.

They exalt:

His name.

Spiritual Principle

Healthy worship lowers self and raises God.

XXVI. LET ALL THE EARTH KNOW

The scope becomes global.

Salvation cannot remain confined to one location.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's glory is too great for a small vision of His mission.

XXVII. THE HOLY ONE AMONG YOU

The chapter ends where salvation ultimately leads:

Presence.

The Holy One is:

Among them.

Spiritual Principle

The goal of salvation is not merely escape from judgment.

It is restored fellowship with God.

XXVIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Why does the speaker praise God in verse 1?

Because God's anger has turned away and His comfort has come.

Question 2

Was God's earlier anger unjust?

No.

Isaiah presents it as the righteous response to sin.

Question 3

What does verse 2 mean when it says God is salvation?

It means salvation is rooted in God's own character, power, and saving action.

Question 4

What replaces fear?

Trust.

Question 5

What does God become to the believer?

Strength.

Song.

Salvation.

Question 6

What do the wells of salvation represent?

The abundant, refreshing, life-giving provision of God's saving grace.

Question 7

How should salvation affect the believer emotionally?

It should produce joy.

Question 8

How should salvation affect worship?

It should produce praise, thanksgiving, singing, and rejoicing.

Question 9

Should God's saving works remain private?

No.

They should be made known among the nations.

Question 10

What does God's people proclaim about His name?

That His name is exalted.

Question 11

Why should Zion shout for joy?

Because the Holy One of Israel is great among His people.

Question 12

What is the greatest blessing in the chapter?

The presence of God among His people.

XXIX. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 12 asks several searching questions.

Am I Praising God for His Mercy?

Do I remember what He has forgiven?

Do I Truly Believe God Is My Salvation?

Or am I depending upon:

Myself?

Money?

People?

Religion?

What Fear Do I Need to Replace with Trust?

What would change if I said:

“I will trust and not be afraid”?

Am I Drawing from the Wells of Salvation?

Or am I spiritually thirsty while standing beside God's provision?

Is There Joy in My Salvation?

Have I allowed familiarity to make grace seem ordinary?

Do I Tell Others What God Has Done?

Who needs to hear my testimony?

Is God's Name Being Exalted Through My Life?

Or am I trying to exalt my own?

Is God's Presence Enough?

Do I value Him more than merely what He gives me?

XXX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Salvation Turns the Heart from Fearful Silence into Joyful Witness”

Isaiah 12 begins:

> **“I will praise You.”**

Then:

> **“I will trust.”**

Then:

> **“Make known His deeds.”**

Principle:

Grace received should become trust expressed, worship offered, and testimony shared.

XXXI. SALVATION AND SONG

Exodus 15 and Isaiah 12 use strikingly similar language.

After deliverance:

God becomes:

Strength.

Song.

Salvation.

Spiritual Principle

Saved people should become singing people.

XXXII. DRAWING WATER WITH JOY

Water must be:

Drawn.

The well is available.

The person comes to it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not merely admire the well.

Drink from what God has provided.

XXXIII. PRAISE AFTER DISCIPLINE

The people can praise because:

God did not leave them under judgment forever.

Spiritual Principle

Do not let yesterday's discipline hide today's mercy.

XXXIV. TRUST WITHOUT FEAR

Isaiah does not say:

I will trust because nothing can go wrong.

He says:

I will trust because:

God is salvation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The foundation of courage is not certainty about circumstances.

It is certainty about God.

XXXV. PUBLIC PRAISE

Isaiah says:

Tell:

The nations.

The whole earth.

Spiritual Principle

Private gratitude should eventually become public testimony.

XXXVI. GREAT IS THE HOLY ONE

The chapter ends by emphasizing:

God's greatness.

God's holiness.

God's presence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest reason for rejoicing is not that everything around us is perfect.

It is that God is among His people.

XXXVII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 12 is what salvation sounds like when it begins to sing.

The people have known:

Judgment.

Fear.

Discipline.

Loss.

But now they say:

“I will praise You.”

Why?

Because anger has turned to:

Comfort.

Then comes the declaration:

“God is my salvation.”

This is more than theology on paper.

It is personal.

God is:

My salvation.

My strength.

My song.

That changes fear.

The believer can say:

“I will trust and not be afraid.”

Not because life contains no danger.

But because God remains greater than the danger.

Then Isaiah gives one of Scripture's most refreshing images:

“With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.”

God's grace is not a dry reservoir.

It is:

Living.

Abundant.

Refreshing.

Come thirsty.

Draw deeply.

Then:

Tell others.

Make known His deeds.

Proclaim His name.

Sing.

Shout.

Rejoice.

Why?

Because salvation should never end with:

“What has God done for me?”

It should continue:

“Let the nations know what God has done.”

And finally Isaiah gives the greatest reason for worship:

“Great is the Holy One of Israel among you.”

Not merely:

His gifts are among you.

Not merely:

His blessings are among you.

But:

He is among you.

That is salvation's greatest treasure.

God with His people.

Therefore:

Praise Him.

Trust Him.

Drink deeply from His grace.

Tell others.

Sing.

And rejoice that the Holy One is near.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for Your salvation.

Thank You that Your righteous anger does not remain forever against those You restore.

Thank You for:

Mercy.

Comfort.

Forgiveness.

Grace.

Father, teach us to say with confidence:

You are our salvation.

When fear rises:

Help us trust.

When weakness comes:

Be our strength.

When sorrow silences us:

Become our song.

When our souls are dry:

Lead us again to the wells of salvation.

Give us joy in what You have done.

Protect us from becoming so familiar with grace that we stop being amazed by it.

Father, put praise in our mouths.

Help us:

Give thanks.

Call upon Your name.

Tell others what You have done.

Proclaim Your greatness.

Sing of Your glorious works.

Let our testimony point to You rather than to ourselves.

And Father, thank You that the greatest blessing is Your presence.

You are:

The Holy One.

The Savior.

The God who dwells among His people.

May our hearts rejoice in You more than merely in Your gifts.

May our lives declare to the world:

Great is the Holy One of Israel.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. For the Lord, the Lord Himself, is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation.” — Isaiah 12:2**

Central Truth

God's salvation turns righteous anger into comfort, replaces fear with trust, becomes strength and song for His people, fills them with the joy of living water, and sends them into the world proclaiming the greatness of the Holy One who dwells among them.

Isaiah 12 in One Sentence

Isaiah celebrates the day when God's restored people praise Him for turning anger into comfort, trust Him as their salvation and strength, draw joy from the wells of His grace, proclaim His works among the nations, and rejoice because the Holy One of Israel is present among them.

Isaiah Chapter 13 — The Judgment of Babylon and the Day of the Lord

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 13 begins a major new section of prophecy.

The focus turns from:

Judah.

Jerusalem.

Assyria.

To:

Babylon.

Babylon would become one of the great powers of the ancient world.

It would be known for:

Military strength.

Wealth.

Culture.

Pride.

Imperial glory.

Yet Isaiah announces that Babylon will not stand forever.

Its greatness will collapse.

Its pride will be humbled.

Its cities will become desolate.

Its luxury will disappear.

Its power will be broken.

The chapter begins with a prophecy specifically directed against Babylon, but Isaiah's language grows larger than one historical event.

He repeatedly speaks of:

> **“The day of the Lord.”**

This phrase describes decisive intervention by God in judgment.

In the immediate historical setting, Babylon faces judgment through invading nations, especially the Medes.

Yet the imagery also reaches beyond Babylon toward the broader biblical theme of God's final judgment against:

Human arrogance.

Violence.

Wickedness.

Rebellion.

The chapter contains dramatic imagery.

Armies gather.

Nations tremble.

The heavens darken.

The earth shakes.

Human pride collapses.

People flee.

Babylon falls.

Isaiah is teaching an important truth:

No empire is permanent.

No nation is beyond accountability.

No amount of wealth can protect wickedness forever.

No human ruler can cancel what God has decreed.

Babylon calls itself glorious.

God declares that its glory will become desolation.

The chapter also shows that God remains sovereign over history.

He summons nations.

He raises armies.

He identifies the Medes before Babylon's fall.

History is not out of control.

The Lord of Heaven's Armies remains Lord over:

Kings.

Empires.

Armies.

Judgment.

The central truth of Isaiah 13 is:

The sovereign Lord will bring down Babylon and every arrogant power that exalts itself against Him, demonstrating that the Day of the Lord brings righteous judgment upon sin, humbles human pride, exposes the weakness of earthly glory, and proves that God's Word over nations cannot fail.

I. ISAIAH RECEIVES A PROPHECY AGAINST BABYLON

Isaiah 13:1 — The Burden Concerning Babylon

> **“This is the prophecy concerning Babylon that Isaiah son of Amoz saw.”**

Isaiah identifies the subject clearly.

Babylon.

The word translated as prophecy or burden carries the idea of:

A weighty message.

A solemn announcement.

A divine pronouncement.

Isaiah does not invent this message.

He:

Sees it.

Receives it.

Declares it.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:1

The Lord later gave Jeremiah a message concerning Babylon and the land of the Chaldeans, announcing judgment against the empire.

Habakkuk 1:6

God tells Habakkuk that He is raising up the fierce Babylonian people, who move across the earth and seize lands belonging to others.

Isaiah 21:9

Isaiah later announces Babylon's fall and declares that its false gods and carved images will be shattered.

Spiritual Principle

The nation God may use in one generation can itself become the object of judgment in another.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Being powerful in history never means being beyond God's authority.

II. GOD RAISES THE SIGNAL FOR BATTLE

Isaiah 13:2 — The Banner on the Hill

> **"Raise a banner on a bare hilltop, shout to them, wave your hand, so they may enter the gates of the nobles."**

The picture is military.

A banner is raised.

A signal is given.

The invading forces are summoned.

Babylon's gates, associated with power and nobility, will be entered.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:2

God commands that Babylon's fall be announced publicly among the nations, declaring that the empire and its idols will be put to shame.

Jeremiah 51:27

A banner is raised among the nations, the trumpet sounds, and kingdoms are summoned together against Babylon for battle.

Jeremiah 4:6

God commands a signal to be raised because approaching judgment and destruction are coming from the north.

Spiritual Principle

When God signals judgment, human walls cannot guarantee safety.

III. GOD SUMMONS HIS INSTRUMENTS OF JUDGMENT

Isaiah 13:3 — Warriors Set Apart for His Purpose

> **“I have commanded those I have set apart; I have summoned My warriors to carry out My wrath—those who rejoice in My triumph.”**

God remains the One directing events.

The armies are His instruments in the sense that He uses them to accomplish judgment.

This does not mean every motive or action of those armies is morally righteous.

It means:

God remains sovereign.

Cross References

Joel 3:11

The nations are summoned to gather for battle as God brings them into the place where His judgment will be revealed.

Jeremiah 51:20

God describes a powerful nation as His war club and weapon through which kingdoms and military forces may be broken.

Jeremiah 50:9

God promises to raise a coalition of powerful nations against Babylon, and their attack will not return empty.

Spiritual Principle

God can direct historical powers without sharing their sinful motives.

Key Truth

The Judge of nations never loses control of the instruments He permits to act.

IV. THE NATIONS GATHER FOR WAR

Isaiah 13:4 — The Lord Musters an Army

> **“Listen! A noise on the mountains, like that of a great multitude! Listen! An uproar among the kingdoms, like nations massing together. The Lord Almighty is mustering an army for war.”**

Isaiah hears:

Noise.

Multitudes.

Kingdoms.

Armies.

The scene is enormous.

Yet behind the human movement stands:

The Lord Almighty.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:9

A gathering of powerful nations comes against Babylon from the north and positions itself for battle.

Joel 2:2

The approaching day of judgment is pictured as darkness and gloom accompanied by a vast and powerful army.

Revelation 19:19

John sees earthly kings and their armies gathered together in opposition to the victorious King and His purposes.

Spiritual Principle

What appears chaotic from earth may still be under the sovereignty of heaven.

V. THE WEAPONS OF GOD'S JUDGMENT COME FROM FAR AWAY

Isaiah 13:5 — Judgment from Distant Lands

> **“They come from faraway lands, from the ends of the heavens—the Lord and the weapons of His wrath—to destroy the whole country.”**

The invading forces come from distant regions.

Babylon's geography cannot shield it.

God's judgment reaches across borders.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:25

The Lord is pictured opening His storehouse and bringing out the weapons appointed for His indignation against Babylon.

Jeremiah 51:11

The Medes are stirred up against Babylon because the Lord has determined to bring judgment against the empire.

Jeremiah 6:22

A powerful people is pictured coming from distant northern regions, armed and prepared for war.

Spiritual Principle

Distance never places anyone outside God's reach.

VI. THE DAY OF THE LORD IS NEAR

Isaiah 13:6 — Destruction from the Almighty

> **“Wail, for the day of the Lord is near; it comes like destruction from the Almighty.”**

Isaiah introduces the great phrase:

“The day of the Lord.”

It refers to a decisive time when God intervenes openly in judgment.

For Babylon:

That day means collapse.

More broadly:

The phrase becomes associated throughout Scripture with God's ultimate judgment.

Cross References

Joel 1:15

Joel warns that the day of the Lord is near and describes it as a time of devastating judgment from the Almighty.

Zephaniah 1:7

People are told to be silent before the Lord because His day is near and His judgment is prepared.

1 Thessalonians 5:3

Paul warns that when people confidently speak of peace and security, sudden destruction may come unexpectedly like labor pains upon a pregnant woman.

Spiritual Principle

God's patience should never be mistaken for the absence of accountability.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The fact that judgment has not arrived yet does not mean judgment has been canceled.

VII. HUMAN STRENGTH COLLAPSES IN FEAR

Isaiah 13:7 — Every Hand Goes Limp

> **“Because of this, every hand will go limp, every heart will melt with fear.”**

Human confidence disappears.

The hands once used for:

War.

Work.

Power.

Control.

Become weak.

Hearts melt.

Cross References

Ezekiel 21:7

Ezekiel describes people losing courage, hands becoming weak, spirits fainting, and knees trembling when judgment is announced.

Joshua 2:11

Rahab says the people of Jericho lost courage when they heard what the Lord had done for Israel.

Nahum 2:10

A conquered city is described as emptied and devastated, with hearts melting, knees trembling, bodies shaking, and faces growing pale.

Spiritual Principle

Human courage built only on circumstances can disappear very quickly.

VIII. TERROR SEIZES BABYLON

Isaiah 13:8 — Anguish Like Labor

> **“Terror will seize them, pain and anguish will grip them; they will writhe like a woman in labor. They will look at each other in horror, their faces flushed with fear.”**

Isaiah uses the repeated biblical image of:

Labor pains.

They are:

Intense.

Unavoidable once begun.

Progressive.

The people suddenly realize that judgment cannot simply be dismissed.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:43

When Babylon's king hears of the advancing enemy, his hands become weak and anguish grips him like the pain of a woman giving birth.

1 Thessalonians 5:3

Sudden judgment is compared to labor pains that come upon a pregnant woman and cannot be escaped.

Psalm 48:6

Fear and trembling seize hostile kings like the pains of childbirth.

Spiritual Principle

There comes a point when consequences can no longer be postponed.

IX. THE DAY OF THE LORD EXPOSES SIN

Isaiah 13:9 — Wrath Against Rebellion

> **“See, the day of the Lord is coming—a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger—to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it.”**

The language is severe because the sin is serious.

God's judgment is not arbitrary.

It is directed against:

Wickedness.

Sin.

Pride.

Violence.

Cross References

Malachi 4:1

The coming day is compared to a burning furnace in which arrogant wickedness is consumed like dry stubble.

Zephaniah 1:18

Wealth cannot rescue people in the day of the Lord's judgment, when divine wrath brings devastation upon persistent rebellion.

Joel 2:31

The sun is darkened and the moon altered before the great and awe-inspiring day of the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

God's holiness means evil cannot remain forever unanswered.

X. THE HEAVENS ARE DARKENED

Isaiah 13:10 — Cosmic Signs of Judgment

> **“The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light.”**

Isaiah uses cosmic imagery to describe the magnitude of divine judgment.

Everything people assume is stable appears shaken.

Darkness replaces normal light.

This language is echoed later in prophetic and New Testament descriptions of divine judgment.

Cross References

Joel 2:10

Before the Lord's advancing judgment, the earth trembles, the heavens shake, and the sun, moon, and stars are darkened.

Matthew 24:29

Jesus describes cosmic disturbances associated with climactic judgment: the sun darkened, the moon no longer giving its light, and heavenly powers shaken.

Ezekiel 32:7

In a prophetic judgment oracle, the heavens are pictured as covered, stars darkened, the sun hidden, and the moon deprived of light.

Spiritual Principle

What humanity considers permanent is still subject to the Creator.

XI. GOD PUNISHES EVIL AND PRIDE

Isaiah 13:11 — Arrogance Brought to an End

> **“I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the proud and humble the pride of the ruthless.”**

Here the scope widens.

Isaiah speaks not merely of one city but of:

The world.

Evil.

Wickedness.

Pride.

Ruthlessness.

The fall of Babylon becomes a picture of the larger principle of divine judgment against arrogant human power.

Cross References

Jeremiah 51:25

God declares Himself against Babylon, pictured as a destructive mountain that ruins nations, and promises to bring it down.

Isaiah 2:12

The Lord has appointed a day against everything proud, arrogant, and exalted, and all of it will be brought low.

Zephaniah 2:10

Proud nations receive judgment because they mocked and exalted themselves against the people belonging to the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Pride is not merely a personality flaw.

It is spiritual rebellion against God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Everything that continually exalts itself against God is moving toward humiliation.

XII. HUMAN LIFE BECOMES RARE

Isaiah 13:12 — Scarcer Than Gold

> **“I will make people scarcer than pure gold, rarer than the gold of Ophir.”**

The picture is one of enormous loss.

Population decreases dramatically.

Human life becomes rarer than prized gold.

The verse does not celebrate destruction.

It communicates the severity of judgment.

Cross References

Job 28:16

The wisdom of God cannot be purchased with the precious gold of Ophir or valued merely according to material wealth.

1 Kings 9:28

Solomon's servants obtained large amounts of gold from Ophir, showing the region's association with exceptionally valuable gold.

Malachi 3:17

God says His faithful people will belong to Him as a treasured possession in the day when He acts.

Spiritual Principle

Human pride often values gold above people, but judgment exposes how precious life truly is.

XIII. HEAVEN AND EARTH SHAKE

Isaiah 13:13 — Creation Trembles Before God

> **“Therefore I will make the heavens tremble, and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath of the Lord Almighty, in the day of His burning anger.”**

The imagery becomes cosmic again.

Heavens:

Tremble.

Earth:

Shakes.

The message is:

God's judgment is not small.

Cross References

Haggai 2:6

God promises that He will once again shake heaven, earth, sea, and dry land as He carries forward His purposes.

Hebrews 12:26

Hebrews quotes God's promise to shake not only the earth but also heaven, showing that created things are temporary while God's kingdom remains unshakable.

Joel 3:16

The Lord roars from Zion, and heaven and earth shake, while He remains a refuge for His own people.

Spiritual Principle

Only God's kingdom is truly unshakable.

XIV. FOREIGNERS FLEE FROM BABYLON

Isaiah 13:14 — Like Sheep Without a Shepherd

> **“Like a hunted gazelle, like sheep without a shepherd, they will each return to their own people, they will flee to their native land.”**

Babylon attracted people from many nations.

When judgment arrives:

The population scatters.

The great imperial center no longer feels safe.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:16

Those living in Babylon are told to flee and return to their own people because of the invading sword.

Jeremiah 50:17

Israel is pictured as a scattered sheep hunted and attacked by powerful kingdoms.

1 Kings 22:17

Micaiah sees Israel scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd.

Spiritual Principle

The places people gather for earthly security can become places they desperately flee.

XV. THOSE CAUGHT IN THE CITY FACE DEATH

Isaiah 13:15 — Babylon's Defenses Fail

> **“Whoever is captured will be thrust through; all who are caught will fall by the sword.”**

The military language is severe.

The point is unmistakable:

Babylon's defenses will fail.

Its reputation cannot protect those caught in the city's downfall.

Cross References

Jeremiah 51:4

People fall wounded and dead in Babylon's territory when the empire's judgment arrives.

Amos 9:1

God warns that those attempting to flee His appointed judgment will not ultimately escape merely through human movement.

Ezekiel 5:12

Ezekiel describes death by famine, plague, and sword as consequences of Jerusalem's rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

No fortress is strong enough to overturn God's judgment.

XVI. WAR BRINGS HORRIFIC SUFFERING TO FAMILIES

Isaiah 13:16 — The Brutality of Conquest

> **“Their infants will be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses will be looted and their wives violated.”**

This is one of the chapter's darkest verses.

It describes the brutality of ancient warfare.

The verse should not be read as celebrating cruelty.

It reveals how horrifying military conquest could become when violent armies overran cities.

War does not remain confined to soldiers.

It devastates:

Children.

Women.

Families.

Homes.

Cross References

Hosea 13:16

Hosea warns that rebellion will bring horrifying military devastation upon Samaria, including suffering among families and children.

Nahum 3:10

When Thebes was conquered, children suffered violence, leaders were humiliated, and prominent people were taken away in chains.

Psalm 137:9

Psalm 137 records the anguished and disturbing language of exiles who had witnessed Babylonian brutality and expressed a desire for Babylon to experience the same violence it had inflicted.

Spiritual Principle

War reveals how destructive human wickedness can become when restraint collapses.

Key Truth

Biblical judgment passages often expose the horror of violence rather than inviting God's people to delight in cruelty.

XVII. GOD STIRS THE MEDES AGAINST BABYLON

Isaiah 13:17 — An Army Money Cannot Buy Off

> **“See, I will stir up the Medes against them, who care nothing for silver and have no delight in gold.”**

Isaiah becomes historically specific.

The Medes will rise against Babylon.

Babylon cannot solve the crisis through:

Bribes.

Silver.

Gold.

The invading force is not coming merely for payment.

Cross References

Jeremiah 51:11

God specifically calls upon the kings of the Medes in connection with Babylon's destruction.

Jeremiah 51:28

The Medes and their rulers are summoned and prepared as part of the coalition against Babylon.

Daniel 5:28

Daniel tells Belshazzar that Babylon's kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians.

Spiritual Principle

There are crises money cannot solve.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Wealth is powerful only until we face something that does not want what money can buy.

XVIII. THE INVADERS SHOW NO MERCY

Isaiah 13:18 — The Severity of Babylon's Fall

> **“Their bows will strike down the young men; they will show no mercy to infants, nor will they spare children.”**

Again the focus is the brutality of ancient conquest.

Isaiah portrays:

War without compassion.

Violence without restraint.

The empire that had inflicted suffering upon others will itself experience devastating conquest.

Cross References

Jeremiah 51:3

Jeremiah commands the attacking forces not to hold back in battle against Babylon's military strength.

Deuteronomy 32:25

Judgment through warfare is described as bringing terror both outside and inside, affecting young and old.

Lamentations 2:21

During Jerusalem's own devastation, young and old lay fallen in the streets, showing the indiscriminate horror of war.

Spiritual Principle

Violence creates consequences far beyond those who make political and military decisions.

XIX. BABYLON'S GLORY WILL BE OVERTHROWN

Isaiah 13:19 — The Jewel of Kingdoms Falls

> **“Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the pride and glory of the Babylonians, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah.”**

Babylon appears:

Beautiful.

Powerful.

Glorious.

Impressive.

God says:

It will fall.

The contrast is dramatic.

Human glory is temporary.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:40

Babylon is compared with Sodom and Gomorrah in the completeness of its coming desolation.

Genesis 19:24

The Lord brought catastrophic judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah because of their entrenched wickedness.

Revelation 18:2

In John's vision, symbolic Babylon falls and becomes a desolate place associated with corruption and unclean powers.

Spiritual Principle

The glory of a sinful kingdom can disappear much faster than it was built.

XX. BABYLON BECOMES UNINHABITED

Isaiah 13:20 — No Tents, No Shepherds

> **“She will never be inhabited again; through all generations no one will live there. No nomad will pitch his tent there, no shepherd will rest his flocks there.”**

Isaiah pictures complete abandonment.

The once crowded city becomes:

Empty.

Unwanted.

Uninhabited.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:39

Babylon is described as becoming a desolate place inhabited by wild creatures rather than ordinary human populations.

Jeremiah 51:37

Babylon will become a heap of ruins and a place associated with wild animals, horror, and abandonment.

Revelation 18:21

Symbolic Babylon is pictured as being thrown down violently and never again recovering its former place of power.

Spiritual Principle

A city can move from the center of the world to a monument of impermanence.

XXI. WILD CREATURES OCCUPY THE RUINS

Isaiah 13:21 — Palaces Become Dens

> **“But desert creatures will lie there, their houses will be full of howling animals; owls will dwell there, and wild goats will leap about.”**

The human population disappears.

Nature takes over the ruins.

The proud city becomes:

Wild.

Empty.

Desolate.

Cross References

Zephaniah 2:14

A destroyed city is pictured as becoming the dwelling place of animals and birds after human pride has been humbled.

Jeremiah 50:39

Babylon's ruins become the habitation of wild desert creatures after its population disappears.

Isaiah 34:11

Isaiah uses similar imagery of wild creatures occupying land devastated under divine judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Human civilization is far more fragile than pride imagines.

XXII. BABYLON'S TIME IS ALMOST OVER

Isaiah 13:22 — Her Days Will Not Be Prolonged

> **“Hyenas will howl in her strongholds, jackals in her luxurious palaces. Her time is close at hand, and her days will not be prolonged.”**

The chapter ends with:

A deadline.

Babylon's luxury appears secure.

God says:

Its time is limited.

The strongholds become homes for wild animals.

The palaces become ruins.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:27

Babylon's day of punishment arrives, and what once appeared powerful is brought down.

Jeremiah 51:33

Babylon is compared to a threshing floor whose appointed time of judgment is near.

Revelation 18:10

Those who profited from symbolic Babylon stand at a distance in fear and mourn because its judgment comes suddenly.

Spiritual Principle

Every empire has an appointed limit known to God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What looks permanent to people may already have an expiration date in heaven.

XXIII. SEVEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 13

1. No Empire Is Beyond God's Judgment

Babylon was magnificent.

It still fell.

Principle:

Political power never becomes divine power.

---

2. The Day of the Lord Is Serious

God's judgment is not symbolic moral discomfort.

It is decisive intervention against wickedness.

Principle:

God's patience should lead to repentance.

---

3. God Humbles Human Pride

The proud and ruthless are brought low.

Principle:

Self-exaltation always has a limit before God.

---

4. God Rules Over Nations

He summons armies and identifies the Medes.

Principle:

History remains beneath God's sovereignty.

---

5. Wealth Cannot Prevent Judgment

Silver and gold cannot stop the Medes.

Principle:

Money is a resource, not a savior.

---

6. War Reveals the Terrible Consequences of Sin

Families suffer alongside armies.

Principle:

Human rebellion produces suffering that reaches far beyond those who begin the conflict.

---

7. God's Word Is Certain

Babylon's glory would end.

Principle:

What God declares is not overturned by human greatness.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 13 TEACHES ABOUT THE DAY OF THE LORD

The day of the Lord is characterized by:

Judgment.

Fear.

Accountability.

Divine intervention.

The humbling of pride.

Isaiah's immediate focus is Babylon.

But the language reaches toward a larger biblical pattern.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Historical judgments are reminders that history itself is moving toward final accountability before God.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 13 TEACHES ABOUT BABYLON

Babylon is called:

The jewel of kingdoms.

The glory of the Babylonians.

It represents:

Power.

Wealth.

Prestige.

Pride.

Yet none of these can keep the empire standing.

Spiritual Principle

Civilization at its most impressive remains temporary without righteousness.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 13 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

God specifically says:

> **“I will put an end to the arrogance of the proud.”**

Pride is central.

Pride says:

We are secure.

We are superior.

We cannot fall.

God says:

You can.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride often mistakes present strength for permanent strength.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 13 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

God says:

I commanded.

I summoned.

I will stir up.

God is presented as sovereign over:

Armies.

Nations.

Political change.

Historical judgment.

Spiritual Principle

World events may involve many human decisions while still remaining under God's ultimate authority.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 13 TEACHES ABOUT JUDGMENT

Judgment has:

Moral cause.

Historical form.

Real consequences.

God punishes:

Evil.

Wickedness.

Pride.

Ruthlessness.

Key Truth

Biblical judgment is connected with God's justice, not divine unpredictability.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 13 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN SECURITY

Babylon possessed:

Walls.

Armies.

Palaces.

Money.

Political control.

Still:

It fell.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Anything that can be taken away is too fragile to become your ultimate security.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 13 TEACHES ABOUT WEALTH

The Medes do not care about:

Silver.

Gold.

Babylon's wealth loses negotiating power.

Spiritual Principle

Money can solve many problems, but it cannot solve every problem.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 13 TEACHES ABOUT WAR

Isaiah does not romanticize conquest.

War includes:

Fear.

Death.

Displacement.

Violence.

Loss.

Family suffering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Bible's descriptions of war should make us sober about violence, not fascinated by it.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 13 TEACHES ABOUT THE CREATOR

Sun.

Moon.

Stars.

Heavens.

Earth.

All appear within the imagery of God's judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Creation does not control God.

God controls creation.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 13 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN GLORY

Babylon is:

Beautiful.

Powerful.

Luxurious.

Yet its palaces become animal dens.

Key Truth

Human glory without God eventually becomes ruins.

XXXIV. THE BANNER ON THE HILL

The chapter begins with:

A signal.

God is summoning judgment.

The empire may not realize what is happening.

But heaven has already issued the command.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

History often changes before powerful people realize their season has ended.

XXXV. WHEN EVERY HAND GOES LIMP

Babylon had warriors.

Weapons.

Commanders.

Yet fear overwhelms them.

Spiritual Principle

Human strength can fail precisely when people need it most.

XXXVI. THE DARKENED SUN

Light disappears from the prophetic picture.

Darkness symbolizes:

Judgment.

Disorientation.

Loss.

The created order itself seems to testify:

The day is serious.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God shakes what people thought was permanent, false security becomes visible.

XXXVII. THE PRIDE OF THE RUTHLESS

Ruthlessness often appears powerful.

But Isaiah says:

God humbles it.

Spiritual Principle

Cruelty is not strength in God's sight.

It is guilt.

XXXVIII. WHEN GOLD CANNOT HELP

Babylon is one of the wealthy kingdoms of the ancient world.

But money becomes irrelevant before an enemy that cannot be purchased.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never ask money to perform the work only God can do.

XXXIX. BABYLON AND SODOM

Isaiah compares Babylon's overthrow with:

Sodom.

Gomorrah.

The comparison emphasizes:

Severity.

Finality.

The collapse of proud wickedness.

Spiritual Principle

God does not measure greatness by architecture, wealth, or military strength.

He measures righteousness.

XL. PALACES BECOME RUINS

Imagine the change.

Music once filled:

Palaces.

Officials once walked:

Hallways.

Wealth once decorated:

Rooms.

Now:

Wild animals.

Silence.

Ruins.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If we build only for this world, eventually the world inherits everything we built.

XLI. HER TIME IS CLOSE

Babylon does not set the length of its own history.

God does.

Spiritual Principle

Every human institution operates on borrowed time.

XLII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What nation is the focus of Isaiah 13?

Babylon.

Question 2

What does God command to be raised?

A banner signaling the gathering of invading forces.

Question 3

Who is ultimately directing the judgment?

The Lord of Heaven's Armies.

Question 4

What is the Day of the Lord?

It is a time of decisive divine intervention in judgment, with Babylon's fall serving here as an immediate historical expression of that larger biblical theme.

Question 5

Why are people terrified?

They suddenly realize that the judgment they cannot control is arriving.

Question 6

What does the darkened sun, moon, and stars communicate?

It communicates the enormous and world-shaking character of God's judgment.

Question 7

What sins does verse 11 specifically mention?

Evil.

Wickedness.

Arrogance.

Pride.

Ruthlessness.

Question 8

Who does God raise against Babylon?

The Medes.

Question 9

Why is Babylon's wealth unable to protect it?

The attacking forces cannot simply be bought off with silver and gold.

Question 10

How is Babylon described before its fall?

As the jewel of kingdoms and the glory of the Babylonians.

Question 11

What becomes of Babylon's former glory?

Its palaces and strongholds become desolate places associated with wild creatures.

Question 12

What does the chapter teach about human empires?

No empire, regardless of its strength, wealth, or prestige, is beyond God's judgment.

XLIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 13 asks several searching questions.

What Do I Think Is Permanent?

Career?

Money?

Government?

Possessions?

Status?

Isaiah reminds us:

Earthly things change.

Is Pride Growing in Me?

Do I assume success means:

I cannot fall?

Where Is My Security?

Money?

Position?

Human strength?

Or God?

Do I Take God's Warnings Seriously?

Or do I treat patience as permission?

Do I Recognize the Cost of Sin?

Does my rebellion affect:

Family?

Friends?

Community?

Others?

Am I Building Only for This World?

What will remain when possessions are gone?

Do I Trust God When Nations Change?

Can I still believe:

He rules history?

XLIV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“What Human Pride Calls Permanent, God Can Turn Into Ruins”

Babylon said:

Glory.

God said:

Judgment.

Babylon said:

Strength.

God said:

Your time is near.

Principle:

Never build eternal confidence upon temporary greatness.

XLV. THE DAY OF THE LORD AND HUMAN PRIDE

One of the repeated themes in Isaiah is:

God exalted.

Human pride humbled.

Isaiah 13 continues that message.

Spiritual Principle

There will never be two ultimate glories competing forever.

God alone remains supreme.

XLVI. GOD'S WORD OVER NATIONS

Isaiah prophesies concerning Babylon before its final fall.

The prophecy itself demonstrates:

God knows the future.

God rules history.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prophecy reminds us that tomorrow is already visible to God.

XLVII. THE MEDES

Isaiah identifies a specific people:

The Medes.

This makes the chapter more than generic language about collapse.

God names an instrument of Babylon's judgment.

Spiritual Principle

God's sovereignty operates through real places, real people, and real history.

XLVIII. THE TRAGEDY OF WAR

Some verses in Isaiah 13 are painful to read.

They should be.

War is painful.

Conquest is horrifying.

Human cruelty creates suffering among people who may have little control over the decisions that produced the conflict.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never read descriptions of human suffering casually.

Let them deepen:

Compassion.

Sobriety.

Hatred of sin.

Longing for righteous peace.

XLIX. THE FAILURE OF EARTHLY GLORY

Babylon's title:

> **“The jewel of kingdoms.”**

Does not save it.

Reputation is not permanence.

Spiritual Principle

You can be admired by the world and still be headed toward collapse.

L. THE WORLD AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Isaiah 13 shakes:

The earth.

The heavens.

The nations.

Hebrews later reminds believers that God's kingdom is:

Unshakable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The safest place to build a life is inside the kingdom that cannot be shaken.

LI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 13 begins with:

A prophecy.

It ends with:

Ruins.

Between those two points stands one great truth:

God rules over nations.

Babylon looks unstoppable.

Its name carries:

Fear.

Power.

Wealth.

Prestige.

Military greatness.

But God speaks before Babylon falls.

That should remind us:

God never looks at human power the way humans do.

We see:

Walls.

Armies.

Money.

Political influence.

God sees:

Limits.

Timetables.

Accountability.

Then comes:

The Day of the Lord.

This phrase reminds us that history is not moving endlessly without destination.

There is:

Accountability.

Judgment.

A day when evil is answered.

Isaiah also identifies why judgment comes.

Evil.

Wickedness.

Arrogance.

Pride.

Ruthlessness.

Babylon's greatest problem is not merely that another empire becomes stronger.

Its deeper problem is:

It stands guilty before God.

That matters personally.

We should never ask only:

“Am I successful?”

We should ask:

“Am I righteous before God?”

Babylon was successful.

Babylon still fell.

Isaiah also warns us against putting confidence in wealth.

Gold cannot save Babylon.

There will always be problems:

Money cannot purchase away.

Power cannot control.

Influence cannot prevent.

Only God is ultimate.

The chapter's scenes of war are also deeply sobering.

Human sin does not remain theoretical.

It produces:

Death.

Broken homes.

Displacement.

Fear.

Suffering.

The violence described should make us long for the righteous reign of the Prince of Peace announced in Isaiah 9 and the peaceable kingdom of Isaiah 11.

Finally:

Babylon becomes ruins.

The jewel of kingdoms becomes:

Desolation.

The palaces become homes for wild creatures.

The strongholds hear:

Howling.

That is the end of human pride apart from God.

So:

Do not worship what can collapse.

Do not trust what can disappear.

Do not boast in what can be taken away.

Do not mistake God's patience for approval.

Build your life upon:

Truth.

Humility.

Righteousness.

Faith.

And the unshakable kingdom of God.

Because Babylon falls.

But God remains.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are Lord over every nation and every generation.

No empire is greater than You.

No king rules outside Your authority.

No human power can overturn Your purposes.

Teach us to live humbly before You.

Protect us from pride.

When we experience:

Success.

Influence.

Prosperity.

Recognition.

Keep us from thinking we are untouchable.

Remind us that everything earthly is temporary.

Father, help us take sin seriously.

Keep us from treating Your patience as permission to continue in rebellion.

Search our hearts for:

Arrogance.

Ruthlessness.

Greed.

Self-exaltation.

Unbelief.

Bring us to repentance.

Father, we grieve the suffering caused by war and human violence.

Give compassion for:

Children.

Families.

Refugees.

Victims.

Those who lose homes.

Those caught in conflicts they did not create.

Make us people who long for:

Justice.

Mercy.

Peace.

Thank You that Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace.

Thank You that Your kingdom will not become ruins.

Thank You that while earthly kingdoms rise and fall:

Your throne remains.

Help us build our lives upon what cannot be shaken.

When the world appears unstable:

Give us faith.

When powerful nations boast:

Remind us You are Lord.

When earthly glory attracts us:

Remind us how quickly glory fades.

May we worship You alone.

May we trust You alone.

May we live humbly before You.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the proud and humble the pride of the ruthless.” — Isaiah 13:11**

Central Truth

The sovereign Lord rules over nations and history, and He will bring down Babylon and every arrogant power that persists in wickedness, demonstrating through the Day of the Lord that human glory is temporary, wealth cannot save, pride will be humbled, and God's righteous Word of judgment will certainly stand.

Isaiah 13 in One Sentence

Isaiah announces the coming overthrow of proud Babylon, describing the Day of the Lord as a time when God summons nations, judges wickedness and arrogance, shakes false human security, brings the Medes against the empire, and turns the glory of a seemingly permanent kingdom into desolation.

Isaiah Chapter 14 — The Fall of Babylon’s King and the Lord’s Purpose

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 14 continues the judgment against Babylon introduced in Chapter 13.

But the chapter does not begin with Babylon.

It begins with:

Mercy.

Restoration.

Return.

Rest.

The Lord will again have compassion upon Jacob.

Israel will be restored to the land.

The people who were once:

Oppressed.

Enslaved.

Exiled.

Humiliated.

Will experience reversal.

Their oppressor will fall.

Their forced labor will end.

Their suffering will cease.

Then Israel will take up a taunt against the king of Babylon.

The ruler who terrified nations will become powerless.

The earth that groaned under his violence will finally experience:

Rest.

Peace.

Song.

Even the trees are poetically pictured as rejoicing because the destroyer has fallen.

Then Isaiah presents one of the most dramatic scenes in the chapter.

The king of Babylon descends to the realm of the dead.

Former rulers look at him and say:

> **“You too have become weak, as we are.”**

All of his:

Pomp.

Music.

Power.

Glory.

Have disappeared.

The man who shook kingdoms now lies powerless in death.

Verses 12–15 then describe the pride of the “morning star, son of the dawn.”

The immediate context remains the arrogant king of Babylon, whose ambition reaches toward heaven itself.

At the same time, many Christians through church history have understood the language as also reflecting or echoing the deeper spiritual pride associated with Satan's rebellion.

The central issue is unmistakable:

The creature says:

> **“I will ascend.”**
>
> **“I will raise my throne.”**
>
> **“I will make myself like the Most High.”**

God answers:

> **“But you are brought down.”**

That is the great reversal of pride.

The chapter then declares one of the strongest statements of divine sovereignty in Isaiah:

> **“Surely, as I have planned, so it will happen, and as I have purposed, so it will stand.”**

And again:

> **“The Lord Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart Him?”**

Human kings plan.

Nations strategize.

Armies move.

But God's purpose stands above them all.

The chapter closes with a prophecy against Philistia.

Philistia is warned not to celebrate too quickly when one oppressor appears broken.

Another threat is coming.

Yet Zion receives a different message:

> **“The Lord has established Zion, and in her His afflicted people will find refuge.”**

The central truth of Isaiah 14 is:

God restores His people, humbles rulers who exalt themselves, brings arrogant human glory down to the grave, accomplishes His sovereign purposes despite every opposing power, and provides refuge for His afflicted people while proud nations ultimately fall beneath His judgment.

I. GOD WILL AGAIN HAVE MERCY ON JACOB

Isaiah 14:1 — Israel Restored

> **“The Lord will have mercy on Jacob; He will again choose Israel and settle them in their own land. Foreigners will join them and unite with the house of Jacob.”**

Judgment is not God's final word toward His covenant people.

The chapter begins:

> **“The Lord will have mercy.”**

God restores:

Jacob.

Israel.

The land.

And the restoration extends beyond Israel.

Foreigners join them.

This anticipates the broader biblical theme of people from the nations being brought near to God's people.

Cross References

Zechariah 2:12

The Lord promises again to take Judah as His special possession in the holy land and to identify Jerusalem with His gracious choice.

Jeremiah 30:18

The Lord promises compassion upon Jacob's dwelling places, restoration of the ruined city, and rebuilding after devastation.

Ephesians 2:13

Those who were once far away from God's covenant blessings have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

Spiritual Principle

God's discipline does not cancel His mercy.

Key Truth

The God who scatters in judgment is also able to gather in compassion.

II. GOD REVERSES ISRAEL'S CAPTIVITY

Isaiah 14:2 — The Captives Become Free

> **“Nations will take them and bring them to their own place, and Israel will possess them as male and female servants in the Lord’s land. They will take captive those who once held them captive, and they will rule over their oppressors.”**

The emphasis is reversal.

Those once:

Captured.

Oppressed.

Controlled.

Will no longer remain under the same power.

God overturns the relationship between:

Oppressor.

Oppressed.

Cross References

Isaiah 49:22

God raises His signal to the nations, and Gentile peoples participate in bringing Israel's sons and daughters back.

Isaiah 60:9

Distant lands and ships bring God's scattered people home together with their wealth in honor of the Lord.

Zechariah 8:23

People from many nations will seek association with God's people because they recognize that God is with them.

Spiritual Principle

God is able to reverse circumstances that appear permanently fixed.

III. GOD GIVES REST FROM OPPRESSION

Isaiah 14:3 — Rest After Hard Labor

> **“On the day the Lord gives you rest from your suffering and turmoil and from the hard labor forced upon you,”**

Three burdens are named:

Suffering.

Turmoil.

Forced labor.

God promises:

Rest.

This recalls Israel's earlier slavery in Egypt.

God is still the God who hears oppressed people.

Cross References

Exodus 1:14

The Egyptians made Israel's lives bitter through severe forced labor in construction and agricultural work.

Deuteronomy 5:15

Israel was commanded to remember that they had been slaves in Egypt and that the Lord brought them out with His mighty power.

Jeremiah 30:8

God promises to break the oppressor's yoke from His people's necks and free them from foreign bondage.

Spiritual Principle

God remembers burdens that oppressors assume no one sees.

IV. THE OPPRESSOR FINALLY FALLS

Isaiah 14:4 — “How the Oppressor Has Come to an End!”

> **“You will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon: ‘How the oppressor has come to an end! How his fury has ceased!’”**

The king once seemed unstoppable.

Then:

He ends.

His fury:

Ceases.

Human tyranny always appears permanent until the day it suddenly is not.

Cross References

Habakkuk 2:6

The oppressed will eventually speak against the arrogant conqueror who accumulated what did not belong to him and enriched himself through oppression.

Jeremiah 50:23

Babylon, once like a hammer striking the whole earth, becomes broken and itself an object of horror.

Revelation 18:10

Those who watched symbolic Babylon's greatness mourn from a distance because its judgment comes suddenly.

Spiritual Principle

No oppressor receives an eternal throne.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never mistake long-lasting oppression for everlasting oppression.

V. GOD BREAKS THE SCEPTER OF THE WICKED

Isaiah 14:5 — The Instrument of Rule Is Broken

> **“The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of the rulers,”**

A staff and scepter represent:

Authority.

Power.

Government.

Dominion.

God breaks them.

Cross References

Psalm 125:3

The rule of wickedness will not remain permanently over the inheritance of the righteous.

Jeremiah 51:20

God describes a powerful kingdom as an instrument used to break nations, armies, and kingdoms according to His purpose.

Psalm 2:9

God's Anointed possesses authority to break rebellious powers that resist His rule.

Spiritual Principle

Political authority remains subordinate to divine authority.

VI. THE TYRANT'S VIOLENCE ENDS

Isaiah 14:6 — Relentless Persecution Stopped

> **“Who struck down peoples in anger with unceasing blows, and subdued nations in wrath with relentless persecution.”**

Babylon's rule was characterized by:

Violence.

Anger.

Control.

Relentless oppression.

But God puts an end to it.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:23

The empire that hammered nations is itself shattered under judgment.

Habakkuk 2:8

Because the conqueror plundered many nations, the surviving peoples will turn and plunder the conqueror.

Zechariah 1:15

God expresses anger toward nations that became excessively cruel while acting against His people.

Spiritual Principle

God distinguishes between authority and abuse of authority.

VII. THE EARTH RESTS AFTER THE OPPRESSOR FALLS

Isaiah 14:7 — Peace Produces Song

> **“All the earth is at rest and at peace; they break into singing.”**

Babylon's fall produces:

Rest.

Quiet.

Singing.

The world breathes again.

Cross References

Psalm 96:11

The heavens and earth are called to rejoice because the Lord comes to exercise righteous rule.

Isaiah 35:1

Even wilderness and dry places are poetically pictured rejoicing when God's restoration comes.

Psalm 98:8

Rivers and mountains are called to celebrate before the Lord as He comes to judge the world in righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

Righteous deliverance creates joy among those formerly oppressed.

VIII. EVEN THE TREES REJOICE

Isaiah 14:8 — The Destroyer Can No Longer Cut Them Down

> **“Even the pine trees and the cedars of Lebanon rejoice over you and say, ‘Since you have fallen, no lumberjack comes against us.’”**

Isaiah uses poetic personification.

Even:

Trees.

Forests.

Creation.

Seem relieved.

Babylon's appetite for conquest and resources has stopped.

Cross References

Isaiah 55:12

Creation is poetically described rejoicing when God's people experience restoration and peace.

Ezekiel 31:16

The fall of a great imperial power is compared to a mighty tree being brought down, causing the nations to tremble.

Zechariah 11:2

Trees are called to mourn because mighty forests and proud cedars are brought down.

Spiritual Principle

Human greed and warfare affect more than human beings.

IX. THE REALM OF THE DEAD STIRS

Isaiah 14:9 — Kings Rise to Meet Babylon's King

> **“The realm of the dead below is stirred up to meet you at your coming. It rouses the spirits of the departed, all the kings of the nations rise from their thrones.”**

Isaiah uses dramatic poetic imagery.

The king who ruled above now descends below.

Former rulers rise as though to greet him.

Their message is:

You are not different.

You are mortal too.

Cross References

Ezekiel 32:21

Former mighty warriors are poetically pictured speaking from the realm of the dead concerning another defeated power.

Luke 16:23

Jesus describes conscious awareness after death in the account of the rich man and Lazarus.

Proverbs 9:18

Those who follow foolishness do not realize that its path leads toward death and the realm of the departed.

Spiritual Principle

Death strips earthly titles of their power.

Key Truth

The grave does not address kings as “Your Majesty.”

X. THE KING HAS BECOME AS WEAK AS EVERYONE ELSE

Isaiah 14:10 — “You Have Become Like Us”

> **“They all respond, ‘You too have become weak, as we are; you have become like us.’”**

The king once stood above nations.

Death brings him down to the common condition of humanity.

He is no longer:

Untouchable.

Invincible.

Exalted.

Cross References

Ezekiel 32:19

A proud nation is challenged to consider whether it is truly more glorious than other nations already brought down to death.

Psalm 82:7

Even those called rulers and mighty ones still die like ordinary human beings.

Ezekiel 31:18

A proud empire's greatness does not prevent it from descending to the same fate as other fallen powers.

Spiritual Principle

Human greatness cannot abolish human mortality.

XI. BABYLON'S POMP DESCENDS TO THE GRAVE

Isaiah 14:11 — Worms Replace Royal Glory

> **“Your pomp has been brought down to the grave, along with the music of your harps. Maggots are spread beneath you and worms cover you.”**

The contrast is deliberately humiliating.

Before:

Music.

Luxury.

Pomp.

Royal splendor.

Now:

Decay.

Worms.

The grave.

Cross References

Job 21:26

Rich and poor alike eventually lie down in death, and decay covers them.

Job 24:20

Those who live wickedly are eventually forgotten and consumed by death, with human greatness broken like a tree.

Ezekiel 32:27

Warriors who once inspired fear are pictured lying powerless among the dead.

Spiritual Principle

Death exposes how temporary outward glory really is.

XII. THE MORNING STAR FALLS FROM HEIGHT

Isaiah 14:12 — The Fall of the Exalted One

> **“How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations!”**

The immediate prophecy continues addressing the fallen king of Babylon.

He had appeared:

Radiant.

Powerful.

High.

Dominant.

Now:

He falls.

The traditional term **Lucifer** comes from the Latin rendering of the expression translated here as “morning star.”

Many Christians have also seen in this language an echo or pattern of Satanic pride and downfall.

The safest interpretation begins with Isaiah's stated historical subject:

The king of Babylon.

Then it recognizes that the language of self-exaltation strongly parallels broader biblical teaching about Satanic rebellion.

Cross References

Luke 10:18

Jesus says He saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning, describing the collapse of Satanic power.

Ezekiel 28:17

In the lament over Tyre's proud ruler, extraordinary beauty produces pride, wisdom becomes corrupted, and the exalted figure is cast down.

Revelation 12:9

The great dragon, identified as the ancient serpent, Devil, and Satan, is cast down with those who follow him.

Spiritual Principle

Pride always reaches upward before it falls downward.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The higher pride tries to climb, the farther humiliation has to bring it down.

XIII. PRIDE SAYS, “I WILL ASCEND”

Isaiah 14:13 — The Ambition of Self-Exaltation

> **“You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of Mount Zaphon.’”**

Notice:

> **“You said in your heart.”**

Pride begins inwardly.

The repeated phrase is:

“I will.”

The desire is not merely success.

It is exaltation.

The creature wants the throne.

Cross References

Ezekiel 28:2

The ruler of Tyre becomes so proud that he claims divine status even though he remains a mortal human being.

1 Timothy 3:6

A newly converted leader must not become proud, lest pride bring the same kind of condemnation associated with the devil.

Matthew 4:9

Satan offers Jesus earthly kingdoms in exchange for worship, revealing his desire to receive honor that belongs only to God.

Spiritual Principle

Pride is fundamentally about who belongs on the throne.

XIV. PRIDE SEEKS TO BE LIKE THE MOST HIGH

Isaiah 14:14 — The Highest Claim

> **“I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’”**

This is the climax of the arrogant ambition.

Not merely:

Great.

Not merely:

Powerful.

But:

> **“Like the Most High.”**

This is creaturely rebellion against Creator authority.

Cross References

Ezekiel 28:2

The proud ruler says, in effect, “I am a god,” exalting himself beyond his rightful human place.

2 Thessalonians 2:4

The man of lawlessness is described as exalting himself above every object of worship and presenting himself as though he were divine.

Genesis 3:5

The serpent tempts humanity with the promise of becoming like God in a way that encourages independence from God's command.

Spiritual Principle

The essence of sin is not merely breaking rules.

It is wanting God's place.

Key Truth

The most dangerous throne is the one we build for ourselves.

XV. GOD BRINGS THE PROUD DOWN

Isaiah 14:15 — From Heavenward Ambition to the Pit

> **“But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit.”**

The contrast could not be stronger.

Pride says:

I will ascend.

God says:

You descend.

Pride says:

Above the stars.

God says:

Into the pit.

Cross References

Ezekiel 28:8

The proud ruler is told that enemies will bring him down into destruction and death.

Matthew 11:23

Jesus warns proud Capernaum that although it imagined itself exalted, it would be brought down.

Revelation 20:10

The devil is ultimately cast into final judgment where his rebellion ends permanently.

Spiritual Principle

Self-exaltation moves in the opposite direction from God's exaltation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Those who try to climb over God eventually discover there is nowhere above Him to stand.

XVI. PEOPLE STARE AT THE FALLEN KING

Isaiah 14:16 — “Is This the Man?”

> **“Those who see you stare at you; they ponder your fate: ‘Is this the man who shook the earth and made kingdoms tremble,”**

The once terrifying king becomes an object of astonishment.

People ask:

This?

This was the man we feared?

His apparent greatness now seems almost unbelievable.

Cross References

Ezekiel 32:10

Nations and kings are astonished when a powerful ruler suddenly falls under judgment.

Nahum 3:19

After Nineveh's fall, surrounding peoples respond because the empire's cruelty had touched so many.

Job 9:6

God alone possesses authority capable of shaking the earth from its place and moving what appears immovable.

Spiritual Principle

Things that terrify us today may look surprisingly small after God has brought them down.

XVII. THE TYRANT TURNED THE WORLD INTO A WILDERNESS

Isaiah 14:17 — Captives Refused Freedom

> **“Who made the world a wilderness, overthrew its cities, and refused to let his captives go home?’”**

Babylon's power produced:

Ruins.

Destroyed cities.

Captivity.

Displacement.

The king's greatness was purchased through other people's suffering.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:33

Israel and Judah are oppressed, and their captors refuse to release them.

Isaiah 45:13

God promises to raise up a ruler who will rebuild His city and release His exiles without being bought or bribed.

Psalm 102:20

God hears the groaning of prisoners and acts on behalf of those condemned and oppressed.

Spiritual Principle

God measures rulers not merely by what they build but by what happens to people under their power.

XVIII. EARTHLY KINGS USUALLY RECEIVE HONORABLE BURIALS

Isaiah 14:18 — Kings in Their Tombs

> **“All the kings of the nations lie in state, each in his own tomb.”**

Kings normally receive:

Funerals.

Tombs.

Memorials.

Honor.

The Babylonian king will be different.

Cross References

Ezekiel 32:29

Former rulers and warriors are pictured lying among the dead after their earthly power has disappeared.

Job 3:15

Job speaks of kings and rulers who once accumulated wealth yet now share the stillness of death.

Ezekiel 26:20

God describes bringing a proud power down among those who descended to death long before.

Spiritual Principle

Human memorials cannot preserve human greatness forever.

XIX. BABYLON'S KING RECEIVES SHAME INSTEAD OF HONOR

Isaiah 14:19 — Like a Rejected Branch

> **“But you are cast out of your grave like a rejected branch; you are covered with the slain, with those pierced by the sword, those who descend to the stones of the pit, like a corpse trampled underfoot.”**

The king who wanted:

Glory.

Receives:

Disgrace.

The king who wanted elevation receives humiliation even in death.

Cross References

Jeremiah 22:19

A wicked king is told he will receive a shameful burial rather than royal honor.

Ezekiel 32:23

A once terrifying power lies among the dead after spreading fear through the living world.

Jeremiah 36:30

God declares that a wicked royal line will lose its privilege and experience disgrace because of rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

Pride seeks remembrance.

Sin can leave a legacy of shame instead.

XX. THE KING DESTROYED HIS OWN PEOPLE

Isaiah 14:20 — A Ruler Who Ruined His Land

> **“You will not join them in burial, for you have destroyed your land and killed your people. The offspring of the wicked will never be remembered.”**

This verse destroys the myth that cruel rulers make nations truly great.

The king:

Destroyed his own land.

Killed his own people.

Power divorced from righteousness eventually becomes destructive even toward those it claims to rule.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:32

The proud will stumble and fall without anyone able to rescue them when God's judgment arrives.

Ezekiel 28:19

A ruler once admired becomes an object of horror and loses the greatness he thought would continue forever.

Psalm 37:28

The Lord loves justice and does not forsake His faithful people, while the enduring future of wickedness is cut off.

Spiritual Principle

Leadership that destroys its own people is not greatness.

XXI. BABYLON'S DYNASTY WILL NOT RISE AGAIN

Isaiah 14:21 — The Future of the Wicked Cut Off

> **“Prepare a place to slaughter his children for the sins of their ancestors; they will never rise to inherit the land or cover the earth with their cities.”**

The language describes the termination of the oppressive dynasty.

The point is:

Babylon's violent system will not simply reproduce itself forever.

This verse should not be read as though Scripture teaches that innocent children bear personal moral guilt for sins they did not commit.

Rather, the prophecy describes corporate dynastic judgment in the violent ancient imperial world, where rulers and their descendants perpetuated systems of conquest.

Cross References

Exodus 20:5

God warns that the consequences of idolatrous rebellion can extend through generations among families that continue in hatred and rejection of Him.

Jeremiah 51:57

Babylon's rulers, officials, warriors, and powerful men are brought down in irreversible judgment.

Psalm 109:13

In an imprecatory context, the wicked man's family line is portrayed as being cut off so that his oppressive legacy does not continue.

Spiritual Principle

Sin can create generational consequences even though each person remains morally responsible before God.

XXII. GOD HIMSELF RISES AGAINST BABYLON

Isaiah 14:22 — Babylon's Name Cut Off

> **“‘I will rise up against them,’ declares the Lord Almighty. ‘I will wipe out Babylon’s name and survivors, her offspring and descendants,’ declares the Lord.”**

The most dangerous enemy Babylon can face is:

God Himself.

The Lord says:

> **“I will rise up.”**

Human armies may participate.

But divine judgment is decisive.

Cross References

Jeremiah 51:62

Jeremiah's prophecy declares that Babylon will become desolate according to God's announced judgment.

Jeremiah 50:26

The nations are summoned against Babylon so its storehouses, power, and defenses may be destroyed.

Ezekiel 25:7

God declares that nations persisting in hostility can be cut off so they know that He is the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

No human power survives indefinitely after God says:

“I am against you.”

XXIII. BABYLON WILL BE SWEPT WITH THE BROOM OF DESTRUCTION

Isaiah 14:23 — Complete Desolation

> **“‘I will turn her into a place for owls, swampland, and sweep her with the broom of destruction,’ declares the Lord Almighty.”**

The metaphor is unforgettable.

God sweeps Babylon away.

The great imperial city becomes:

Desolate.

Abandoned.

Wild.

Cross References

Zephaniah 2:14

A proud city brought under judgment becomes a place inhabited by wild creatures rather than thriving human civilization.

Jeremiah 51:43

Babylon's cities become deserted wastelands where ordinary human settlement disappears.

Revelation 18:21

Symbolic Babylon is pictured as being thrown down violently and never recovering its former place of dominance.

Spiritual Principle

God can sweep away what humanity considers immovable.

XXIV. GOD'S PLAN WILL HAPPEN

Isaiah 14:24 — “As I Have Planned”

> **“The Lord Almighty has sworn: ‘Surely, as I have planned, so it will happen, and as I have purposed, so it will stand.’”**

This is one of the strongest sovereignty statements in Isaiah.

God:

Plans.

Purposes.

Accomplishes.

His plan is not:

Suggestion.

Possibility.

Wish.

Cross References

Numbers 23:19

God is not a human being who lies or changes His declaration carelessly; when He speaks, He acts.

Isaiah 46:10

God declares the end from the beginning and says His purpose will stand and He will accomplish everything He determines.

Isaiah 55:11

God's Word does not return empty but accomplishes the purpose for which He sends it.

Spiritual Principle

God's purposes do not depend upon favorable circumstances.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God purposes does not need human permission to stand.

XXV. GOD WILL CRUSH ASSYRIA

Isaiah 14:25 — The Yoke Removed

> **“I will crush the Assyrian in My land; on My mountains I will trample him down. His yoke will be taken from My people, and his burden removed from their shoulders.”**

Isaiah briefly returns to Assyria.

Babylon will fall.

Assyria will fall.

Empires change.

God remains.

Cross References

Isaiah 10:12

After God finishes using Assyria in judgment, He promises to punish the empire for its arrogant heart.

Isaiah 37:36

The Lord's angel strikes the Assyrian army and dramatically breaks its military threat.

Nahum 1:13

God promises to break the oppressor's yoke and tear away the bonds placed upon His people.

Spiritual Principle

God can use an oppressor temporarily without allowing that oppressor to rule forever.

XXVI. GOD'S PURPOSE EXTENDS OVER THE NATIONS

Isaiah 14:26 — The Hand Over the Whole World

> **“This is the plan determined for the whole world; this is the hand stretched out over all nations.”**

God's sovereignty is not local.

His hand extends over:

All nations.

His purpose includes:

World history.

Cross References

Isaiah 9:12

Isaiah repeatedly uses the image of God's stretched-out hand to describe judgment continuing until His purpose is fulfilled.

Isaiah 5:25

God's hand remains stretched out in judgment because persistent rebellion remains unresolved.

Isaiah 10:4

The repeated phrase emphasizes that God's judgment continues while sin remains unrepented.

Spiritual Principle

No national border limits God's sovereignty.

XXVII. NO ONE CAN THWART THE LORD

Isaiah 14:27 — “Who Can Turn It Back?”

> **“For the Lord Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart Him? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back?”**

These are rhetorical questions.

Answer:

No one.

Kings cannot.

Armies cannot.

Demons cannot.

Nations cannot.

Circumstances cannot.

Cross References

Numbers 23:20

When God has determined to bless, no human being possesses authority to reverse His declared purpose.

Job 9:12

When God acts, no one can seize His work away from Him or successfully demand that He answer to human authority.

Daniel 4:35

God does according to His will among heaven and earth, and no one can stop His hand or overturn His sovereign authority.

Spiritual Principle

God's sovereignty is not theoretical.

His purpose actually stands.

Key Truth

No creature possesses veto power over God.

XXVIII. THE PROPHECY AGAINST PHILISTIA COMES IN AHAZ'S DEATH YEAR

Isaiah 14:28 — A Historical Marker

> **“This prophecy came in the year King Ahaz died:”**

Isaiah again anchors prophecy in history.

Ahaz dies.

Political conditions change.

Philistia may see opportunity.

God says:

Do not celebrate yet.

Cross References

2 Kings 16:20

Ahaz died and was buried, and his son Hezekiah became king after him.

2 Chronicles 28:27

Ahaz died after a reign marked by serious unfaithfulness, and Hezekiah succeeded him.

Isaiah 7:1

Isaiah had earlier described the political crisis during the reign of Ahaz when Aram and Israel threatened Jerusalem.

Spiritual Principle

Political transition does not place history outside God's supervision.

XXIX. PHILISTIA MUST NOT CELEBRATE TOO QUICKLY

Isaiah 14:29 — A Worse Threat Is Coming

> **“Do not rejoice, all you Philistines, that the rod which struck you is broken; for from the root of that snake will spring up a viper, its offspring will be a fiery flying serpent.”**

One threat disappears.

Philistia celebrates.

God warns:

A greater threat can follow.

Temporary relief is not always permanent deliverance.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:8

Hezekiah later defeated Philistine forces and struck their territory extensively.

2 Chronicles 26:6

Uzziah had previously fought Philistia successfully and broke down several fortified cities.

Zephaniah 2:4

Philistine cities are warned of coming judgment and destruction.

Spiritual Principle

Do not interpret every temporary change as final security.

XXX. GOD CARES FOR THE POOR WHILE JUDGING PHILISTIA

Isaiah 14:30 — Refuge for the Needy

> **“The poorest of the poor will find pasture, and the needy will lie down in safety. But I will destroy your root with famine; it will slay your survivors.”**

The verse presents contrast.

God cares for:

The poor.

The needy.

But judges:

The hostile power.

Cross References

Psalm 37:19

Those who trust the Lord are sustained even in difficult days and are provided for in times of famine.

Zephaniah 2:5

Philistia's coastal cities receive a word of judgment because their security cannot protect them from God.

Amos 1:8

God announces judgment upon Philistine rulers and cities until their oppressive power is removed.

Spiritual Principle

God's judgment of the proud and care for the vulnerable are not contradictory.

They arise from the same righteous character.

XXXI. PHILISTIA WILL WAIL

Isaiah 14:31 — The Enemy Comes from the North

> **“Wail, you gates; cry out, you city; melt away, all you Philistines! A cloud of smoke comes from the north, and there is not a straggler in its ranks.”**

The approaching enemy is:

Organized.

Disciplined.

United.

The smoke signals:

Advance.

Danger.

Judgment.

Cross References

Jeremiah 47:2

Jeremiah describes an invading force rising from the north like overflowing waters and sweeping through Philistine territory.

Amos 1:6

Gaza is condemned for carrying entire communities into captivity and handing them over to enemies.

Jeremiah 1:14

God tells Jeremiah that disaster will break out from the north upon the inhabitants of the land.

Spiritual Principle

A threat dismissed today may become unavoidable tomorrow.

XXXII. ZION IS ESTABLISHED BY THE LORD

Isaiah 14:32 — Refuge for the Afflicted

> **“What answer shall be given to the envoys of that nation? ‘The Lord has established Zion, and in her His afflicted people will find refuge.’”**

This is the chapter's final answer.

What makes Zion secure?

Not:

Military greatness.

Diplomatic alliances.

Wealth.

Human kings.

The answer is:

> **“The Lord has established Zion.”**

That changes everything.

The afflicted find:

Refuge.

Cross References

Psalm 87:1

God's city is pictured as firmly founded upon the holy mountains according to His purpose.

Psalm 102:16

The Lord rebuilds Zion and reveals His glory through restoration.

Psalm 48:8

God establishes His city according to His enduring purpose, demonstrating that its security ultimately rests in Him.

Spiritual Principle

Security rests most firmly in what God establishes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God establishes does not require human pride to keep it standing.

XXXIII. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 14

1. God Restores His People

The chapter begins with mercy.

Principle:

Judgment does not cancel God's ability to restore.

2. Oppression Has an Ending

Babylon's tyranny stops.

Principle:

No earthly oppressor possesses unlimited time.

---

3. Death Humbles Human Greatness

The king of Babylon becomes weak like everyone else.

Principle:

Titles disappear at the grave.

---

4. Pride Leads Downward

The arrogant king says:

> **“I will ascend.”**

God says:

You will descend.

Principle:

Self-exaltation moves toward humiliation.

---

5. Satanic Pride Is Reflected in the Desire to Rival God

The immediate prophecy concerns Babylon's king, while its language has traditionally been understood by many Christians as echoing the deeper rebellion of Satan.

Principle:

Every desire to take God's place shares the basic spirit of rebellion.

---

6. God's Purpose Cannot Be Stopped

> **“As I have purposed, so it will stand.”**

Principle:

Nothing in creation can cancel God's sovereign purpose.

---

7. Nations Remain Accountable to God

Babylon.

Assyria.

Philistia.

All answer to Him.

Principle:

God is Lord over every border and every throne.

---

8. God Provides Refuge for His Afflicted People

The chapter ends:

Not with Babylon.

Not with Philistia.

But:

Zion.

Principle:

The safest place is where God establishes His refuge.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 14 TEACHES ABOUT RESTORATION

The first word of hope is:

Mercy.

God's people have suffered discipline.

Yet:

He chooses.

Gathers.

Settles.

Comforts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's restoration begins in His mercy, not human deserving.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 14 TEACHES ABOUT OPPRESSION

The king of Babylon:

Strikes peoples.

Subdues nations.

Keeps captives.

Destroys cities.

God ends his rule.

Spiritual Principle

God may permit oppression for a season without approving oppression forever.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 14 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

Pride says:

I will ascend.

I will raise.

I will sit.

I will make myself.

The language revolves around:

Self.

Key Truth

Pride does not merely think too highly of oneself.

It places self where God belongs.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 14 TEACHES ABOUT “LUCIFER”

The word **Lucifer** is historically associated with Isaiah 14:12 through the Latin translation of the expression often rendered:

Morning star.

Day star.

Shining one.

In Isaiah's immediate literary context, the taunt is directed against:

The king of Babylon.

The ruler's arrogance is described in cosmic and exalted imagery.

Many Christians have also interpreted verses 12–15 as presenting a secondary picture or spiritual echo of Satan's rebellion because:

The figure seeks heavenly exaltation.

The figure desires Godlike status.

The figure is cast down.

Other interpreters understand the entire passage strictly as poetic language describing the Babylonian king.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Whatever view is taken concerning the secondary application, Isaiah's central warning is undeniable:

Pride that seeks God's place ends in downfall.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 14 TEACHES ABOUT SATANIC PRIDE

Elsewhere Scripture clearly portrays Satan as:

Rebellious.

Proud.

Desiring worship.

Opposed to God's rule.

Isaiah 14's repeated:

> **“I will.”**

Provides a powerful illustration of that rebellious spirit.

Spiritual Principle

Sin begins when the creature refuses to remain under the Creator.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 14 TEACHES ABOUT DEATH

Death reduces:

Kings.

Warriors.

Rich.

Poor.

Powerful.

Weak.

To mortality.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Live now in light of the reality that earthly greatness does not survive the grave.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 14 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN GLORY

The king had:

Music.

Pomp.

A throne.

Military victories.

Fearful influence.

Then:

Worms.

The grave.

Spiritual Principle

Never exchange eternal righteousness for temporary applause.

XLI. WHAT ISAIAH 14 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S PURPOSE

God says:

> **“As I have planned, so it will happen.”**

And:

> **“As I have purposed, so it will stand.”**

This is divine sovereignty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely predict history.

He sovereignly governs His redemptive purpose within history.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 14 TEACHES ABOUT NATIONS

Babylon falls.

Assyria falls.

Philistia is warned.

God remains.

Key Truth

Isaiah's theology of nations is simple:

Countries are powerful.

God is sovereign.

XLIII. WHAT ISAIAH 14 TEACHES ABOUT ZION

Zion's security is summarized in one statement:

> **“The Lord has established Zion.”**

Spiritual Principle

God's people are secure ultimately because of God's faithfulness, not human invincibility.

XLIV. THE GREAT CONTRAST: “I WILL” AND “I HAVE PURPOSED”

The proud king says:

I will.

God says:

I have purposed.

Which word stands?

God's.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human ambition never becomes greater than divine purpose.

XLV. FROM THRONE TO GRAVE

The king's movement is downward.

Throne.

Pride.

Fall.

Grave.

Pit.

Spiritual Principle

A throne cannot protect an unrepentant soul from accountability.

XLVI. THE DANGER OF WANTING GOD'S PLACE

Isaiah 14 exposes the heart of pride.

Pride does not always say:

“I hate God.”

Sometimes pride says:

“I do not need God.”

Sometimes:

“I decide truth.”

Sometimes:

“I deserve the highest place.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Whenever self becomes ultimate authority, pride has begun constructing a throne.

XLVII. THE EARTH SINGS WHEN TYRANNY ENDS

Verse 7 is striking.

When oppression ceases:

People sing.

Spiritual Principle

True authority should produce safety, not relief when the ruler disappears.

XLVIII. THE TREES REJOICE

Even nature is pictured as relieved.

The conqueror can no longer cut down the forests.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human power should steward creation, not simply consume it.

XLIX. GOD'S BROOM OF DESTRUCTION

Babylon looks massive.

God says:

I will sweep it.

The metaphor makes imperial power look suddenly small.

Spiritual Principle

God can remove in a moment what took generations to build.

L. WHO CAN THWART HIM?

Isaiah asks:

Who can stop God?

Who can turn His hand back?

Answer:

No one.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith rests not merely in God's good intentions but in His unstoppable ability to accomplish them.

LI. DON'T CELEBRATE TOO SOON

Philistia sees one rod broken.

God says:

Another threat comes.

Spiritual Principle

Never build confidence merely upon the disappearance of one problem.

Build confidence upon God.

LII. ZION'S FINAL ANSWER

The chapter could end with:

Babylon.

Lucifer.

Assyria.

Philistia.

Instead:

Zion.

God's afflicted people find refuge.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God always has a refuge stronger than the empire threatening His people.

LIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

How does Isaiah 14 begin?

With God's promise to have mercy on Jacob and restore Israel.

Question 2

What happens to Babylon's oppressor?

His tyranny ends and his power is broken.

Question 3

Why does the earth rejoice?

Because relentless oppression has ceased.

Question 4

What happens when the king of Babylon enters the realm of the dead?

Former kings mock his fallen condition because he has become as weak as they are.

Question 5

What happens to his earthly pomp?

It disappears into the grave.

Question 6

Who is the “morning star” in the immediate context?

The language belongs to Isaiah's taunt against the proud king of Babylon.

Question 7

Why is the passage often connected with Satan?

Many Christian interpreters see the king's heavenly ambition, desire to rival the Most High, and dramatic fall as also reflecting the deeper pattern of Satanic pride.

Question 8

What fivefold attitude dominates verses 13–14?

The repeated self-centered declaration:

> **“I will.”**

Question 9

What is the result of that pride?

The exalted ruler is brought down to the grave and the depths of the pit.

Question 10

What had Babylon's king done to other nations?

He devastated cities, oppressed nations, and refused freedom to captives.

Question 11

What happens to Babylon?

God promises to rise against it and sweep away its proud power.

Question 12

What does Isaiah 14:24 teach?

What God plans will happen and what He purposes will stand.

Question 13

Can anyone thwart God's purpose?

No.

Isaiah asks rhetorically:

> **“Who can thwart Him?”**

Question 14

Why is Philistia told not to celebrate?

The removal of one oppressor does not mean Philistia has escaped future judgment.

Question 15

Where do God's afflicted people find refuge?

In Zion, which the Lord Himself has established.

LIV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 14 asks several searching questions.

Where Has God Shown Me Mercy?

Have I thanked Him for restoration?

Is Pride Growing in My Heart?

How often do my plans begin with:

“I will”

without asking:

“What does God will?”

Am I Building a Throne for Myself?

Do I insist upon:

My way?

My truth?

My recognition?

My control?

What Earthly Glory Am I Chasing?

Will it matter when life ends?

Do I Mistake Temporary Power for Permanent Power?

What person or institution feels too powerful to fall?

Do I Believe God's Purpose Stands?

Can I trust Him when circumstances appear contradictory?

Am I Celebrating Too Quickly Because One Problem Disappeared?

Is my confidence in changing circumstances or in God?

Where Is My Refuge?

Money?

Government?

People?

Myself?

Or:

The Lord?

LV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Pride Says, ‘I Will Ascend.’ God Says, ‘My Purpose Will Stand.’”

That is the great conflict in Isaiah 14.

Human pride says:

My throne.

My greatness.

My will.

God says:

My purpose.

Principle:

Life becomes spiritually ordered when our “I will” bows before God's “I have purposed.”

LVI. MERCY BEFORE THE TAUNT

Notice the chapter's order.

Before Babylon's humiliation:

Israel receives mercy.

God's ultimate purpose is not merely:

Destroy the enemy.

It is:

Restore His people.

Spiritual Principle

God's judgment and restoration both serve His holy purposes.

LVII. WHEN THE OPPRESSOR ENDS

Oppressors often create the illusion:

“This will never change.”

Isaiah says:

It changes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's timetable may feel long, but no human tyranny outlives God's sovereignty.

LVIII. THE GREAT LEVELER

The kings in the grave say:

> **“You have become like us.”**

Death removes:

Crowns.

Ranks.

Uniforms.

Titles.

Spiritual Principle

Humility is wisdom because mortality is certain.

LIX. THE FIVE “I WILLS”

The arrogant heart says:

I will ascend.

I will raise.

I will sit.

I will ascend.

I will make myself.

Everything revolves around:

Self.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride is not merely thinking much of yourself.

It is thinking too little of God.

LX. THE MOST HIGH HAS NO RIVAL

The proud ruler wants to become like:

The Most High.

But there is only:

One Most High.

Spiritual Principle

Creation flourishes when it worships God and collapses when it tries to replace Him.

LXI. FROM “I WILL ASCEND” TO “YOU ARE BROUGHT DOWN”

Two voices.

Creature:

I will ascend.

Creator:

You are brought down.

God's voice has the final word.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not build your identity upon a declaration God must eventually contradict.

LXII. GOD'S PLAN FOR ASSYRIA

Assyria appears invincible.

God says:

I will crush it.

Babylon appears magnificent.

God says:

I will sweep it away.

Spiritual Principle

God does not need a stronger empire in order to remain sovereign over the present empire.

LXIII. THE UNSHAKABLE PURPOSE

Verse 24:

> **“As I have purposed, so it will stand.”**

Verse 27:

> **“Who can thwart Him?”**

These verses belong together.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's plans possess something human plans never possess:

Absolute sovereignty behind them.

LXIV. THE REFUGE OF THE AFFLICTED

Isaiah closes by focusing upon:

Afflicted people.

They are not forgotten.

God establishes:

A refuge.

Spiritual Principle

God's sovereignty is not only terrifying to the proud.

It is comforting to the afflicted.

LXV. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 14 begins with:

Mercy.

It moves through:

The downfall of Babylon.

The humiliation of pride.

The certainty of God's purpose.

And ends with:

Refuge.

That gives us a complete picture.

God is:

Merciful.

Just.

Sovereign.

Protective.

The king of Babylon believed power made him permanent.

It did not.

He believed nations existed beneath him.

He believed his throne could rise indefinitely.

Then:

He died.

His pomp disappeared.

The rulers he once terrified looked at him and said:

> **“You too have become weak, as we are.”**

That is a warning to every human heart.

We may never rule an empire.

But pride can still say:

My life.

My plans.

My way.

My success.

My authority.

My future.

Isaiah teaches us to submit every:

“I will”

to:

“Your will be done.”

The passage traditionally associated with Lucifer gives the same warning at the deepest spiritual level.

Rebellion begins when the creature wants:

The Creator's place.

Satan's temptation has always been:

Exalt yourself.

Become your own authority.

Decide good and evil for yourself.

But the way upward in God's kingdom is not:

Self-exaltation.

It is:

Humility.

Isaiah then gives us extraordinary confidence.

God says:

“As I have planned, so it will happen.”

That means:

Babylon cannot stop Him.

Assyria cannot stop Him.

Philistia cannot stop Him.

No nation can stop Him.

No ruler can stop Him.

No circumstance can stop Him.

His hand is stretched out.

Who can turn it back?

No one.

That truth should produce:

Humility toward God.

Confidence in God.

And freedom from fear of human power.

Finally:

Zion becomes refuge.

The afflicted find shelter where:

God establishes.

So when earthly powers shake:

Do not panic.

When proud people rise:

Do not envy them.

When rulers boast:

Do not worship them.

When your own heart says:

“I will ascend,”

Humble yourself.

And when everything around you seems uncertain:

Remember:

God's purpose stands.

Babylon falls.

Assyria falls.

Philistia is warned.

But the Lord remains.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for Your mercy.

Thank You that discipline is not Your final word toward those You restore.

Thank You for gathering, comforting, and providing refuge for Your people.

Father, protect us from pride.

Search every hidden:

“I will”

within our hearts.

Forgive us when we try to live as though we are our own highest authority.

Forgive us when we want:

Control.

Recognition.

Power.

Praise.

More than we want obedience to You.

Teach us humility.

Remind us that every:

Position.

Possession.

Achievement.

Title.

Opportunity.

Comes under Your sovereign authority.

Father, protect us from Satanic pride—the desire to exalt ourselves against Your rightful rule.

Help us say:

Not my will.

But Yours.

Thank You that Your purposes cannot be stopped.

When the world seems unstable:

Remind us.

When nations rise:

Remind us.

When rulers boast:

Remind us.

When circumstances frighten us:

Remind us.

You have purposed.

Your purpose will stand.

No one can thwart Your hand.

Father, comfort those who are oppressed.

Give rest to those carrying heavy burdens.

Protect those who are afflicted.

Be their refuge.

Give wisdom to leaders.

Humble tyrants.

Defend the weak.

And keep us faithful to You.

May our lives never say:

“I will make myself great.”

May they say:

“Great is the Lord.”

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“The Lord Almighty has sworn: ‘Surely, as I have planned, so it will happen, and as I have purposed, so it will stand.’” — Isaiah 14:24**

Central Truth

God mercifully restores His people, brings proud and oppressive rulers down from their imagined heights, exposes the futility of self-exaltation, sovereignly accomplishes every purpose He has determined, judges hostile nations, and establishes refuge for His afflicted people.

Isaiah 14 in One Sentence

Isaiah celebrates Israel's restoration, taunts the fallen king of Babylon whose pride brought him from imagined heavenly heights to humiliation and death, declares that no one can thwart the Lord's sovereign purpose, warns Philistia against false security, and assures the afflicted that God Himself has established Zion as their refuge.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 15 — The Burden Against Moab

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 15 is a short chapter filled with:

Destruction.

Mourning.

Flight.

Fear.

Loss.

Grief.

The prophecy is directed against:

Moab.

Moab was located east of the Dead Sea and had a long, complicated history with Israel.

The Moabites were related to Israel through Lot, Abraham's nephew, yet throughout biblical history the two peoples often experienced:

Conflict.

Hostility.

Political rivalry.

Military tension.

Isaiah announces that Moab's judgment will come with shocking speed.

The chapter begins:

> **"In one night Ar of Moab is destroyed and silenced; in one night Kir of Moab is destroyed and silenced."**

The repeated phrase:

> **"In one night"**

emphasizes suddenness.

Cities that seemed secure are devastated almost immediately.

Then the whole land begins mourning.

People go to their high places.

They weep.

They shave their heads.

They cut their beards.

They wear sackcloth.

They cry in the streets.

Even Moab's soldiers tremble.

Refugees flee from city to city.

The land itself suffers.

Water disappears.

Grass withers.

Vegetation dies.

The wealth people spent years gathering must now be carried away.

The cries of sorrow spread across the entire country.

Yet one of the most striking statements in the chapter is Isaiah 15:5:

> **"My heart cries out for Moab!"**

Isaiah does not rejoice over judgment.

He grieves.

That is important.

Biblical prophecy does not teach us to enjoy the suffering of those under judgment.

God's justice is real.

But compassion is also real.

Isaiah hears the cries of Moab and his heart responds.

The central truth of Isaiah 15 is:

Moab's sudden downfall reveals that human strength, cities, religion, wealth, and military power cannot provide lasting security apart from God, while Isaiah's sorrow over Moab reminds us that divine judgment should produce sobriety and compassion rather than delight in another person's destruction.

I. MOAB’S CITIES FALL IN A SINGLE NIGHT

Isaiah 15:1 — Sudden Destruction

> **“This is the burden concerning Moab: In one night Ar of Moab is destroyed and silenced; in one night Kir of Moab is destroyed and silenced.”**

The prophecy begins without delay.

Two important Moabite cities are named:

Ar.

Kir.

Both fall:

In one night.

This emphasizes how quickly apparent stability can disappear.

One evening:

Life continues.

By morning:

Everything has changed.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:1

The Lord announces judgment against Moab and declares that important Moabite cities will be ruined, captured, and put to shame.

Amos 2:2

God promises to send fire against Moab, consuming its strongholds while the nation falls amid the noise of battle and military alarm.

Numbers 21:28

Fire is poetically described as coming out from Heshbon and consuming the territory associated with Ar of Moab and its rulers.

Spiritual Principle

Circumstances that appear secure can change in a single night.

Key Truth

Never make temporary stability your ultimate security.

II. MOAB GOES TO ITS HIGH PLACES TO WEEP

Isaiah 15:2 — Religion Cannot Stop the Judgment

> **“They go up to the temple at Bajith and to Dibon’s high places to weep. Moab wails over Nebo and Medeba. Every head is shaved, every beard is cut off.”**

Moab turns toward:

Temples.

High places.

Religious centers.

But its false worship cannot save it.

The people express grief through ancient signs of mourning:

Shaved heads.

Cut beards.

Public wailing.

The land that once expressed pride now expresses humiliation.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:37

Throughout Moab, heads are shaved, beards cut, hands marked by mourning, and sackcloth worn because grief has spread everywhere.

Jeremiah 48:22

God’s judgment reaches Moabite towns including Dibon and other important settlements throughout the land.

Numbers 21:30

Moab’s strength is pictured as being destroyed from Heshbon toward Dibon and other regions of the country.

Spiritual Principle

False religion cannot rescue people from the consequences of rebellion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A crisis often reveals whether worship is directed toward the living God or toward something powerless to save.

III. THE STREETS ARE FILLED WITH MOURNING

Isaiah 15:3 — Sackcloth and Bitter Weeping

> **“In the streets they wear sackcloth; on the rooftops and in the squares everyone wails, weeping bitterly.”**

Grief fills public life.

The mourning is not hidden.

It appears:

In streets.

On rooftops.

In public squares.

Everyone is affected.

Sackcloth symbolizes:

Humiliation.

Sorrow.

Distress.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:38

There is widespread mourning throughout Moab, on rooftops and in public places, because God has broken the nation like a vessel no one wants.

Amos 8:10

God warns that celebrations can be turned into mourning and songs into lamentation, with sackcloth and grief replacing joy.

Jeremiah 6:26

God calls His people to put on sackcloth and mourn bitterly because sudden destruction is approaching.

Spiritual Principle

Sin may promise celebration, but its consequences can turn celebration into mourning.

IV. EVEN MOAB'S SOLDIERS TREMBLE

Isaiah 15:4 — Warriors Lose Their Courage

> **"Heshbon and Elealeh cry out; their voices are heard as far as Jahaz. Even Moab's armed men cry out; their hearts tremble within them."**

The cry spreads from city to city.

Even soldiers are terrified.

These are the men trained to:

Fight.

Defend.

Stand firm.

Yet they cry out.

Military training cannot remove the fear created by national collapse.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:34

The cry of Moab spreads from one city to another until the sound of devastation is heard across the land.

Numbers 21:23

A Moabite-region king once gathered his forces for battle and went out against Israel at Jahaz.

Jeremiah 48:45

Fugitives from Moab seek shelter, but destruction reaches even the places where they hope to find safety.

Spiritual Principle

Human courage has limits.

Key Truth

Even warriors tremble when the foundation beneath them collapses.

V. ISAIAH’S HEART CRIES OUT FOR MOAB

Isaiah 15:5 — Compassion in the Middle of Judgment

> **“My heart cries out for Moab! Her fugitives flee as far as Zoar, like a three-year-old heifer on the run. They climb the ascent of Luhith with weeping; on the road to Horonaim they raise a cry of destruction.”**

This verse is one of the most important in the chapter.

Isaiah does not say:

Good.

They deserve it.

Instead:

> **“My heart cries out for Moab!”**

The prophet announces judgment while grieving the suffering it brings.

Refugees flee.

People climb roads while weeping.

Their cries fill the countryside.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:5

People climb the road to Luhith weeping continuously, while cries of devastation are heard on the descent toward Horonaim.

Genesis 19:22

Lot was told to flee quickly to Zoar because judgment could not proceed until he reached the place of refuge.

Jeremiah 48:3

Cries are heard from Horonaim because devastation and great destruction have overtaken Moab.

Spiritual Principle

Truth and compassion belong together.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A faithful messenger may announce judgment without taking pleasure in the suffering judgment brings.

VI. THE LAND ITSELF BECOMES BARREN

Isaiah 15:6 — Nothing Green Remains

> **“The waters of Nimrim are dried up; the grass is withered, the vegetation is gone, and nothing green is left.”**

The devastation affects:

Cities.

People.

Water.

Pasture.

Vegetation.

The judgment reaches the environment sustaining daily life.

Without water:

Grass dies.

Vegetation disappears.

Livestock suffer.

People suffer.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:34

Jeremiah also describes the waters of Nimrim becoming desolate as Moab’s judgment spreads across the land.

Joel 1:18

Animals groan because pastures dry up, cattle wander in distress, and flocks suffer because the land has lost its food.

Amos 1:2

The Lord’s voice in judgment causes pastures to mourn and productive areas to wither.

Spiritual Principle

Human life depends upon blessings we often take for granted.

VII. MOAB CARRIES AWAY ITS STORED WEALTH

Isaiah 15:7 — Years of Accumulation Must Be Abandoned

> **“So the wealth they have gathered and stored up they will carry away to the Brook of the Willows.”**

Moab gathered wealth over time.

Now:

It must be carried away.

Possessions that once represented:

Security.

Success.

Stability.

Become burdens refugees attempt to transport.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:36

Jeremiah mourns for Moab because the wealth and resources the nation accumulated have been lost.

Psalm 137:2

The exiles in Babylon hung their musical instruments upon trees beside the rivers because grief had replaced celebration.

Amos 6:7

Those who lived in luxury and self-indulgence would be among the first taken into exile, and their carefree feasting would end.

Spiritual Principle

What takes years to accumulate can become impossible to keep.

Key Truth

Possessions can travel with us only so far.

VIII. MOAB’S CRY REACHES ITS BORDERS

Isaiah 15:8 — The Whole Land Hears the Wailing

> **“Their cry of anguish goes around Moab’s borders; their wailing reaches as far as Eglaim and echoes to Beer Elim.”**

The sorrow is nationwide.

No small section is affected.

The crying reaches:

Borders.

Cities.

Regions.

The entire nation feels the disaster.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:20

Moab is told to mourn because the nation has been shattered and its downfall is being announced throughout the region.

Jeremiah 48:39

Moab wails in brokenness and becomes an object of horror and humiliation among surrounding peoples.

Ezekiel 25:9

God announces judgment against Moab’s frontier cities and the places in which the nation took pride.

Spiritual Principle

National sin can eventually produce national consequences.

IX. FURTHER DANGER AWAITS THE SURVIVORS

Isaiah 15:9 — Blood in the Waters

> **“The waters of Dimon are full of blood, yet I will bring still more upon Dimon: a lion upon the fugitives of Moab and upon those who remain in the land.”**

The chapter ends without relief.

The waters are filled with blood.

People flee.

Some remain.

Yet danger continues.

The lion becomes a picture of:

Further destruction.

Threat.

Judgment.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:44

The one who escapes from terror falls into another danger, and the person who escapes one trap encounters another because Moab’s appointed judgment cannot simply be outrun.

Amos 5:19

Trying to escape the day of judgment is compared to fleeing from a lion only to meet a bear, or entering a house only to be bitten by a serpent.

2 Kings 17:25

When foreign settlers first occupied the former territory of Israel, lions attacked some of them because they did not understand the requirements associated with the land and its God.

Spiritual Principle

Running from consequences is not the same as turning to God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Escape from one danger does not equal salvation if the deeper spiritual problem remains unresolved.

X. SEVEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 15

1. Judgment Can Come Suddenly

Moab’s cities fall:

> **“In one night.”**

Principle:

Do not assume tomorrow will provide the opportunity you refuse today.

---

2. Earthly Strongholds Are Temporary

Cities fall.

Armies tremble.

Principle:

Human security is never absolute security.

---

3. False Worship Cannot Save

Moab runs to its religious high places.

Still:

Judgment comes.

Principle:

Religion without the true God cannot become a refuge.

---

4. Pride Can Be Turned Into Mourning

Moab once possessed confidence.

Now:

Sackcloth.

Baldness.

Weeping.

Principle:

Pride often learns too late how fragile human glory is.

---

5. God's Messengers Should Possess Compassion

Isaiah says:

> **“My heart cries out for Moab.”**

Principle:

Truth should never make the heart cruel.

---

6. Wealth Cannot Save in the Day of Disaster

Moab's riches must be carried away.

Principle:

Possessions are poor saviors.

---

7. Human Escape Cannot Replace Divine Refuge

Fugitives run from one danger into another.

Principle:

The ultimate need is not merely escape from circumstances but reconciliation with God.

XI. WHAT ISAIAH 15 TEACHES ABOUT JUDGMENT

Judgment is pictured as:

Sudden.

Extensive.

Painful.

Unavoidable.

It reaches:

Cities.

Soldiers.

Families.

Wealth.

Land.

Water.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin is never as small as it appears while judgment is delayed.

XII. WHAT ISAIAH 15 TEACHES ABOUT MOAB

Moab's cities were:

Established.

Recognizable.

Populated.

Yet devastation comes rapidly.

The chapter emphasizes how quickly national confidence can collapse.

Spiritual Principle

A nation's history cannot guarantee its future.

XIII. WHAT ISAIAH 15 TEACHES ABOUT FALSE RELIGION

The people go to:

Temple.

High places.

They weep.

But their religious centers cannot change the outcome.

Key Truth

Desperation does not automatically make false worship effective.

XIV. WHAT ISAIAH 15 TEACHES ABOUT GRIEF

The chapter is saturated with mourning.

Words and images include:

Wail.

Weep.

Cry.

Sackcloth.

Shaved heads.

Trembling hearts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's Word does not treat human suffering casually.

XV. WHAT ISAIAH 15 TEACHES ABOUT COMPASSION

Isaiah's response stands out:

> **“My heart cries out for Moab!”**

He does not deny the justice of judgment.

Neither does he become emotionally cold.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical conviction should deepen compassion rather than destroy it.

XVI. WHAT ISAIAH 15 TEACHES ABOUT WEALTH

Moab carries away what it spent years accumulating.

Suddenly possessions become:

Portable burdens.

Limited resources.

Things that cannot stop disaster.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Own possessions.

Do not let possessions become the thing you believe owns your future.

XVII. WHAT ISAIAH 15 TEACHES ABOUT CREATION

Water dries.

Grass dies.

Vegetation disappears.

The effects of judgment reach everyday provisions.

Spiritual Principle

Water, food, fertile ground, and ordinary daily provision are blessings, not guarantees.

XVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 15 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

Even soldiers cry out.

Fear reaches people expected to be brave.

Key Truth

Courage based only upon strength will eventually meet a crisis stronger than itself.

XIX. WHAT ISAIAH 15 TEACHES ABOUT REFUGEES

The chapter vividly presents:

People fleeing.

Families moving.

Wealth being carried.

Roads filled with crying.

This reminds us that national conflict is experienced personally by ordinary people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never discuss war and judgment so abstractly that you forget the people walking the roads in tears.

XX. ONE NIGHT

The repeated phrase deserves attention.

> **“In one night.”**

It expresses:

Sudden reversal.

No long warning once the moment arrives.

Spiritual Principle

Life can change more quickly than we expect.

XXI. THE HIGH PLACES CANNOT HELP

Moab goes upward:

To temples.

To high places.

Yet the nation continues downward.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Going to a religious place is not the same as going to the living God.

XXII. THE ARMED MEN CRY

Military strength was expected to produce courage.

Instead:

The warriors themselves panic.

Spiritual Principle

If our hope rests entirely in human strength, fear eventually exposes the foundation.

XXIII. “MY HEART CRIES OUT”

This may be the spiritual center of the chapter.

Judgment is real.

Compassion is real.

We do not have to choose between:

Truth.

Love.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The strongest warnings should sometimes come from the most compassionate hearts.

XXIV. THE DRIED WATERS

Nimrim dries up.

Something essential disappears.

Spiritual Principle

We often recognize the value of ordinary blessings only after they are gone.

XXV. THE WEALTH THEY GATHERED

Moab accumulated.

Stored.

Protected.

Then fled carrying what it could.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not spend your whole life collecting what you cannot keep.

XXVI. THE CRY AROUND THE BORDER

Moab's anguish spreads throughout the land.

Sin's consequences rarely remain contained within the location where rebellion began.

Spiritual Principle

What begins privately can eventually become public pain.

XXVII. THE LION WAITING FOR THE FUGITIVES

The chapter closes with additional danger.

That is intentionally sobering.

Running is not enough.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The safest direction is not simply away from trouble.

It is toward God.

XXVIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What nation is the focus of Isaiah 15?

Moab.

Question 2

How quickly are Ar and Kir destroyed?

In one night.

Question 3

What does this sudden destruction teach?

It teaches that apparently stable circumstances can change with extraordinary speed.

Question 4

Where do the Moabites go to mourn?

They go to their temples and high places.

Question 5

How do they express grief?

They shave their heads, cut their beards, wear sackcloth, wail, and weep publicly.

Question 6

How do Moab’s soldiers respond?

Even the armed men cry out and tremble with fear.

Question 7

How does Isaiah personally respond to Moab’s suffering?

He says:

> **“My heart cries out for Moab!”**

Question 8

What does that teach us about preaching judgment?

Judgment should be proclaimed truthfully but not with delight in human suffering.

Question 9

What happens to the waters of Nimrim?

They dry up, leaving vegetation withered and the land barren.

Question 10

What happens to Moab’s wealth?

The people attempt to carry away what they had accumulated and stored.

Question 11

How extensive is Moab’s sorrow?

The cry spreads across the country and reaches its borders.

Question 12

Does fleeing automatically provide safety?

No.

The closing image shows further danger facing fugitives and survivors.

XXIX. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 15 asks several searching questions.

What Am I Treating as Permanent?

Home?

Career?

Income?

Health?

Possessions?

Isaiah reminds us that circumstances can change quickly.

Where Do I Run in Crisis?

Toward:

God?

Or toward powerless substitutes?

Is My Religion Real?

Am I truly seeking God?

Or merely practicing outward forms?

How Do I Respond to Other People's Judgment?

With:

Self-righteousness?

Mockery?

Or compassion?

Does My Heart Still Break for People?

Can I tell someone the truth and still weep for them?

What Wealth Am I Trusting?

Would my faith survive if possessions disappeared?

Am I Grateful for Ordinary Blessings?

Water?

Food?

Shelter?

Safety?

Am I Merely Running from Consequences?

Or am I actually turning toward God?

XXX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Never Preach Judgment With a Heart That Has Forgotten How to Weep”

Isaiah says:

> **“My heart cries out for Moab!”**

The prophet knows judgment is deserved.

Yet:

He grieves.

Principle:

Biblical truth should make us serious about sin and tender toward sinners at the same time.

XXXI. SUDDEN REVERSAL

Moab's chapter begins with cities falling overnight.

One day they appear:

Stable.

The next:

Destroyed.

Spiritual Principle

Do not postpone obedience because you assume life will remain unchanged.

XXXII. RELIGION IN A CRISIS

People often become religious when disaster arrives.

But Isaiah shows:

Not every religious response is saving faith.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Crisis may reveal spiritual hunger, but only the true God can satisfy it.

XXXIII. WHEN PRIDE BECOMES SACKCLOTH

The symbols of Moab's grief show complete humiliation.

Pride has disappeared.

Spiritual Principle

It is better to humble ourselves voluntarily before God than to wait for circumstances to humble us.

XXXIV. COMPASSION FOR THOSE UNDER JUDGMENT

Some people imagine that preaching strongly against sin requires emotional hardness.

Isaiah proves otherwise.

He announces:

Judgment.

And:

Weeps.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Compassion does not weaken truth.

It shows the spirit in which truth should often be spoken.

XXXV. WEALTH ON THE MOVE

What was stored securely now has to be:

Packed.

Carried.

Moved.

Possessions become evidence of how temporary earthly security can be.

Spiritual Principle

Material things are tools for life, not foundations for eternity.

XXXVI. WHEN THE LAND MOURNS

Dry water sources.

Dead grass.

No vegetation.

The landscape mirrors the nation's devastation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human life remains dependent upon God's ordinary provisions every day.

XXXVII. THE CRIES OF THE FUGITIVES

Isaiah makes us hear:

The refugees.

Their voices.

Their weeping.

Their footsteps.

Their fear.

Spiritual Principle

Compassion begins when we stop seeing only nations and begin seeing people.

XXXVIII. NO EASY ESCAPE

The lion at the end of the chapter is a final warning.

Moab cannot simply relocate and pretend everything is solved.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A changed location cannot heal an unchanged relationship with God.

XXXIX. FIVE GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 15

1. Destruction

The cities fall.

2. Mourning

The people weep.

3. Flight

The fugitives flee.

4. Loss

The land and wealth disappear.

5. Continuing Judgment

Further danger remains.

Key Truth

Moab's collapse reaches every level of national life because false security cannot withstand divine judgment.

XL. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 15 is not an easy chapter.

There is no great military victory for God's people.

No triumphant song.

No dramatic rescue.

Instead:

We hear crying.

We watch people flee.

We see cities destroyed.

We see water dry up.

We see wealth carried away.

We hear soldiers trembling.

And we hear Isaiah say:

“My heart cries out for Moab!”

That may be the most important lesson for us.

We can believe strongly in God's holiness and still possess compassion.

We can preach against sin and still weep for sinners.

We can believe judgment is righteous and still grieve when people experience the consequences of rebellion.

Never allow biblical conviction to become:

Cruelty.

Arrogance.

Coldness.

Isaiah also warns us about false security.

Moab had:

Cities.

Soldiers.

Religious centers.

Water.

Vegetation.

Wealth.

None of them could save the nation.

That should cause us to ask:

What are we trusting?

A bank account can disappear.

A job can disappear.

A government can change.

A city can fall.

Health can change.

Possessions can be left behind.

Life itself can change:

In one night.

Therefore:

Build upon God.

Seek Him before the crisis.

Do not wait until everything around you is collapsing before asking where your true refuge is.

Isaiah also makes us see refugees.

People climbing roads while crying.

People carrying what they can.

People leaving home.

That should soften our hearts toward those who experience:

War.

Disaster.

Displacement.

Loss.

Finally, Moab discovers that running from danger is not enough.

Further danger awaits.

That teaches us the difference between:

Escape.

And:

Salvation.

You can escape one circumstance and still need God.

You can move to another place and still carry the same spiritual problem.

You can outrun one enemy and still remain unable to outrun sin.

Therefore:

Do not merely run from destruction.

Run to God.

Do not merely fear consequences.

Seek repentance.

Do not merely protect possessions.

Prepare your soul.

And when others suffer:

Do not stand at a distance with pride.

Say with Isaiah:

> **“My heart cries out.”**

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are holy and just.

Your judgments are righteous.

Yet You are also compassionate.

Teach us to hold:

Truth.

And:

Mercy.

Together.

Father, forgive us when we take security for granted.

We often assume:

Tomorrow will look like today.

Our possessions will remain.

Our plans will succeed.

Our strength will continue.

Remind us that life can change quickly.

Teach us to build upon You.

Protect us from trusting in:

Money.

Cities.

Government.

Military strength.

Religious forms.

Anything other than You.

Father, give us compassionate hearts.

When others suffer, keep us from:

Mocking.

Judging proudly.

Celebrating their pain.

Give us the heart of Isaiah:

A heart that cries out.

Help us speak truth without becoming cruel.

Help us warn people because we love them.

Father, remember refugees and displaced people.

Remember those who have lost:

Homes.

Possessions.

Family.

Safety.

Comfort them.

Provide for them.

Protect them.

Use Your people to show mercy.

Thank You for every ordinary blessing we possess:

Water.

Food.

Shelter.

Safety.

Family.

Health.

Help us never treat them as guaranteed.

And above all:

Teach us not merely to run from consequences.

Teach us to run toward You.

You alone are our true refuge.

You alone are our lasting security.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“My heart cries out for Moab! Her fugitives flee as far as Zoar.” — Isaiah 15:5**

Central Truth

Moab's sudden destruction reveals the fragility of cities, wealth, military strength, false religion, and earthly security, while Isaiah's sorrow for the suffering nation teaches that God's righteous judgment should move His people toward humility, compassion, repentance, and deeper trust in Him alone.

Isaiah 15 in One Sentence

Isaiah announces the sudden devastation of Moab, describes its cities mourning, soldiers trembling, refugees fleeing, waters drying, and wealth disappearing, while revealing through his own grief that righteous judgment should never eliminate compassion for those suffering its consequences.

Isaiah Chapter 16 — Moab’s Pride and Its Coming Judgment

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 16 continues the burden against Moab begun in Isaiah 15.

Chapter 15 showed us:

Cities destroyed.

People mourning.

Soldiers trembling.

Refugees fleeing.

Water drying up.

Wealth being carried away.

Isaiah weeping over Moab.

Chapter 16 reveals one of the deeper reasons behind Moab’s coming downfall:

Pride.

Moab has:

Strength.

Agricultural prosperity.

Vineyards.

Cities.

Wealth.

Religious high places.

Yet none of these things can save the nation.

The chapter begins, however, with an opportunity for refuge.

Moab is pictured sending tribute toward:

Zion.

Its displaced people need:

Shelter.

Protection.

Mercy.

The appeal is:

“Hide the outcasts, do not betray the fugitives.”

Then Isaiah suddenly looks beyond the immediate crisis to a righteous throne.

He declares:

“In mercy a throne will be established.”

A faithful ruler will sit upon:

David’s throne.

He will judge with:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Faithfulness.

This points beyond the failures of ordinary human government toward the promised Davidic King.

Against this righteous throne stands:

Moab’s pride.

Isaiah says:

“We have heard of Moab’s pride—how great is his arrogance!”

Moab’s problem is not simply military weakness.

Its deeper problem is spiritual arrogance.

Pride becomes:

Conceit.

Insolence.

Boasting.

But Isaiah says:

The boasting is empty.

Then the consequences become visible.

The people mourn.

The vineyards wither.

Harvest songs disappear.

Winepresses become silent.

Joy leaves the orchards.

And once again Isaiah expresses profound grief:

> **“My heart laments for Moab like a harp.”**

This is not cold prophecy.

Isaiah speaks truth while grieving the ruin sin produces.

Yet Moab still turns toward its high places.

The nation prays at its shrine.

But Isaiah says:

> **“It will do her no good.”**

False worship cannot provide true refuge.

Finally, God places a definite time upon Moab’s glory:

> **“Within three years.”**

The nation’s:

Glory.

Population.

Strength.

Will be greatly reduced.

Only:

A small.

Weak.

Remnant.

Will remain.

The central truth of Isaiah 16 is:

Moab’s pride, false security, material prosperity, and powerless religion cannot protect it from God’s appointed judgment, while the righteous throne established in mercy points to the faithful Davidic King whose rule rests upon justice, righteousness, and truth.

I. MOAB IS CALLED TO SEND TRIBUTE TO ZION

Isaiah 16:1 — Lambs Sent to the Ruler

> **“Send lambs as tribute to the ruler of the land, from Sela, across the desert, to the mountain of the Daughter of Zion.”**

Moab once possessed:

Flocks.

Resources.

Political strength.

Now the nation is pictured sending tribute toward:

Zion.

The lambs represent recognition of authority and submission.

Moab needs help.

The proud nation is being brought low.

Cross References

2 Kings 3:4

Mesha king of Moab was a sheep breeder who regularly paid the king of Israel a very large tribute consisting of lambs and the wool from many rams.

Jeremiah 48:28

The people of Moab are told to leave their cities and live among the rocks like a dove nesting along the sides of a ravine because destruction is approaching.

Psalm 60:8

God declares His sovereignty over surrounding nations, describing Moab as subject to His authority and Philistia as unable to resist His triumph.

Spiritual Principle

Pride eventually encounters circumstances that force it to recognize dependence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

It is better to bow willingly before God than to wait until circumstances force pride to its knees.

II. MOAB’S PEOPLE ARE LIKE BIRDS DRIVEN FROM THE NEST

Isaiah 16:2 — Refugees at the Arnon

> **“Like fluttering birds pushed from the nest, so the women of Moab will be at the fords of the Arnon.”**

The image is heartbreaking.

A bird driven from its nest is:

Disoriented.

Exposed.

Vulnerable.

Homeless.

That is how Isaiah pictures Moab’s displaced people.

The Arnon becomes a place of:

Flight.

Crossing.

Uncertainty.

Cross References

Numbers 21:13

Israel camped beyond the Arnon River, which served as an important territorial boundary in the region near Moab.

Judges 11:18

During Israel’s journey, the people traveled around Edom and Moab and camped beyond the Arnon rather than invading Moabite territory.

Jeremiah 48:18

The inhabitants of Moabite cities are told to come down from their place of honor and sit in humiliation because the destroyer is approaching.

Spiritual Principle

War and judgment often turn settled people into displaced people.

Key Truth

Behind every map of national conflict are human beings searching for somewhere safe to stand.

III. THE FUGITIVES PLEAD FOR PROTECTION

Isaiah 16:3 — “Hide the Outcasts”

> **“Give counsel, render a decision. Make your shadow like night at high noon. Hide the outcasts, do not betray the fugitives.”**

This is an appeal for:

Wisdom.

Protection.

Compassion.

The image of making a shadow like night at noon communicates:

Deep shelter.

Complete concealment.

Protection from exposure.

The fugitives desperately need someone who will not betray them.

Cross References

Zephaniah 2:3

The humble are called to seek the Lord, pursue righteousness, and seek humility in the hope of finding shelter when the day of judgment arrives.

Psalm 27:5

In the day of trouble, God hides His servant in His shelter, keeps him secure in His dwelling, and places him beyond the reach of danger.

Psalm 17:8

The psalmist asks God to guard him as carefully as the pupil of the eye and hide him beneath the protective shadow of His wings.

Spiritual Principle

God values the protection of people who are exposed and vulnerable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True strength does not merely defend itself.

It creates shelter for those who cannot defend themselves.

IV. MOAB’S OUTCASTS SEEK SHELTER

Isaiah 16:4 — Refuge from the Destroyer

> **“Let the outcasts of Moab stay with you; be a shelter to them from the destroyer. For the oppressor is at an end, the destruction has ceased, and the one who tramples others is gone from the land.”**

Isaiah again emphasizes:

Refuge.

The displaced need shelter from:

The destroyer.

The verse then looks toward a time when:

Oppression ends.

Destruction ceases.

The trampling conqueror disappears.

That prepares directly for the righteous throne of verse 5.

Cross References

Jeremiah 40:11

Judeans who had fled into surrounding nations heard that a remnant had been left in the land and began returning from the places where they had taken refuge.

Zephaniah 2:9

God announces that hostile lands will eventually become desolate and that the remnant of His people will possess what their enemies once controlled.

Jeremiah 48:47

Despite Moab’s severe judgment, God declares that in the latter days He will restore Moab’s fortunes, showing that judgment does not prevent God from retaining sovereign mercy.

Spiritual Principle

Oppression has an expiration date before God.

V. A THRONE IS ESTABLISHED IN MERCY

Isaiah 16:5 — The Faithful King from David’s House

> **“In mercy a throne will be established; one will sit on it in faithfulness, in the tent of David, judging with justice and eager to do what is right.”**

This verse shines like light in the middle of Moab’s darkness.

Isaiah sees:

A throne.

Established in:

Mercy.

Occupied by:

A faithful ruler.

Connected with:

David.

Characterized by:

Justice.

Righteousness.

This reaches beyond ordinary political leadership.

It belongs to the great messianic hope already revealed in Isaiah 9 and Isaiah 11.

Cross References

2 Samuel 7:16

God promised David that his royal house, kingdom, and throne would be established according to God’s covenant purpose.

Isaiah 9:7

The promised Son will rule upon David’s throne, establishing and sustaining His kingdom through justice and righteousness forever, and the zeal of the Lord will accomplish it.

Luke 1:32

The angel told Mary that Jesus would be great, would be called the Son of the Most High, and would receive the throne associated with His ancestor David.

Spiritual Principle

God’s ideal throne is established not merely by power but by mercy, faithfulness, justice, and righteousness.

Key Truth

The world does not ultimately need a stronger tyrant.

It needs the righteous King.

VI. MOAB’S GREAT PROBLEM IS PRIDE

Isaiah 16:6 — Arrogance and Empty Boasting

> **“We have heard of Moab’s pride—how great is his arrogance!—his conceit, his pride, and his insolence. But his boasting is empty lies.”**

Isaiah identifies the root.

Pride.

Arrogance.

Conceit.

Insolence.

Boasting.

Moab’s outward crisis reveals an inward condition.

Pride says:

I am secure.

I am strong.

I do not need correction.

I will endure.

God says:

The boasting is empty.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:29

Jeremiah also describes Moab as extremely proud, arrogant, haughty, and self-exalting.

Jeremiah 48:30

God says He knows Moab’s angry boasting, but its claims are empty and its actions will not accomplish what pride imagines.

Zephaniah 2:10

Moab and its neighbors receive judgment because of their pride and because they mocked and exalted themselves against God’s people.

Spiritual Principle

Pride makes claims reality cannot support.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Boasting is often the loudest shortly before reality exposes how weak the foundation truly is.

VII. MOAB WILL WAIL OVER ITS RUIN

Isaiah 16:7 — Kir Hareseth Mourned

> **“Therefore Moab will wail for Moab; everyone will mourn. They will grieve for the foundations of Kir Hareseth; they are ruined.”**

Pride becomes:

Wailing.

Boasting becomes:

Mourning.

Confidence becomes:

Grief.

The very nation that exalted itself now mourns itself.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:31

Jeremiah says he will mourn for Moab, cry out for the entire nation, and grieve for the people of Kir Hareseth.

Jeremiah 48:36

The prophet’s heart mourns for Moab like the sorrowful sound of a flute because its accumulated wealth and prosperity have disappeared.

2 Kings 3:25

Israel’s forces destroyed Moabite towns, stopped water sources, ruined productive land, and attacked Kir Hareseth until only its fortified defenses remained.

Spiritual Principle

Pride promises celebration but can end in lamentation.

VIII. MOAB’S PRODUCTIVE VINEYARDS WITHER

Isaiah 16:8 — The Vine of Sibmah Is Trampled

> **“The fields of Heshbon wither, and the vine of Sibmah languishes. The rulers of nations have trampled down its choicest vines, which once reached Jazer and spread toward the desert; their shoots spread out and crossed the sea.”**

Moab had been known for:

Agricultural prosperity.

Vineyards.

Fruitfulness.

The vine had spread widely.

Now:

It withers.

Foreign rulers trample what once brought:

Prosperity.

Income.

Joy.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:32

Jeremiah says he weeps for Sibmah’s vine and mourns because destroyers have fallen upon Moab’s summer fruit and grape harvest.

Numbers 32:3

Heshbon and surrounding cities are listed among important settlements east of the Jordan sought as pastureland because of the region’s agricultural usefulness.

Numbers 32:38

Israelite tribes rebuilt several cities in the region and gave them new names after receiving territory east of the Jordan.

Spiritual Principle

Prosperity is a blessing, not an unbreakable guarantee.

IX. ISAIAH WEEPS OVER THE DESTROYED HARVEST

Isaiah 16:9 — Tears for Heshbon and Elealeh

> **“So I weep with Jazer for the vine of Sibmah; I drench you with my tears, O Heshbon and Elealeh. No shouts of joy will be heard over your summer fruit or your harvest.”**

Again Isaiah weeps.

Chapter 15:

> **“My heart cries out for Moab!”**

Chapter 16:

> **“I drench you with my tears.”**

The prophet’s sorrow continues.

The harvest once produced:

Celebration.

Now:

Silence.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:32

Jeremiah weeps over the vine of Sibmah because the destroyer has ruined its fruit and harvest.

Joel 1:11

Farmers and vineyard workers are told to mourn because grain and vineyard crops have been devastated and the expected harvest has failed.

Lamentations 2:11

Jeremiah describes his eyes failing from tears and his inner being overwhelmed with grief because of the destruction experienced by his people.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual maturity should not make us indifferent to material and human suffering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The prophet who speaks God's truth should still possess eyes capable of tears.

X. JOY DISAPPEARS FROM THE ORCHARDS

Isaiah 16:10 — The Winepresses Become Silent

> **“Joy and gladness are taken away from the orchards; in the vineyards no one sings or shouts; no one treads out wine in the presses, for I have silenced the joyful shout.”**

Harvest normally brings:

Singing.

Celebration.

Community.

Gladness.

Now:

Silence.

No harvest songs.

No winepress celebrations.

The agricultural life of Moab has collapsed.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:33

Joy and gladness disappear from Moab’s fruitful fields and vineyards, and the normal sounds of winepress celebration are silenced.

Joel 1:12

Vines and fruit trees wither, crops fail, and joy itself seems to dry up among the people.

Amos 5:11

Because the poor were oppressed, those who built expensive houses and planted desirable vineyards would not enjoy what they had produced.

Spiritual Principle

Prosperity without humility can disappear while the fields are still standing.

XI. ISAIAH’S INNER BEING LAMENTS FOR MOAB

Isaiah 16:11 — Sorrow Like the Sound of a Harp

> **“My heart laments for Moab like a harp; my soul grieves for Kir Hareseth.”**

Isaiah’s grief is not superficial.

His inner being trembles with sorrow.

The prophet does not enjoy announcing destruction.

This verse reminds us again:

Truth and compassion belong together.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:36

Jeremiah’s heart mourns like the sound of flutes for Moab and Kir Hareseth because their wealth has disappeared.

Jeremiah 4:19

Jeremiah cries out in deep internal anguish because he hears the sound of war and recognizes the devastation approaching his people.

Lamentations 1:20

The sufferer calls upon God to see deep distress, describing intense inner anguish caused by rebellion and judgment.

Spiritual Principle

A heart aligned with God should never become casual about destruction.

Key Truth

Judgment may be deserved and still be tragic.

XII. MOAB’S RELIGION CANNOT SAVE IT

Isaiah 16:12 — Prayer at the High Place Is Useless

> **“When Moab appears at her high place, when she goes to her shrine to pray, it will do her no good.”**

This is a devastating statement.

Moab:

Worships.

Prays.

Visits religious places.

Yet:

There is no help.

Why?

Because worship directed toward false gods cannot produce true salvation.

Sincerity cannot turn an idol into God.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:35

God promises to bring an end to Moab’s sacrifices and incense offered at its idolatrous high places.

1 Kings 18:29

The prophets of Baal continued crying out through the day, but there was no voice, no answer, and no response from the false god they served.

Jeremiah 2:28

God challenges His people to call upon the gods they made for themselves and see whether those idols can actually save them in the time of trouble.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer is only as powerful as the object to whom it is directed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Religious activity cannot substitute for relationship with the living God.

XIII. THIS JUDGMENT WAS ALREADY ANNOUNCED

Isaiah 16:13 — God Had Spoken Before

> **“This is the word the Lord has already spoken about Moab.”**

Moab’s judgment is not:

Impulsive.

Unexpected from God’s perspective.

Unannounced.

God had already spoken.

Warning came before fulfillment.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:47

Even after announcing severe judgment, God also speaks of a future restoration of Moab’s fortunes according to His sovereign purpose.

Numbers 24:17

Balaam foretells the coming of a ruler from Jacob who will exercise dominion and strike Moab, showing that Moab had long appeared within biblical prophetic expectation.

Deuteronomy 2:9

God specifically told Israel not to attack Moab or seize its territory because He had given that land to the descendants of Lot.

Spiritual Principle

God’s judgment should never be separated from the warnings He graciously gives beforehand.

XIV. GOD SETS A THREE-YEAR LIMIT

Isaiah 16:14 — Moab’s Glory Brought Low

> **“But now the Lord says: ‘Within three years, as a hired worker counts years, Moab’s glory will be brought low and her large population will be despised. Only a small and weak remnant will remain.’”**

The prophecy becomes specific.

Not:

Eventually.

Not:

Someday.

But:

> **“Within three years.”**

The phrase:

> **“as a hired worker counts years”**

suggests precision.

A hired worker carefully counts the length of service.

The judgment will not drift indefinitely.

Moab’s:

Glory.

Population.

Strength.

Will be reduced.

A remnant survives.

But it is:

Small.

Weak.

Cross References

Isaiah 21:16

Isaiah gives another precisely measured prophetic period, saying that within one year, counted as carefully as the term of a hired worker, the glory of Kedar will come to an end.

Jeremiah 48:15

Moab’s cities are invaded, its strongest young men go down into slaughter, and the King—the Lord of Heaven’s Armies—declares the judgment.

Jeremiah 48:42

Moab is brought down as a national power because the nation proudly exalted itself against the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

God determines the limits of national power.

Key Truth

Moab's calendar is ultimately in God's hands.

XV. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 16

1. God Cares About Refugees and Outcasts

The chapter calls for fugitives to be:

Hidden.

Protected.

Sheltered.

Principle:

Strength should become refuge for the vulnerable.

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2. The Righteous King Rules in Mercy

A throne is established in:

Mercy.

Faithfulness.

Justice.

Righteousness.

Principle:

God’s ideal rule combines authority with moral goodness.

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3. Pride Is Spiritually Destructive

Moab’s deepest problem is:

Arrogance.

Principle:

Pride makes people trust what cannot save them.

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4. Prosperity Is Temporary

Moab’s vineyards wither.

Principle:

Material abundance should produce gratitude, not arrogance.

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5. Compassion Belongs Beside Judgment

Isaiah weeps.

Principle:

God’s truth should never make God’s servant emotionally cruel.

---

6. False Religion Cannot Save

Moab prays.

Nothing happens.

Principle:

Religious sincerity cannot give life to a false god.

---

7. God’s Word Is Certain

The Lord had spoken.

Then He gives:

A timetable.

Principle:

Divine warnings are not empty threats.

---

8. God Places Limits upon Nations

Within three years:

Moab’s glory falls.

Principle:

No nation controls the length of its own greatness.

XVI. WHAT ISAIAH 16 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

Verse 5 presents:

A throne.

A Davidic ruler.

Mercy.

Faithfulness.

Justice.

Righteousness.

These themes fit the larger messianic expectation of Isaiah.

Isaiah 9 described:

The Son whose government has no end.

Isaiah 11 described:

The Branch from Jesse.

Isaiah 16 again places hope in:

A righteous ruler from David’s line.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

In a world of proud rulers, God points repeatedly toward the righteous King.

XVII. WHAT ISAIAH 16 TEACHES ABOUT MERCY

The throne is established:

> **“In mercy.”**

This is extraordinary.

God’s kingdom is not founded upon:

Cruelty.

Exploitation.

Selfish domination.

Spiritual Principle

God never has to choose between being powerful and being merciful.

XVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 16 TEACHES ABOUT JUSTICE

The King:

Judges with justice.

Is eager to do:

What is right.

Justice is not an inconvenience to His reign.

It defines His reign.

Key Truth

Perfect government requires righteous character.

XIX. WHAT ISAIAH 16 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

Isaiah piles up words:

Pride.

Arrogance.

Conceit.

Insolence.

Boasting.

This is deliberate.

Pride had saturated Moab’s identity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride becomes especially dangerous when it stops being an action and becomes an atmosphere.

XX. WHAT ISAIAH 16 TEACHES ABOUT BOASTING

Moab makes impressive claims.

God calls them:

Empty.

The tragedy of boasting is that it tries to create reality through words.

But words cannot hold up a collapsing foundation.

Spiritual Principle

Confidence is only as strong as the truth beneath it.

XXI. WHAT ISAIAH 16 TEACHES ABOUT PROSPERITY

Moab had:

Fields.

Vines.

Summer fruit.

Harvests.

Winepresses.

These are good gifts.

But gifts cannot become gods.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Enjoy prosperity gratefully, but never ask prosperity to guarantee tomorrow.

XXII. WHAT ISAIAH 16 TEACHES ABOUT WORSHIP

Moab worships.

Moab prays.

Yet:

Nothing changes.

This shows that worship is not automatically acceptable simply because it is sincere.

Spiritual Principle

True worship must be directed toward the true God.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 16 TEACHES ABOUT COMPASSION

Isaiah says:

I weep.

My tears drench you.

My heart laments.

My soul grieves.

The prophet is emotionally involved in the message.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The preacher who never grieves over judgment may not fully understand the weight of what he is preaching.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 16 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S WORD

God had:

Already spoken.

Now:

He speaks again.

He adds:

A precise time.

Spiritual Principle

God’s patience between warning and fulfillment should be used for humility, not presumption.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 16 TEACHES ABOUT REMNANTS

Moab will not remain in its former greatness.

Only:

A small.

Weak.

Remnant.

Will survive.

Key Truth

God can reduce great populations and powerful institutions to a remnant when pride persists.

XXVI. THE THRONE AND THE HIGH PLACE

Isaiah 16 presents two very different religious centers.

One:

A throne established in mercy.

The other:

A false high place where prayer accomplishes nothing.

One points toward:

God’s righteous King.

The other toward:

Humanly manufactured religion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The question is not merely whether you worship.

The question is:

Whom do you worship?

XXVII. THE OUTCASTS OF MOAB

The chapter begins with displaced people.

Their vulnerability matters.

Isaiah does not reduce Moab to:

An enemy nation.

He sees:

Women.

Fugitives.

Outcasts.

Refugees.

Spiritual Principle

Compassion looks beyond categories and sees people.

XXVIII. MAKE YOUR SHADOW LIKE NIGHT

This is one of the chapter’s beautiful pictures of refuge.

At high noon:

The sun is intense.

A deep shadow provides:

Relief.

Cover.

Safety.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s people should become a shade for those burning under the heat of suffering.

XXIX. THE THRONE ESTABLISHED IN MERCY

Human kingdoms often establish thrones through:

War.

Conquest.

Force.

Isaiah points toward one established in:

Mercy.

Spiritual Principle

Christ’s authority and Christ’s compassion never compete with one another.

XXX. MOAB’S GREAT PRIDE

Why does Isaiah emphasize pride so strongly?

Because pride destroys:

Teachable hearts.

Dependence.

Repentance.

Gratitude.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride closes the door through which correction is trying to enter.

XXXI. WHEN THE VINEYARD STOPS SINGING

Agricultural harvests normally filled communities with celebration.

Now:

Silence.

The lack of singing shows:

Loss has reached everyday life.

Spiritual Principle

Sin can eventually silence joys people assumed would always remain.

XXXII. THE PROPHET’S TEARS

Isaiah does not stand above Moab saying:

“You deserve this.”

He says:

I weep.

That does not mean judgment is unjust.

It means:

Compassion remains alive.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

It is possible to agree with God’s judgment and still grieve deeply over the destruction sin produces.

XXXIII. THE USELESS SHRINE

Moab reaches its high place.

Prays.

Waits.

No help comes.

Why?

The god being addressed cannot save.

Spiritual Principle

A powerless object of faith produces powerless faith regardless of sincerity.

XXXIV. THE THREE-YEAR CLOCK

Moab’s people may think:

Life will continue.

God says:

Three years.

This creates urgency.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never assume God’s silence means you have unlimited time.

XXXV. FROM GLORY TO WEAKNESS

Verse 14 provides a dramatic contrast.

Before:

Glory.

Large population.

National strength.

After:

Small remnant.

Weakness.

Spiritual Principle

Human greatness can shrink much faster than it was built.

XXXVI. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What does Moab send toward Zion?

Lambs as tribute.

Question 2

How are Moab’s displaced women described?

Like birds driven from their nest.

Question 3

What protection is requested for Moab’s fugitives?

They are to be hidden, sheltered, and not betrayed.

Question 4

What kind of throne does Isaiah describe?

A throne established in mercy and occupied faithfully in David’s line.

Question 5

How will the ruler on that throne govern?

With justice, faithfulness, and eagerness to do what is right.

Question 6

What is Moab’s central spiritual problem?

Pride.

Question 7

How does Isaiah describe that pride?

As arrogance, conceit, insolence, and empty boasting.

Question 8

What happens to Moab’s agricultural prosperity?

Its fields and vineyards wither and are trampled.

Question 9

How does Isaiah respond to Moab’s suffering?

He weeps and says his heart and soul grieve for Moab.

Question 10

What disappears from the vineyards?

Joyful singing, celebration, and the sounds associated with the winepress.

Question 11

Can Moab’s religious high places save the nation?

No.

Its prayers there accomplish nothing.

Question 12

Had God warned Moab previously?

Yes.

Isaiah says this was the Word the Lord had already spoken.

Question 13

What new detail does God give in verse 14?

Moab’s glory will be brought low within three years.

Question 14

What will remain after the judgment?

Only a small and weak remnant.

XXXVII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 16 asks several searching questions.

Am I Providing Refuge for the Vulnerable?

When people are:

Displaced.

Afraid.

Hurting.

Exposed.

Do I create:

Safety?

Or additional difficulty?

Is Pride Hiding Somewhere in My Heart?

Do I resist:

Correction?

Advice?

Repentance?

Dependence?

What Am I Boasting About?

Education?

Money?

Ministry?

Career?

Possessions?

Influence?

Appearance?

Ability?

Have I Confused Prosperity with Security?

Would my faith remain if the vineyard stopped producing?

Do I Grieve Over the Consequences of Sin?

Or have I become emotionally hard?

Is My Worship Directed Toward the Living God?

Am I relying upon:

Religious activity?

Tradition?

Ritual?

Instead of God Himself?

Am I Ignoring a Warning Because Judgment Has Not Yet Come?

What has God already told me that I need to obey?

Do I Remember That My Time Is in God’s Hands?

Am I living with spiritual urgency?

XXXVIII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Pride Builds Its Own Throne, but Only God Can Establish a Throne That Lasts”

Moab has:

Pride.

Boasting.

Prosperity.

But Isaiah points toward a different throne:

One established in:

Mercy.

Faithfulness.

Justice.

Righteousness.

Principle:

Human pride tries to make itself great; God’s King is truly great because righteousness defines His rule.

XXXIX. WHEN PRIDE REFUSES REFUGE

Moab needs:

Shelter.

Protection.

Help.

Yet Moab is known for:

Pride.

That tension matters.

Pride says:

I need no one.

Reality says:

I need refuge.

Spiritual Principle

One of pride’s greatest lies is convincing us that dependence is weakness.

XL. THE DAVIDIC KING

Isaiah has already shown us:

Isaiah 9:

The Son upon David’s throne.

Isaiah 11:

The Branch from Jesse.

Isaiah 16:

The ruler in David’s tent.

This forms a developing picture.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah continually redirects hope from failing nations toward God’s promised King.

XLI. MERCY AND JUSTICE TOGETHER

Verse 5 joins:

Mercy.

Faithfulness.

Justice.

Righteousness.

Human beings sometimes separate these.

God’s King does not.

Spiritual Principle

Perfect mercy is never unjust, and perfect justice is never morally cruel.

XLII. THE EMPTINESS OF BOASTING

Moab’s boasting cannot prevent:

Loss.

Mourning.

Destruction.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Words about how strong we are cannot make us stronger than reality.

XLIII. WHEN PROSPERITY DISAPPEARS

The vineyards once crossed wide areas.

They looked permanent.

Then foreign powers trampled them.

Spiritual Principle

Prosperity should lead to thanksgiving while it lasts, not presumption that it must always continue.

XLIV. NO HARVEST SONG

Joy disappears.

The silence itself becomes part of judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not wait until the song is gone before thanking God for the harvest.

XLV. MY HEART LAMENTS

Isaiah’s grief continues from Chapter 15.

This is not emotional weakness.

It is spiritual tenderness.

Spiritual Principle

A soft heart can preach hard truth.

XLVI. PRAYER THAT CANNOT SAVE

Moab prays.

But prayer directed toward falsehood cannot create truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith is not powerful because it is faith.

Faith is powerful only when placed in the One who is truly able to save.

XLVII. GOD HAS ALREADY SPOKEN

Verse 13 reminds us:

The warning is not new.

God gave opportunity.

Spiritual Principle

Repeated warning is evidence of patience, but it also increases responsibility.

XLVIII. WITHIN THREE YEARS

God brings the prophecy close.

The clock is running.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Whenever God gives time before judgment, treat the time as mercy.

XLIX. THE SMALL AND WEAK REMNANT

Moab’s pride was:

Large.

Its surviving remnant will be:

Small.

Moab believed itself:

Strong.

The remnant will be:

Weak.

Spiritual Principle

Pride often ends by confronting the exact weakness it refused to admit.

L. SEVEN CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 16

1. Pride and Refuge

Moab boasts.

Yet its refugees need shelter.

2. False Thrones and the Davidic Throne

Human power fails.

The righteous throne stands.

3. Boasting and Mourning

Pride speaks loudly.

Judgment produces wailing.

4. Prosperous Vineyards and Withered Fields

Abundance becomes loss.

5. Harvest Singing and Silence

Joy disappears from the winepress.

6. False Worship and True Sovereignty

Moab’s shrine cannot help.

The Lord’s Word stands.

7. Great Glory and a Weak Remnant

Moab’s greatness shrinks under judgment.

Key Truth

Everything Moab trusted proves temporary, while God’s Word and righteous rule remain.

LI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 16 continues the sorrow of Isaiah 15, but now Isaiah reveals the heart beneath Moab’s problem:

Pride.

Moab needs:

Refuge.

Yet Moab is proud.

Moab needs:

Mercy.

Yet Moab boasts.

Moab needs:

God.

Yet Moab goes to its own high places.

That is the tragedy of pride.

Pride can make a person desperately needy while still refusing to admit the need.

Isaiah therefore gives us a warning.

Do not let pride prevent you from receiving:

Help.

Correction.

Mercy.

Forgiveness.

Wisdom.

Salvation.

The chapter also gives us a beautiful picture of the kind of King humanity needs.

A throne established in:

Mercy.

A King characterized by:

Faithfulness.

Justice.

Righteousness.

This is very different from the proud kingdoms Isaiah has been describing.

Babylon boasts.

Assyria boasts.

Moab boasts.

But God points toward:

David’s promised King.

Jesus Christ.

His throne does not need arrogance.

His authority does not depend upon oppression.

His greatness does not require false boasting.

He is righteous.

Isaiah also teaches us again how to respond to the suffering of others.

He says:

> **“I weep.”**

And:

> **“My heart laments.”**

That should challenge us.

Do not celebrate when prideful people fall.

Take warning from their fall.

Grieve the destruction.

Pray for repentance.

Maintain compassion.

The chapter also asks us what we are trusting.

Moab trusted:

Agriculture.

Vineyards.

Harvests.

Wealth.

National glory.

False religion.

But vineyards can wither.

Harvest songs can stop.

Money can disappear.

National strength can shrink.

Religious shrines can fail.

Only God remains.

Finally:

The Lord places a time upon Moab’s glory.

Within three years:

Everything changes.

That should remind us:

Time belongs to God.

We do not own tomorrow.

Therefore:

Humble yourself today.

Repent today.

Obey today.

Give thanks today.

Seek God today.

Do not wait until:

The vineyard withers.

The songs stop.

The glory fades.

And the strength disappears.

The throne that lasts is not the throne built by pride.

It is the throne established:

In mercy.

In faithfulness.

In justice.

In righteousness.

So reject Moab’s pride.

And trust the King from David’s line.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that Your throne is established in righteousness.

Thank You that You are:

Merciful.

Faithful.

Just.

Holy.

Forgive us for pride.

Forgive us when we become:

Arrogant.

Self-sufficient.

Boastful.

Unteachable.

Forgive us when we act as though our:

Strength.

Money.

Success.

Possessions.

Abilities.

Can secure our future.

Teach us humility.

Help us admit when we need:

Help.

Mercy.

Correction.

Refuge.

Father, make us people who protect the vulnerable.

Give us compassion for:

Refugees.

Outcasts.

Those fleeing danger.

Those who have lost homes.

Those who feel exposed and afraid.

May we never betray people who desperately need shelter.

Make us:

A shadow in the heat.

A refuge in the storm.

A compassionate presence in suffering.

Father, thank You for Jesus Christ, the promised King from David’s line.

Thank You that His throne is characterized by:

Mercy.

Faithfulness.

Justice.

Righteousness.

Teach us to live under His rule.

Father, protect our hearts from becoming cold toward those suffering the consequences of sin.

Give us the heart of Isaiah.

Give us tears.

Give us compassion.

Help us speak truth while loving people.

Thank You for every harvest.

Every meal.

Every possession.

Every good day.

Every ordinary blessing.

Keep us from assuming they must always remain.

And Father, protect us from false religion.

Keep us from trusting in rituals without You.

Teach us to worship You:

The living God.

The true God.

The saving God.

When You warn us:

Help us listen.

When You correct us:

Help us repent.

When You give us time:

Help us recognize it as mercy.

May our confidence rest not in:

Moab’s glory.

Human pride.

Material prosperity.

But in You alone.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“In mercy a throne will be established; one will sit on it in faithfulness, in the tent of David, judging with justice and eager to do what is right.” — Isaiah 16:5**

Central Truth

Moab’s pride, material prosperity, national glory, and false religion cannot save it from God’s appointed judgment, while the throne established in mercy points toward the faithful Davidic King whose righteous rule brings the justice, truth, and security human pride can never provide.

Isaiah 16 in One Sentence

Isaiah calls for protection of Moab’s displaced people, points toward the righteous Davidic King whose throne is established in mercy, exposes Moab’s arrogance and empty boasting, mourns the destruction of its prosperous vineyards, declares the futility of its false worship, and announces that within three years its glory will be reduced to a small and weak remnant.

Isaiah Chapter 17 — The Burden Against Damascus

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 17 turns attention toward:

Damascus.

Aram.

Ephraim.

Israel.

The chapter begins with the announcement that Damascus will fall.

The proud city will become:

A heap of ruins.

Its surrounding cities will be deserted.

Its political strength will disappear.

But Isaiah quickly shows that the prophecy is not only about Syria.

Israel also comes under judgment.

The glory of Jacob will fade.

What once looked:

Strong.

Healthy.

Abundant.

Will become:

Thin.

Weak.

Reduced.

Isaiah uses two agricultural pictures to describe the coming loss.

First:

A reaper cuts down grain.

Second:

An olive tree is beaten until only a few olives remain.

Yet those remaining olives are important.

They represent:

A remnant.

God's judgment is severe.

But it is not without preservation.

Then comes one of the most hopeful turns in the chapter:

> **“In that day people will look to their Maker, and their eyes will turn to the Holy One of Israel.”**

Judgment has exposed the failure of:

Idols.

Altars.

Asherah poles.

Man-made religion.

The people finally look away from the works of their own hands and turn toward:

Their Maker.

That is the heart of true repentance.

The tragedy is explained clearly in verse 10:

> **“You have forgotten God your Savior; you have not remembered the Rock, your fortress.”**

That is the spiritual root of the disaster.

They have forgotten:

Their Savior.

Their Rock.

Their Fortress.

They may still plant.

Work.

Cultivate.

Import vines.

Produce visible growth.

But without God:

The harvest becomes ruin.

Finally, Isaiah turns from Israel's weakness to the roaring nations.

The nations sound like:

The sea.

Mighty waters.

Overwhelming noise.

Yet God only needs to:

Rebuke them.

And suddenly they scatter like:

Chaff.

Tumbleweed.

Windblown debris.

The chapter ends with dramatic reversal:

> **“At evening they bring terror, but by morning they are gone.”**

What terrifies God's people at night can disappear by morning when God acts.

The central truth of Isaiah 17 is:

God humbles Damascus and Israel because human power, idolatry, and self-reliance cannot save, yet He preserves a remnant, turns some hearts back toward their Maker, and demonstrates that even roaring nations scatter instantly when the sovereign Lord rebukes them.

I. DAMASCUS WILL BECOME A HEAP OF RUINS

Isaiah 17:1 — The Fall of Damascus

> **“This is the burden concerning Damascus: ‘Behold, Damascus will no longer be a city;**
> **it will become a heap of ruins.’”**

Damascus was:

Ancient.

Strategic.

Powerful.

Important.

Yet Isaiah announces:

It will fall.

Human beings often look at long-established cities and assume:

They will always remain.

God reminds us:

Age is not immortality.

Cross References

Jeremiah 49:23

Jeremiah announces distress against Damascus and surrounding Syrian cities, describing fear, anxiety, and loss of courage when judgment approaches.

Amos 1:5

God declares that He will break Damascus's defenses, remove its rulers, and bring judgment upon the kingdom of Aram.

Zechariah 9:1

Zechariah announces that the Lord's judgment reaches the land of Hadrach and Damascus, emphasizing that the eyes of humanity and Israel alike are ultimately directed toward the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

No city becomes permanent merely because it has survived for a long time.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

History can make a city old.

Only God determines how long it stands.

II. THE CITIES OF AROER WILL BE ABANDONED

Isaiah 17:2 — Flocks Rest Where People Once Lived

> **“The cities of Aroer will be deserted; they will be places for flocks to lie down, with no one to make them afraid.”**

The picture is one of depopulation.

Cities once filled with:

Homes.

Families.

Trade.

Activity.

Become:

Pasture.

Animals rest where people once lived.

No one remains to disturb them.

Cross References

Joshua 13:25

Aroer is listed among the territories and towns associated with the region east of the Jordan.

Judges 11:26

Jephthah refers to Aroer and nearby cities when reviewing Israel's long history of possession in the region.

Numbers 32:34

The tribes settling east of the Jordan rebuilt Aroer and other towns for habitation and livestock.

Spiritual Principle

Places of activity can become empty when judgment removes the people who filled them.

III. SYRIA AND EPHRAIM WILL LOSE THEIR STRENGTH

Isaiah 17:3 — Fortresses and Royal Power Disappear

> **“The fortress will disappear from Ephraim, and royal power from Damascus. The remnant of Aram (Syria) will be like the fading glory of Israel,’ declares the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.”**

Two allied powers are addressed together:

Aram.

Ephraim.

Their:

Fortresses.

Political power.

Glory.

Will fade.

The same alliance that once frightened Judah in Isaiah 7 will itself collapse.

Cross References

2 Kings 15:29

Assyria captured large portions of northern Israel and deported many inhabitants, severely weakening the kingdom.

2 Kings 16:9

Assyria attacked Damascus, captured it, deported its population, and killed Rezin.

2 Kings 16:5

Rezin of Aram and Pekah of Israel had earlier joined forces against Jerusalem but were unable to conquer it.

Spiritual Principle

Political alliances that look powerful today may collapse tomorrow.

Key Truth

God can dismantle in one season what nations spent years building.

IV. JACOB'S GLORY WILL FADE

Isaiah 17:4 — Strength Becomes Weakness

> **“In that day the glory of Jacob will fade; his body will grow thin and wasted.”**

Israel once possessed:

Strength.

Population.

Prosperity.

Influence.

But judgment reduces that glory.

The image of a body growing thin suggests:

Loss.

Weakness.

Decline.

Cross References

Isaiah 10:16

God warns that He will send wasting weakness among the strong warriors of the proud empire He is judging.

2 Kings 17:6

Assyria captured Samaria and carried Israel into exile, bringing the northern kingdom's national glory to an end.

Micah 1:6

God declares that Samaria will become a ruined heap, with its foundations exposed under judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Glory that is not anchored in God can fade quickly.

V. ISRAEL WILL BE REAPED LIKE GRAIN

Isaiah 17:5 — The Harvest of Judgment

> **“It will be as when a reaper gathers grain and reaps the heads with his arm, as when someone gleans heads of grain in the Valley of Rephaim.”**

Israel is compared to:

A field.

The reaper arrives.

The grain is gathered.

Very little remains.

The picture emphasizes:

Thoroughness.

Reduction.

Judgment.

Cross References

Micah 4:12

The nations do not understand God's ultimate purpose, for He gathers them like sheaves brought together for threshing.

2 Samuel 5:18

The Valley of Rephaim was a known location near Jerusalem where enemy armies once gathered for battle.

Joel 3:13

God calls for the sickle because the harvest of wickedness is ripe and judgment has reached its appointed time.

Spiritual Principle

God's judgment is not random.

It comes like a harvest when the appointed time has arrived.

VI. A SMALL REMNANT WILL REMAIN

Isaiah 17:6 — Olives Left on the Tree

> **“Yet some gleanings will remain, as when an olive tree is beaten—two or three olives left at the top of the highest branch, four or five on the fruitful boughs,’ declares the Lord, the God of Israel.”**

Judgment is extensive.

But:

Not everything disappears.

A few olives remain.

This is:

Remnant theology.

God preserves:

Some.

Not because judgment is weak.

But because mercy remains within God's purpose.

Cross References

Isaiah 24:13

Isaiah later compares the survivors among the nations to the few olives left after an olive tree has been beaten and the few grapes remaining after harvest.

Deuteronomy 24:20

Israel was commanded not to strip an olive tree completely but to leave what remained for the foreigner, fatherless, and widow.

Micah 7:1

Micah compares himself to someone searching after harvest but finding almost no fruit remaining.

Spiritual Principle

God may reduce greatly without removing completely.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A remnant may look small to us while still carrying God's future purpose.

VII. PEOPLE WILL FINALLY LOOK TO THEIR MAKER

Isaiah 17:7 — Eyes Turn to the Holy One

> **“In that day people will look to their Maker, and their eyes will turn to the Holy One of Israel.”**

This is the great spiritual reversal of the chapter.

Before:

They looked toward idols.

Now:

Their Maker.

Before:

Works of their hands.

Now:

The Holy One of Israel.

Judgment becomes a means of exposing false trust.

Cross References

Isaiah 45:22

God calls people from every part of the earth to turn to Him and be saved because He alone is God.

Hosea 3:5

Afterward, Israel will return and seek the Lord their God and the promised Davidic king, approaching the Lord with reverence in the latter days.

Micah 7:7

Micah declares that he will look to the Lord, wait for the God of his salvation, and trust that God will hear him.

Spiritual Principle

True repentance changes the direction of the eyes.

Key Truth

The turning point comes when people stop looking at what they made and start looking at the One who made them.

VIII. IDOLS WILL LOSE THEIR ATTRACTION

Isaiah 17:8 — Man-Made Worship Rejected

> **“They will not look to the altars, the work of their hands, nor to the Asherah poles or the incense altars their fingers have made.”**

The repeated idea is:

Human manufacture.

Their hands made:

Altars.

Their fingers made:

Religious objects.

The tragedy of idolatry is that people worship what they themselves created.

Cross References

Isaiah 2:8

Isaiah condemns a land filled with idols where people bow before objects made by their own hands.

Isaiah 2:20

In the day of judgment, people will throw away the silver and gold idols they once made for worship.

Hosea 8:11

Israel multiplied altars, but those altars became occasions for further sin rather than true worship.

Spiritual Principle

Anything we create cannot become our Creator.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If your god depends upon your hands to exist, it cannot carry your life.

IX. STRONG CITIES WILL BECOME DESOLATE

Isaiah 17:9 — Fortresses Become Abandoned Places

> **“In that day their strong cities will be like deserted places in the woods, like branches abandoned before Israel long ago; they will become desolate.”**

Strength does not prevent abandonment.

Their cities are called:

Strong.

Yet they become:

Desolate.

Isaiah deliberately exposes the weakness of human fortification.

Cross References

Isaiah 6:11

Isaiah had already been told that cities would eventually lie ruined and uninhabited, houses would be empty, and the land would become desolate.

Leviticus 26:31

God warned that covenant rebellion could result in cities becoming ruins and sanctuaries becoming desolate.

2 Kings 17:6

The fall of Samaria and exile of Israel fulfilled the reality of depopulated and devastated northern territories.

Spiritual Principle

Strong walls cannot protect a people who have abandoned their true fortress.

X. ISRAEL FORGOT GOD ITS SAVIOR

Isaiah 17:10 — Forgetting the Rock

> **“You have forgotten God your Savior; you have not remembered the Rock, your fortress. Therefore, though you plant choice vines and set them with imported slips,”**

Here is the spiritual diagnosis.

They:

Forgot God.

Did not remember:

The Rock.

Their fortress.

This is shocking because God had been:

Their Savior.

Their Defender.

Their Foundation.

Yet they continued building life without remembering Him.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 32:18

Moses rebukes Israel for forgetting the Rock who gave them life and failing to remember the God who brought them forth.

Jeremiah 2:32

God asks whether a bride forgets her ornaments, yet His people have forgotten Him for countless days.

Hosea 8:14

Israel forgot its Maker and built impressive structures, while Judah multiplied fortified cities instead of depending upon God.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual decline often begins not with open hatred of God but with gradual forgetfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never become so busy building your life that you forget the God who gave you life.

XI. HARD WORK WITHOUT GOD ENDS IN LOSS

Isaiah 17:11 — A Ruined Harvest

> **“Though on the day you plant them you make them grow, and in the morning you make your seed flourish, yet the harvest will be a heap of ruins in the day of grief and desperate sorrow.”**

The people work.

They plant.

They cultivate.

They encourage growth.

Outwardly:

Things seem successful.

But the harvest collapses.

Why?

The foundational spiritual problem remains:

They forgot God.

Cross References

Hosea 8:7

Those who sow the wind will reap the whirlwind, and what appears to grow will not produce a harvest capable of sustaining them.

Galatians 6:7

No one can mock God successfully, because whatever a person continually sows is what that person will eventually reap.

Jeremiah 12:13

People may sow wheat yet harvest thorns, exhausting themselves only to gain nothing because divine judgment has overtaken their labor.

Spiritual Principle

Visible growth is not the same as lasting fruitfulness.

Key Truth

A flourishing morning does not guarantee a successful harvest.

XII. THE NATIONS ROAR LIKE THE SEA

Isaiah 17:12 — The Noise of Human Power

> **“Woe to the raging nations—they roar like the roaring sea! The uproar of the peoples is like the crashing of mighty waters.”**

The nations sound overwhelming.

They are compared to:

Roaring sea.

Crashing waters.

The imagery communicates:

Noise.

Force.

Chaos.

Threat.

Cross References

Psalm 46:6

Nations rage and kingdoms shake, but when God speaks, the earth itself melts before His authority.

Revelation 17:15

In symbolic prophecy, many waters represent peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages.

Luke 21:25

Jesus speaks of nations in distress and people confused by the roaring and tossing of the sea during times of great upheaval.

Spiritual Principle

Noise is not the same as sovereignty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The loudest power in the room is not necessarily the greatest power in the universe.

XIII. GOD REBUKES THE ROARING NATIONS

Isaiah 17:13 — Chaff Before the Wind

> **“Though the nations roar like the roar of many waters, God will rebuke them; they will flee far away, driven before the wind like chaff on the hills, like tumbleweed before a whirlwind.”**

The contrast is dramatic.

Nations:

Roar.

God:

Rebukes.

Then:

They flee.

What sounded like an unstoppable sea becomes:

Chaff.

Tumbleweed.

Windblown debris.

Cross References

Psalm 83:13

The psalmist asks God to make hostile nations like tumbleweed and chaff driven away by the wind.

Psalm 1:4

The wicked are not firmly rooted but are like chaff that the wind blows away.

Psalm 106:9

God rebuked the Red Sea, dried it up, and led His people through the depths as though they were crossing dry land.

Spiritual Principle

What overwhelms us may require only one rebuke from God.

Key Truth

The sea has a roar.

God has authority.

XIV. THE EVENING TERROR IS GONE BY MORNING

Isaiah 17:14 — Sudden Deliverance

> **“At evening they bring terror, but by morning they are gone. Such is the portion of those who plunder us, the lot of those who rob us.”**

This is one of the chapter's most dramatic endings.

Evening:

Terror.

Morning:

Gone.

The threat appears:

Immediate.

Overwhelming.

Unavoidable.

Then:

God acts.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:35

During the night, the angel of the Lord struck the Assyrian army, and by morning an enormous number of enemy soldiers lay dead.

Psalm 30:5

Weeping may remain during the night, but joy comes with the morning because God's favor outlasts temporary sorrow.

Exodus 12:29

At midnight, God acted decisively against Egypt, bringing judgment that changed Israel's circumstances before another day had fully begun.

Spiritual Principle

God can change circumstances between evening and morning.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never assume tonight's terror has permission to become tomorrow's reality.

XV. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 17

1. Powerful Cities Can Fall

Damascus becomes ruins.

Principle:

Human history cannot guarantee future security.

---

2. God Humbles Both Enemies and His Own People

Aram is judged.

Israel is judged.

Principle:

God's holiness applies His standard impartially.

---

3. God Preserves a Remnant

A few olives remain.

Principle:

God can preserve His purpose through what appears very small.

---

4. Judgment Can Turn Eyes Back Toward God

People finally look to:

Their Maker.

Principle:

Some losses expose the idols prosperity allowed us to ignore.

---

5. Idols Fail

The people stop looking toward the works of their own hands.

Principle:

Nothing we create can replace the One who created us.

---

6. Forgetting God Produces Empty Labor

Choice vines grow.

The harvest fails.

Principle:

Work without God may produce activity without lasting fruit.

---

7. God Rules Over Roaring Nations

Their sound is enormous.

His rebuke is greater.

Principle:

Political and military noise never equals divine sovereignty.

---

8. God Can Remove Terror Overnight

Evening fear becomes morning deliverance.

Principle:

God can change in hours what people thought would last for years.

XVI. WHAT ISAIAH 17 TEACHES ABOUT DAMASCUS

Damascus had:

History.

Military power.

Royal authority.

Yet:

It becomes ruins.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No city should interpret longevity as immunity from accountability.

XVII. WHAT ISAIAH 17 TEACHES ABOUT ISRAEL

Israel is not spared merely because it belongs to the covenant people.

Its glory fades because:

It has forgotten God.

Spiritual Principle

Privilege increases responsibility.

XVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 17 TEACHES ABOUT THE REMNANT

The remnant is pictured as:

A few olives.

Small.

Scattered.

Still present.

Key Truth

God does not need large numbers to preserve His purpose.

XIX. WHAT ISAIAH 17 TEACHES ABOUT REPENTANCE

Verse 7 says:

People look to:

Their Maker.

Their eyes turn toward:

The Holy One of Israel.

That is repentance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Repentance is not merely feeling badly about consequences.

It is redirecting the heart toward God.

XX. WHAT ISAIAH 17 TEACHES ABOUT IDOLATRY

The idols are:

Works of hands.

Works of fingers.

They are human products.

Spiritual Principle

The creator should never bow before what he created.

XXI. WHAT ISAIAH 17 TEACHES ABOUT FORGETTING GOD

The nation did not necessarily deny that God existed.

It simply:

Forgot Him.

That may be even more searching.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A life can become practically godless long before the mouth becomes verbally atheistic.

XXII. WHAT ISAIAH 17 TEACHES ABOUT GOD AS SAVIOR

God is called:

> **“God your Savior.”**

This makes their forgetfulness especially tragic.

They forgot the One who had already rescued them.

Spiritual Principle

Remembering grace protects the heart from wandering.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 17 TEACHES ABOUT GOD AS ROCK

God is:

The Rock.

The fortress.

Stable.

Reliable.

Strong.

Yet Israel traded the Rock for:

Man-made security.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not abandon the Rock while building temporary walls.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 17 TEACHES ABOUT WORK

The people:

Plant.

Cultivate.

Produce rapid growth.

Still:

The harvest fails.

Spiritual Principle

Diligence is good, but diligence cannot replace dependence upon God.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 17 TEACHES ABOUT SOWING AND REAPING

The harvest reflects:

The seed.

The spiritual condition.

The judgment.

Key Truth

We eventually meet what we have been planting.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 17 TEACHES ABOUT THE NATIONS

The nations roar.

God rebukes.

They scatter.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not measure nations only by the volume of their threats.

Measure them beneath the authority of God.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 17 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

Evening brings terror.

The threat looks overwhelming.

But:

Morning changes everything.

Spiritual Principle

Fear often assumes permanence where God has permitted only temporary trouble.

XXVIII. THE FADING GLORY OF JACOB

Glory can:

Fade.

Strength can:

Thin.

Prosperity can:

Shrink.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never turn God's blessings into evidence that you no longer need God.

XXIX. THE OLIVES LEFT AT THE TOP

Only a few remain.

But those few matter.

God sees:

The remnant.

Spiritual Principle

Small does not mean insignificant in God's plan.

XXX. LOOK TO YOUR MAKER

This may be the spiritual center of Isaiah 17.

The people stop looking:

Downward.

Toward idols.

And begin looking:

Upward.

Toward their Maker.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Healing begins when the eyes return to the One from whom the heart wandered.

XXXI. THE WORK OF THEIR HANDS

Idolatry gives divine value to:

Human production.

Modern idols may not always be statues.

They can include:

Money.

Career.

Influence.

Technology.

Possessions.

Self.

Spiritual Principle

Anything created becomes an idol when it receives the trust belonging to the Creator.

XXXII. FORGOTTEN SAVIOR

The verse does not say:

You never knew Him.

It says:

You forgot Him.

That is a warning especially for people with spiritual history.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Yesterday's knowledge of God cannot substitute for today's dependence upon God.

XXXIII. CHOICE VINES, RUINED HARVEST

The vines are:

Choice.

Imported.

Carefully planted.

Humanly impressive.

Yet:

The harvest becomes a heap.

Spiritual Principle

Excellent methods cannot overcome a spiritually corrupted foundation.

XXXIV. ROARING WATERS

The nations sound frightening.

Like:

An ocean storm.

But even an ocean is created.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not confuse the roar of creation with the voice of the Creator.

XXXV. THE REBUKE OF GOD

God does not need:

Another army.

A larger army.

A louder nation.

He rebukes.

They scatter.

Spiritual Principle

Divine authority does not depend upon matching human strength with greater human strength.

XXXVI. EVENING AND MORNING

This is one of the chapter's great contrasts.

Evening:

Terror.

Morning:

Deliverance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Always leave room in your fear for what God may do before morning.

XXXVII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What city is the main subject at the beginning of Isaiah 17?

Damascus.

Question 2

What happens to Damascus?

It is reduced from a functioning city to ruins.

Question 3

What happens to Ephraim's strength?

Its fortress and glory disappear.

Question 4

How does Isaiah describe Jacob's decline?

His glory fades and he becomes like a body growing thin.

Question 5

What agricultural picture describes Israel's judgment?

A field being harvested until almost nothing remains.

Question 6

What second picture describes the remnant?

An olive tree with only a few olives remaining after being beaten.

Question 7

What do people finally do in verse 7?

They look to their Maker and turn their eyes toward the Holy One of Israel.

Question 8

What do they stop looking toward?

Man-made altars, Asherah poles, and other objects of false worship.

Question 9

What was Israel's deeper spiritual sin?

They forgot God their Savior and failed to remember the Rock who was their fortress.

Question 10

What happens to the carefully planted vines?

They may appear to grow at first, but the final harvest becomes ruin.

Question 11

How are the nations described?

Like roaring seas and crashing mighty waters.

Question 12

What happens when God rebukes them?

They flee and scatter like chaff before the wind.

Question 13

How quickly can the threatening situation change?

The enemy may bring terror in the evening and be gone by morning.

Question 14

What is one of the main lessons of the chapter?

Human strength, idols, labor, and national power cannot replace trust in God.

XXXVIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 17 asks several searching questions.

What Have I Forgotten?

Have I forgotten:

God's faithfulness?

Past deliverance?

His provision?

His warnings?

Am I Looking to My Maker?

Or mostly looking toward:

My resources?

My plans?

Other people?

What Is the Work of My Hands That I Am Tempted to Trust?

Money?

Career?

Property?

Ministry?

Reputation?

Skill?

Am I Depending on the Rock?

Or building substitute fortresses?

Am I Working Without God?

Am I planting excellent vines while spiritually forgetting the One who gives the harvest?

What Am I Sowing?

What kind of harvest will my present choices produce?

What Nations or Powers Sound Too Loud to Me?

Have I forgotten that God can rebuke the roar?

What Is Frightening Me Tonight?

Can I leave room for what God may do by morning?

XXXIX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“When You Forget the Rock, Even the Best-Planted Vineyard Can Become a Ruined Harvest”

Israel worked.

Planted.

Cultivated.

But:

Forgot God.

Principle:

Human effort becomes spiritually empty when dependence upon God disappears.

XL. THE CITY THAT COULD NOT LAST

Damascus looked established.

Yet God announced:

Ruins.

Spiritual Principle

Nothing earthly possesses permanence simply because it has existed for generations.

XLI. THE ALLIANCE THAT COLLAPSED

Aram and Ephraim once frightened Judah.

Now:

Their own glory fades.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never fear an alliance more than the God who controls its lifespan.

XLII. THE REMNANT ON THE BRANCH

Two or three olives.

Four or five.

Almost nothing.

Yet:

Not nothing.

Spiritual Principle

God's promises are not endangered by small numbers.

XLIII. FROM IDOLS TO THE MAKER

This is the right movement:

From:

Created.

To:

Creator.

From:

Hands.

To:

The Holy One.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Repentance begins when we stop asking creation to do the work of the Creator.

XLIV. FORGETTING THE SAVIOR

Forgetfulness is dangerous because it happens quietly.

Nobody wakes one morning intending:

I will forget God today.

It happens through:

Distraction.

Prosperity.

Busyness.

Self-confidence.

Spiritual Principle

Remembering God requires deliberate spiritual attention.

XLV. THE ROCK AND THE VINEYARD

Israel forgets:

The Rock.

Then tries to build security through:

Vines.

But agricultural success cannot replace spiritual stability.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not trade the Rock beneath your feet for fruit that grows only for a season.

XLVI. THE ROARING NATIONS

Human power often announces itself loudly.

God does not need to shout louder.

He simply:

Rebukes.

Spiritual Principle

Authority does not have to compete with noise.

XLVII. CHAFF ON THE HILLS

The mighty nations become:

Weightless.

Rootless.

Driven.

This is the opposite of how they first appeared.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can turn what looks like a mountain into chaff.

XLVIII. TERROR AT EVENING

Evening can magnify fear.

Darkness makes threats feel larger.

But Isaiah says:

Wait until morning.

Spiritual Principle

Do not make permanent conclusions in temporary darkness.

XLIX. FIVE GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 17

1. Collapse

Damascus falls.

2. Reduction

Israel becomes weak.

3. Remnant

A few remain.

4. Return

Eyes turn toward the Maker.

5. Rebuke

God scatters the roaring nations.

Key Truth

God uses judgment to expose false security, preserve a remnant, turn hearts back toward Himself, and demonstrate His authority over nations.

L. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 17 begins with:

A city falling.

It ends with:

Nations disappearing.

Between those two scenes God reveals one central issue:

Where are people looking?

Damascus looks toward:

Its power.

Israel looks toward:

Its idols.

The people look toward:

Their own works.

They plant:

Choice vines.

They invest.

They cultivate.

They work.

But they forget:

God their Savior.

The Rock.

Their Fortress.

That is one of the most dangerous spiritual conditions possible.

You can be:

Busy.

Productive.

Religious.

Successful.

And still:

Forget God.

Isaiah therefore says:

> **“In that day people will look to their Maker.”**

That is where restoration begins.

Look again toward:

Your Maker.

Your Savior.

Your Rock.

Your Fortress.

Stop asking man-made things to carry divine weight.

Your:

Money.

Job.

Home.

Government.

Relationships.

Abilities.

Technology.

Possessions.

Are not the Rock.

God is.

Isaiah also gives hope through the remnant.

Almost everything may appear stripped away.

Only:

A few olives remain.

Do not despise them.

God can preserve His purpose through what survives.

Then come the nations.

They roar like:

A storming ocean.

They sound unstoppable.

But God rebukes them.

And suddenly:

Chaff.

Tumbleweed.

Gone.

The chapter closes with one of its greatest encouragements:

“At evening they bring terror, but by morning they are gone.”

Some troubles can change quickly.

Some threats that keep you awake tonight may look completely different tomorrow.

Therefore:

Do not worship tonight's fear.

Do not forget your Savior.

Do not abandon the Rock.

Do not trust the works of your hands.

Look to your Maker.

And remember:

The nations may roar.

God still speaks.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are our Maker.

You are our Savior.

You are our Rock.

You are our Fortress.

Forgive us for forgetting You.

Forgive us when our lives become so filled with:

Work.

Plans.

Possessions.

Responsibilities.

Success.

That we stop depending upon You.

Turn our eyes back toward You.

Help us look away from every idol.

Anything made by:

Human hands.

Human intelligence.

Human power.

Human ambition.

Keep us from asking created things to become our salvation.

Father, thank You for preserving a remnant.

When circumstances leave only:

A few olives.

A small beginning.

A little strength.

Help us not despise what remains.

Show us what You can do with it.

Father, bless our work.

But keep our work from becoming our god.

When we plant:

Give us humility.

When we harvest:

Give us gratitude.

When the harvest fails:

Keep our faith anchored in You.

Father, when nations roar:

Remind us that You reign.

When the world sounds chaotic:

Remind us that You can rebuke the waters.

When threats appear overwhelming:

Remind us that they can become chaff before Your breath.

And when evening brings terror:

Give us enough faith to wait for morning.

May we never forget:

You are still God in the night.

You are still God in the morning.

You are still our Rock.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“In that day people will look to their Maker, and their eyes will turn to the Holy One of Israel.” — Isaiah 17:7**

Central Truth

God humbles Damascus and Israel because political strength, idolatry, human achievement, and self-reliance cannot save, yet He preserves a remnant, turns hearts back toward their Maker, and proves that roaring nations become powerless when the sovereign Lord rebukes them.

Isaiah 17 in One Sentence

Isaiah announces the fall of Damascus and the weakening of Israel, pictures a small remnant surviving like olives left after harvest, calls people back from man-made idols to their Maker and Savior, warns that labor without remembering God ends in sorrow, and declares that the roaring nations scatter like chaff when God rebukes them.

Isaiah Chapter 18 — The Burden Against Cush (Ethiopia)

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 18 turns attention toward:

Cush.

A distant and powerful land beyond the rivers associated with Ethiopia and the upper Nile region.

The chapter is brief, but its message is significant.

Cush is pictured as:

Active.

Organized.

Diplomatic.

Powerful.

Feared.

Its messengers travel rapidly.

Its envoys move across the waters.

Its influence reaches beyond its borders.

Yet Isaiah reveals that all this human activity takes place beneath the watchful eye of God.

The Lord says:

“I will remain quiet and watch from My dwelling place.”

This is one of the most important statements in the chapter.

God may appear:

Silent.

Inactive.

Unhurried.

But silence does not mean:

Absence.

Ignorance.

Weakness.

Indifference.

God is watching.

He sees nations rise.

He sees diplomacy.

He sees military plans.

He sees human ambition.

And He knows exactly when to act.

Isaiah compares God’s quiet observation to:

Shimmering heat in sunlight.

Dew during harvest.

Then, just before the expected harvest is fully realized, God intervenes.

The picture changes from:

Growth.

To:

Pruning.

Branches are cut.

Shoots are removed.

The expected harvest does not reach completion.

Human plans can appear almost ready to succeed when God suddenly brings them to an end.

The aftermath is severe.

The fallen are left to:

Birds of prey.

Wild animals.

The imagery communicates complete military defeat.

Yet Isaiah 18 does not end with destruction.

It ends with:

Worship.

The very distant people described at the beginning eventually bring:

Gifts.

To:

The Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

And they bring them to:

Mount Zion.

Thus the chapter moves from:

Human activity.

To divine observation.

From:

National power.

To judgment.

And finally:

From distant nations.

To worship of the true God.

The central truth of Isaiah 18 is:

The Lord quietly watches the movements of powerful nations, acts decisively at His appointed time to cut down human pride and frustrated plans, and ultimately draws distant peoples to honor His name in Zion, demonstrating that every nation remains beneath His sovereign rule.

I. ISAIAH ADDRESSES THE LAND BEYOND THE RIVERS OF CUSH

Isaiah 18:1 — The Land of Whirring Wings

> **“Woe to the land of whirring wings, which lies beyond the rivers of Cush (Ethiopia),”**

Isaiah begins with:

> **“Woe.”**

The land is distant.

The phrase:

> **“whirring wings”**

has been understood in different ways.

It may evoke:

Insects.

Rapid movement.

Sails.

A land filled with activity.

Whatever the precise image, Cush is presented as:

Remote.

Energetic.

Recognizable.

Powerful.

Yet distance from Jerusalem does not mean distance from God’s authority.

Cross References

Zephaniah 3:10

God promises that worshipers from beyond the rivers of Cush will one day bring offerings and seek Him.

Psalm 68:31

Rulers will come from Egypt, and Cush will stretch out its hands toward God in recognition and worship.

Genesis 10:6

Cush is listed among the descendants of Ham, identifying the ancient ancestral line connected with the people and region.

Spiritual Principle

No nation is too distant for God to see.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Geography may separate nations from one another, but no border separates a nation from God’s sovereignty.

II. CUSH SENDS SWIFT ENVOYS

Isaiah 18:2 — Messengers Across the Waters

> **“That sends envoys by sea in papyrus boats over the waters. Go, swift messengers, to a tall and smooth-skinned nation, to a people feared far and wide, an aggressive and powerful nation whose land is divided by rivers.”**

The nation is described as:

Tall.

Distinctive.

Feared.

Powerful.

River-filled.

Its messengers are:

Swift.

Its diplomacy is:

Active.

Papyrus boats were light vessels suitable for rapid travel along waterways.

The scene communicates urgency.

Nations are communicating.

Plans are being formed.

Political activity is underway.

Cross References

Isaiah 30:4

Judah’s officials and envoys traveled to Egyptian cities seeking political help rather than trusting completely in the Lord.

Ezekiel 30:9

Messengers travel swiftly by ship to alarm distant peoples when judgment reaches Egypt and the surrounding region.

Job 9:26

Job compares the rapid passing of his days to swift boats moving quickly across the water and to an eagle rushing toward its prey.

Spiritual Principle

Human beings may send swift messengers, but God already knows the message before they arrive.

III. ALL THE WORLD IS TOLD TO WATCH

Isaiah 18:3 — Look at the Banner and Hear the Trumpet

> **“All you people of the world, you who live on the earth, when a banner is raised on the mountains, look! When a trumpet sounds, listen!”**

The scope suddenly expands.

Not merely:

Cush.

But:

All people.

The whole earth is called to:

Look.

Listen.

The banner signals action.

The trumpet announces:

Movement.

Warning.

Battle.

Divine intervention.

Cross References

Isaiah 11:12

God raises a banner for the nations and gathers the scattered people of Israel and Judah from distant places.

Joel 2:1

The trumpet is sounded in Zion as a warning because the day of the Lord is approaching.

Jeremiah 4:21

Jeremiah asks how long he must continue seeing the battle signal and hearing the sound of the trumpet announcing approaching conflict.

Spiritual Principle

When God acts in history, His actions carry lessons beyond the nation immediately involved.

Key Truth

God’s dealings with nations are meant to make the world look and listen.

IV. GOD REMAINS QUIET AND WATCHES

Isaiah 18:4 — Divine Silence Is Not Divine Absence

> **“For this is what the Lord said to me: ‘I will remain quiet and watch from My dwelling place, like shimmering heat in the sunshine, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.’”**

This verse reveals:

God’s patience.

God’s observation.

God’s timing.

He says:

> **“I will remain quiet.”**

But immediately adds:

> **“and watch.”**

God’s silence is active observation.

He is not:

Asleep.

Distracted.

Unconcerned.

He watches from His dwelling place.

The images of heat and dew describe something:

Quiet.

Present.

Steady.

Cross References

Isaiah 30:15

God tells His people that salvation is found in returning and resting, while strength comes through quietness and trust.

Psalm 132:14

The Lord speaks of Zion as His chosen resting place, where He desires to dwell according to His purpose.

Habakkuk 2:20

The Lord is in His holy temple, and all the earth is called to become silent before Him.

Spiritual Principle

God’s silence should never be interpreted as God’s inactivity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When heaven seems quiet, remember:

God may be watching while the appointed moment approaches.

V. GOD CUTS THE BRANCHES BEFORE THE HARVEST

Isaiah 18:5 — Intervention at the Critical Moment

> **“For before the harvest, when the blossom is gone and the flower becomes a ripening grape, He will cut off the shoots with pruning knives and take away the spreading branches.”**

Everything appears ready.

The blossom has passed.

The grape begins ripening.

Harvest seems near.

Then:

God cuts.

The expected result is interrupted.

This is a picture of human plans nearing completion before God suddenly stops them.

Cross References

John 15:2

Jesus says the Father removes unfruitful branches and prunes fruitful ones so they may produce even more fruit.

Isaiah 5:5

God says He will remove the protective hedge around His unfaithful vineyard and allow it to be broken down and trampled.

Matthew 21:34

When harvest time arrived, the owner of the vineyard sent servants to receive the fruit that rightly belonged to him.

Spiritual Principle

Near-success is not guaranteed success.

Key Truth

A plan can reach the edge of harvest and still be cut down by God.

VI. THE DEFEATED ARE LEFT FOR BIRDS AND ANIMALS

Isaiah 18:6 — Total Defeat

> **“They will all be left to the birds of prey on the mountains and to the wild animals of the land. The birds will feed on them in summer, and the wild animals in winter.”**

The imagery is severe.

It pictures:

Battlefield defeat.

Unburied dead.

Complete collapse.

The reference to:

Summer.

Winter.

Shows the extended consequences of defeat.

Cross References

Ezekiel 39:4

God declares that defeated armies will fall upon the mountains and become food for birds of prey and wild animals.

Isaiah 34:15

Isaiah later describes creatures making their homes in lands left desolate under judgment.

Revelation 19:17

John sees an angel calling birds to gather for the aftermath of God’s decisive judgment against rebellious military powers.

Spiritual Principle

Human military glory can end in complete humiliation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never boast in power that God can bring down before another season arrives.

VII. CUSH WILL BRING GIFTS TO THE LORD

Isaiah 18:7 — The Distant Nation Comes to Zion

> **“At that time gifts will be brought to the Lord of Heaven’s Armies from a tall and smooth-skinned people, a people feared far and wide, an aggressive and powerful nation whose land is divided by rivers—to Mount Zion, the place of the Name of the Lord Almighty.”**

The chapter ends unexpectedly.

The nation introduced as:

Distant.

Powerful.

Feared.

Now brings:

Gifts.

Not to:

An earthly empire.

But to:

The Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

Where?

Mount Zion.

The chapter therefore moves toward:

Recognition.

Submission.

Worship.

Cross References

Psalm 68:31

Rulers come from Egypt and Cush reaches toward God in worship and recognition.

Zephaniah 3:10

From beyond the rivers of Cush, worshipers will come and bring offerings to the Lord.

Psalm 72:10

Kings from distant regions bring gifts and tribute to the righteous King, acknowledging His universal authority.

Spiritual Principle

God’s purpose is greater than merely defeating nations.

He draws nations toward Himself.

Key Truth

The God who judges pride is also the God who receives worshipers from distant lands.

VIII. SEVEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 18

1. God Rules Distant Nations

Cush may be far from Jerusalem.

It is not far from God.

Principle:

There are no remote regions in God’s kingdom of authority.

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2. Political Activity Does Not Escape God’s Attention

Envoys travel.

Messages move.

Nations strategize.

God watches.

Principle:

God understands every plan before it becomes public.

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3. God May Be Silent Without Being Inactive

He says:

> **“I will remain quiet and watch.”**

Principle:

Silence from heaven is not evidence of absence from heaven.

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4. God Acts at the Right Time

He cuts:

Before harvest.

Principle:

God does not act too early or too late.

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5. Human Power Is Temporary

The feared nation experiences defeat.

Principle:

A nation’s reputation cannot protect it from divine sovereignty.

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6. Judgment Is Complete When God Decrees It

The battlefield imagery shows total defeat.

Principle:

Human power cannot negotiate its way out once God’s appointed judgment arrives.

---

7. God Draws Nations to Worship

The final scene is not merely destruction.

It is:

Gifts brought to Zion.

Principle:

God’s redemptive purpose reaches peoples far beyond Israel.

IX. WHAT ISAIAH 18 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY

God watches:

Cush.

The messengers.

The nations.

The developing plans.

Then:

He acts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not have to participate visibly in every moment in order to remain sovereign over every moment.

X. WHAT ISAIAH 18 TEACHES ABOUT DIVINE SILENCE

Verse 4 is especially important.

God says:

I will remain quiet.

This can feel confusing to believers.

We may ask:

Why is God silent?

Why does He not act now?

Isaiah reminds us:

Quiet does not mean:

Absent.

Spiritual Principle

Sometimes God’s silence is the space between observation and intervention.

XI. WHAT ISAIAH 18 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S TIMING

The branches are cut:

Before harvest.

Not at:

Blossom.

Not after everything is complete.

At the exact time God chooses.

Key Truth

God’s timing may differ from ours without ever being late.

XII. WHAT ISAIAH 18 TEACHES ABOUT NATIONS

Cush is:

Powerful.

Feared.

Organized.

But still:

Accountable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

International power does not create spiritual independence from God.

XIII. WHAT ISAIAH 18 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN PLANS

The chapter is full of activity:

Messengers.

Boats.

Banners.

Trumpets.

Military movements.

Yet:

God has the final action.

Spiritual Principle

Human plans are active.

God’s purpose is decisive.

XIV. WHAT ISAIAH 18 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

The people are described as:

Feared.

Aggressive.

Powerful.

These qualities can create:

Confidence.

Self-sufficiency.

Pride.

Yet God can cut a developing harvest before it reaches completion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not let progress convince you that you have become unstoppable.

XV. WHAT ISAIAH 18 TEACHES ABOUT JUDGMENT

The pruning image shows:

Precision.

Deliberation.

Control.

God is not pictured losing control.

He deliberately cuts.

Spiritual Principle

Divine judgment is purposeful, not chaotic.

XVI. WHAT ISAIAH 18 TEACHES ABOUT WORSHIP

The final picture is remarkable.

A foreign people comes to:

Zion.

With:

Gifts.

Key Truth

God’s name is not destined to remain honored in only one nation.

XVII. WHAT ISAIAH 18 TEACHES ABOUT ZION

Mount Zion is called:

> **“The place of the Name of the Lord Almighty.”**

Zion becomes the destination of nations recognizing:

God.

His authority.

His name.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s presence gives Zion its importance.

XVIII. THE LAND OF WHIRRING WINGS

Isaiah begins with the movement of:

A distant land.

The land seems:

Busy.

Active.

Restless.

Spiritual Principle

Human activity is not the same as divine progress.

XIX. THE SWIFT MESSENGERS

Messengers travel quickly.

But God does not need messengers in order to discover events.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What takes human communication time to reveal is already fully known to God.

XX. LOOK AND LISTEN

Isaiah says:

Look.

Listen.

God expects nations to pay attention.

Spiritual Principle

Wise people learn from what God does in the lives and histories of others.

XXI. THE QUIET GOD WHO IS WATCHING

This may be the heart of the chapter.

God is:

Quiet.

Watching.

Waiting.

Then:

Acting.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never mistake divine patience for divine powerlessness.

XXII. SHIMMERING HEAT IN THE SUN

Heat can be:

Quiet.

Invisible in substance.

Yet clearly present.

So is God’s watchfulness.

Spiritual Principle

Not everything real is noisy.

XXIII. DEW IN THE HARVEST

Dew forms:

Quietly.

Without spectacle.

God’s presence can operate without dramatic announcement.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not assume God is absent simply because His work is not loud.

XXIV. THE RIPENING GRAPE

The plans seem nearly mature.

Harvest is close.

Then God cuts.

Spiritual Principle

Almost accomplished is not beyond God’s intervention.

XXV. THE PRUNING KNIFE

The image is precise.

Not random destruction.

A branch is deliberately removed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God knows exactly what to cut and exactly when to cut it.

XXVI. BIRDS AND BEASTS

The proud military force becomes:

Food.

The picture strips away:

Uniform.

Rank.

Prestige.

Spiritual Principle

Military reputation is temporary before mortality.

XXVII. FROM FEARED NATION TO WORSHIPING NATION

The nation described as:

Feared far and wide.

Ends by bringing gifts to God.

That is a beautiful reversal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can turn a nation known for earthly strength toward recognition of heavenly authority.

XXVIII. THE NATIONS AND THE LORD’S NAME

The chapter expands the vision.

God is not merely:

A tribal deity.

A local ruler.

He is:

The Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

Spiritual Principle

The God of Israel is Lord over the whole earth.

XXIX. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What nation is addressed in Isaiah 18?

Cush, associated with the region south of Egypt.

Question 2

How is the land described?

As a distant land beyond rivers and as a powerful nation known far and wide.

Question 3

What are its leaders doing?

Sending swift messengers and envoys across the waters.

Question 4

Who is called to watch what happens?

All the peoples of the world.

Question 5

What two signals are mentioned?

A banner.

A trumpet.

Question 6

What does God say He will do?

Remain quiet and watch from His dwelling place.

Question 7

Does God’s quietness mean He is inactive?

No.

He is observing and waiting for the right time to act.

Question 8

What agricultural picture describes God’s intervention?

He cuts off shoots and removes branches just before the expected harvest.

Question 9

What does that teach?

Human plans may appear near success and still be interrupted by God.

Question 10

What happens after the defeat?

The fallen are pictured as left for birds and wild animals.

Question 11

How does the chapter end?

With gifts being brought to the Lord in Mount Zion.

Question 12

What does this teach about the nations?

God not only rules them but can draw distant peoples toward worship of Him.

XXX. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 18 asks several searching questions.

Am I Mistaking God’s Silence for His Absence?

Have I assumed He does not care because He has not acted yet?

Can I Wait While God Watches?

Or do I panic whenever His timing differs from mine?

Am I Trusting Human Activity Too Much?

Messages.

Plans.

Meetings.

Strategies.

Connections.

Are useful.

But are they replacing dependence upon God?

Am I Proud Because Something Seems Close to Success?

Have I forgotten that the harvest still belongs to God?

Do I Recognize God's Authority Over Nations?

Do world events cause me to forget:

The Lord is watching?

Do I Learn from God's Dealings With Others?

When the banner rises:

Do I look?

When the trumpet sounds:

Do I listen?

Am I Bringing My Gifts to God?

Do my:

Abilities.

Resources.

Influence.

Strength.

Ultimately honor Him?

XXXI. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“When God Is Quiet, He Is Still Watching”

Isaiah 18 does not show God:

Panicking.

Rushing.

Reacting.

He watches.

Then:

He acts.

Principle:

God’s silence does not mean events have escaped His attention; it often means the appointed moment has not yet arrived.

XXXII. THE WORLD IS TOLD TO WATCH

The judgment concerning Cush carries a lesson for:

Everyone.

Spiritual Principle

God’s acts in history are sermons to the nations.

XXXIII. GOD DOES NOT PANIC

Human messengers hurry.

God watches.

That contrast is significant.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Heaven never shares earth’s panic.

XXXIV. WHEN HUMAN PLANS RIPEN

Human beings often assume:

Progress means certainty.

Growth means success.

Momentum means completion.

Isaiah says:

Not necessarily.

Spiritual Principle

Momentum remains subordinate to God.

XXXV. THE HARVEST THAT NEVER ARRIVES

The grapes look ready.

Yet:

Pruning comes first.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not celebrate the harvest before God has allowed the fruit to be gathered.

XXXVI. POWER THAT CANNOT SAVE ITSELF

Cush is:

Feared.

Strong.

Organized.

Yet none of these qualities make it sovereign.

Spiritual Principle

Being feared by people does not make anyone feared by God.

XXXVII. JUDGMENT AND WORSHIP

The chapter contains both.

Judgment:

The branches fall.

Worship:

Gifts come to Zion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s final purpose is greater than merely bringing down pride; He seeks the honor of His name among the nations.

XXXVIII. CUSH AND THE NATIONS

Isaiah repeatedly broadens God's plan beyond Israel.

Here:

A distant African people is included in the prophetic vision of those bringing gifts before the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

God’s purposes have always reached farther than one ethnic or geographic boundary.

XXXIX. THE PLACE OF THE LORD’S NAME

What makes Zion significant?

Not merely:

Geography.

Architecture.

History.

But:

God’s name.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s presence gives sacred significance to what otherwise would be ordinary.

XL. FIVE GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 18

1. Human Activity

Messengers travel.

2. Global Attention

The nations are told to watch.

3. Divine Observation

God remains quiet and watches.

4. Divine Intervention

The branches are cut.

5. Divine Worship

The distant nation brings gifts to Zion.

Key Truth

God watches human power mature, intervenes according to His perfect timing, and directs history toward the honor of His name.

XLI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 18 teaches us how to think when:

Nations are moving.

Politics are changing.

Messengers are traveling.

Plans are developing.

Powerful people are acting.

The chapter says:

God is watching.

That may be exactly what someone needs to remember.

Sometimes God seems:

Quiet.

We pray.

Nothing seems to happen.

We wait.

The situation continues.

We begin asking:

Where is God?

Isaiah answers:

> **“I will remain quiet and watch.”**

God’s quietness is not:

Ignorance.

God’s waiting is not:

Weakness.

God’s patience is not:

Indifference.

He sees:

Every messenger.

Every plan.

Every nation.

Every movement.

Every threat.

And He knows when to act.

The picture of the harvest teaches us another lesson.

Human plans may come:

Very close.

The blossom falls.

The grape forms.

Harvest seems certain.

Then:

God cuts the branch.

This means we should never become arrogant merely because:

Things are going well.

The business is growing.

The campaign is succeeding.

The plan is working.

The organization is expanding.

The nation is powerful.

Success is never greater than sovereignty.

Then comes the severe picture of judgment.

The people who appeared powerful are completely defeated.

That should humble us.

But Isaiah does not end in defeat.

He ends in:

Worship.

A distant people brings gifts to:

The Lord.

That is the beautiful direction of biblical prophecy.

God's name will be honored among the nations.

The people once described by their earthly strength now recognize:

Heaven's King.

Therefore:

Do not panic when God is quiet.

Do not become proud when plans are prospering.

Do not fear nations as though God has lost authority.

Do not mistake movement for sovereignty.

Look.

Listen.

Wait.

Trust.

God is watching.

And when the right moment comes:

God knows exactly what to do.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You are Lord over every nation.

No land is too distant for Your sight.

No ruler is beyond Your authority.

No plan develops outside Your knowledge.

Father, help us trust You when You seem quiet.

When we pray and do not immediately see:

Change.

Answers.

Deliverance.

Intervention.

Remind us:

You are watching.

Keep us from interpreting Your silence as absence.

Teach us patience.

Teach us faith.

Teach us to wait for Your timing.

Father, protect us from pride when our plans appear successful.

When the blossom appears:

Keep us humble.

When the fruit begins forming:

Keep us dependent.

When harvest seems close:

Remind us that everything still belongs to You.

Father, give wisdom to the nations.

Humble leaders who trust only in human power.

Expose arrogance.

Restrain wickedness.

Bring justice.

And draw people everywhere toward Your name.

Thank You that Your purposes reach:

Every nation.

Every people.

Every land.

May people from distant places come to honor You.

May our own:

Gifts.

Resources.

Talents.

Influence.

Strength.

Be brought before You in worship.

And when the world seems noisy:

Help us remember the quiet God who is still watching.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"For this is what the Lord said to me: 'I will remain quiet and watch from My dwelling place, like shimmering heat in the sunshine, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.'" — Isaiah 18:4**

Central Truth

The Lord quietly watches the movements and ambitions of powerful nations, intervenes decisively at His appointed time to cut down human pride and frustrated plans, and ultimately draws distant peoples to honor His name, proving that every nation remains beneath His sovereign authority.

Isaiah 18 in One Sentence

Isaiah describes distant Cush sending swift messengers and displaying national strength, calls the whole earth to watch, reveals the Lord quietly observing until the precise moment of intervention, announces the cutting down of human power, and ends with the distant nation bringing gifts to the Lord at Mount Zion.

Isaiah Chapter 19 — The Burden Against Egypt

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 19 presents one of the most remarkable prophetic movements in the book of Isaiah.

The chapter begins with:

Judgment.

Fear.

Political collapse.

Economic devastation.

Failed leadership.

False religion.

Confusion.

But it ends with:

Healing.

Worship.

Reconciliation.

A highway.

Blessing.

Egypt, Assyria, and Israel united under the Lord.

The chapter begins with God coming against Egypt.

Egypt had long represented:

Political power.

Military strength.

Economic prosperity.

Human wisdom.

False religion.

Idolatry.

Egypt’s greatness depended heavily upon:

The Nile.

Its agricultural system.

Its rulers.

Its intellectual tradition.

Its gods.

But Isaiah shows that every one of these foundations can be shaken.

The Lord comes.

The idols tremble.

The Egyptians lose courage.

Civil conflict breaks out.

Political unity collapses.

Religious confusion increases.

The Nile dries.

Fishermen mourn.

Textile workers lose hope.

Wage earners suffer.

Egypt’s supposedly wise counselors become foolish.

Yet the chapter does not end there.

Beginning in verse 18, the message changes dramatically.

Cities in Egypt begin acknowledging:

The Lord.

An altar is built to Him.

A monument witnesses to His name.

The Egyptians cry to Him.

God sends:

A Savior.

A Defender.

The Lord makes Himself known to Egypt.

The people worship Him.

Then comes one of the most beautiful statements in the chapter:

> **“The Lord will strike Egypt with a plague; He will strike them and heal them.”**

God wounds.

Then heals.

He judges.

Then restores.

He disciplines.

Then receives those who turn to Him.

Finally, Egypt and Assyria—historic enemies—are pictured traveling on the same highway and worshiping together.

Israel joins them.

The Lord says:

> **“Blessed be Egypt My people, Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance.”**

The central truth of Isaiah 19 is:

The Lord humbles Egypt’s idols, economy, rulers, wisdom, and false religion, but His purpose moves beyond judgment toward repentance, healing, worship, reconciliation, and blessing, revealing that even former enemies can be brought together under the rule of the one true God.

I. THE LORD COMES AGAINST EGYPT

Isaiah 19:1 — Egypt’s Idols Tremble

> **“This is the burden concerning Egypt: Behold, the Lord rides on a swift cloud and comes into Egypt. The idols of Egypt tremble before Him, and the hearts of the Egyptians melt within them.”**

The chapter begins with dramatic imagery.

The Lord comes:

Swiftly.

Majestically.

Sovereignly.

The idols that Egypt trusted:

Tremble.

The people lose courage.

Egypt had many gods.

But none can stand before:

The Lord.

Cross References

Psalm 104:3

God is pictured stretching out the heavens and riding upon the clouds as though they were His chariot, demonstrating His authority over creation.

Exodus 12:12

The Lord announced that He would pass through Egypt in judgment and execute judgment against Egypt’s gods as well as its people.

Jeremiah 46:25

God declares judgment against Egypt, its rulers, and its religious centers, showing that neither political nor spiritual power can protect the nation.

Spiritual Principle

False gods may intimidate people, but they tremble before the true God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Anything you worship that must tremble before God is too weak to become your god.

II. EGYPT TURNS AGAINST ITSELF

Isaiah 19:2 — Brother Against Brother

> **“I will stir up Egyptians against Egyptians. Brother will fight against brother, neighbor against neighbor, city against city, kingdom against kingdom.”**

One of the forms of judgment is:

Internal division.

Egypt does not merely face an external enemy.

It begins fighting:

Itself.

Brother.

Neighbor.

City.

Kingdom.

Social order fractures from within.

Cross References

Matthew 12:25

Jesus teaches that a kingdom divided against itself cannot remain stable and that a city or household torn by division cannot stand.

2 Chronicles 15:6

During a period of judgment, nation fought against nation and city against city because God allowed deep turmoil among them.

Mark 3:24

Jesus states plainly that if a kingdom becomes divided against itself, that kingdom cannot continue standing.

Spiritual Principle

A nation can be weakened from within long before an enemy defeats it from without.

Key Truth

Division can destroy what opposition alone could not.

III. EGYPT'S PLANS FAIL AND FALSE RELIGION DEEPENS

Isaiah 19:3 — Idols, Sorcerers, Mediums, and Spiritists

> **"The spirit of Egypt will fail within them; I will frustrate their plans. They will consult idols and sorcerers, mediums and spiritists."**

Egypt loses:

Confidence.

Direction.

Clarity.

Instead of turning to God:

They turn deeper into false spirituality.

They seek:

Idols.

Sorcerers.

Mediums.

Spiritists.

This is spiritual desperation.

Cross References

Isaiah 8:19

God’s people are warned not to consult mediums and spiritists who whisper and mutter, but instead to seek guidance from the living God.

Exodus 7:11

Pharaoh summoned Egypt’s wise men and magicians, who attempted to imitate the signs performed through Moses.

Leviticus 19:31

God commands His people not to turn toward mediums or spiritists because seeking them brings spiritual defilement.

Spiritual Principle

Confusion becomes more dangerous when it drives people toward forbidden spiritual sources.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A crisis does not make every source of spiritual guidance legitimate.

IV. EGYPT WILL FALL UNDER A HARSH RULER

Isaiah 19:4 — A Cruel Master

> **“I will hand the Egyptians over to the power of a cruel master; a harsh king will rule over them,” declares the Lord, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.”**

Egypt valued its:

Independence.

Power.

Royal tradition.

Yet God says:

A harsh ruler will dominate them.

Human sovereignty is limited.

Cross References

Ezekiel 30:10

God announces that Egypt’s multitude and strength will be brought down through foreign power according to His judgment.

Jeremiah 46:26

The Lord promises to hand Egypt over to those seeking its life, though He also speaks of later restoration.

2 Kings 24:7

Egypt’s regional influence diminished significantly as Babylonian power expanded and territory once under Egyptian influence was taken away.

Spiritual Principle

Political independence is never absolute independence from God.

V. THE NILE WILL DRY UP

Isaiah 19:5 — Egypt’s Lifeline Fails

> **“The waters of the Nile will dry up, and the riverbed will be parched and empty.”**

The Nile was essential to Egypt.

It supported:

Agriculture.

Transportation.

Fishing.

Trade.

Daily life.

To lose the Nile meant:

Economic disaster.

Food crisis.

National weakness.

Cross References

Ezekiel 30:12

God declares that He can dry up Egypt’s streams and hand the land over to foreign power.

Nahum 1:4

The Lord rebukes the sea, dries rivers, and causes fertile regions to wither, showing His authority over water and land.

Zechariah 10:11

God is pictured striking the sea and drying waterways in order to remove obstacles and humble human power.

Spiritual Principle

God can touch the very resource upon which a nation believes its entire life depends.

VI. THE CANALS AND STREAMS WITHER

Isaiah 19:6 — Reeds and Rushes Die

> **“The canals will stink, the streams of Egypt will dwindle and dry up; the reeds and rushes will wither.”**

The problem spreads.

Not only:

The Nile.

But:

Canals.

Streams.

Vegetation.

Egypt’s carefully managed water system fails.

Cross References

Exodus 7:21

When the Nile was struck during the plagues, fish died, the river smelled foul, and the Egyptians could not drink its water.

Ezekiel 29:10

God declares that Egypt’s land will become desolate from one end to the other under judgment.

Isaiah 15:6

Moab’s waters also dried up, causing grass and vegetation to wither and disappear.

Spiritual Principle

Human systems depend upon blessings beyond human control.

VII. THE CROPS ALONG THE NILE DISAPPEAR

Isaiah 19:7 — Agriculture Collapses

> **“The plants along the Nile, at the mouth of the river, every sown field along the Nile will wither, blow away, and be no more.”**

Egypt’s agricultural strength collapses.

Seed was:

Sown.

Fields were:

Planted.

Yet:

The crops disappear.

Cross References

Genesis 41:1

Pharaoh’s dreams beside the Nile became the setting for God’s warning of future famine and Egypt’s dependence upon divine revelation.

Ezekiel 29:9

Egypt’s land is warned of coming desolation because of proud claims that ignored the Lord’s sovereignty.

Nahum 3:8

Nineveh is challenged by comparison with another great city surrounded and protected by waters, showing that even water-based strength cannot guarantee safety.

Spiritual Principle

A fertile field is a blessing, not a promise of permanent abundance.

VIII. THE FISHING INDUSTRY COLLAPSES

Isaiah 19:8 — Fishermen Mourn

> **“The fishermen will mourn; all who cast hooks into the Nile will lament, and those who spread nets on the waters will waste away.”**

Judgment reaches:

Employment.

Livelihood.

Families.

Ordinary workers.

Fishing depends upon:

Healthy water.

Living fish.

When the Nile fails:

An entire industry collapses.

Cross References

Ezekiel 29:4

Pharaoh is symbolically pictured as a great creature in the Nile whom God will pull out together with the fish clinging to him.

Habakkuk 1:15

A conquering nation is described gathering people like fish caught with hooks, nets, and dragnets.

Jeremiah 16:16

God uses imagery of fishermen and hunters to describe people being sought out and brought under judgment.

Spiritual Principle

National judgment eventually reaches individual livelihoods.

IX. THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY FAILS

Isaiah 19:9 — Flax Workers Lose Hope

> **“Those who work with flax will despair; the weavers of fine linen will lose hope.”**

Egypt was known for:

Flax.

Linen.

Textiles.

Now workers despair.

One economic failure creates:

Another.

The collapse spreads through connected industries.

Cross References

Ezekiel 27:7

Fine linen from Egypt was prized and used in international trade, showing the quality and importance of Egyptian textile production.

Proverbs 7:16

Fine linen from Egypt is mentioned as a luxury textile, demonstrating its reputation and value.

1 Kings 10:28

Solomon’s kingdom imported goods connected with Egypt, illustrating Egypt’s place within regional commerce.

Spiritual Principle

Economic systems are interconnected and fragile.

X. WAGE EARNERS ARE CRUSHED

Isaiah 19:10 — Workers Lose Their Livelihood

> **“The workers in cloth will be dejected, and all wage earners will be crushed.”**

Judgment is not merely about:

Kings.

Pharaoh.

Priests.

It reaches:

Ordinary workers.

People who depend on daily wages.

Economic collapse has a human face.

Cross References

Ezekiel 30:6

Those who support Egypt’s power will fall, and the pride connected with its strength will be brought down.

Jeremiah 46:25

God announces judgment against Egypt’s rulers, gods, and political power.

Nahum 3:9

A powerful nation once relied upon extensive regional support and alliances, but even those resources could not make its security permanent.

Spiritual Principle

National decisions eventually affect ordinary households.

XI. EGYPT’S WISE COUNSELORS BECOME FOOLISH

Isaiah 19:11 — The Officials of Zoan

> **“The officials of Zoan are fools; Pharaoh’s wise counselors give stupid advice. How can you say to Pharaoh, ‘I am one of the wise, a descendant of ancient kings’?”**

Egypt prided itself on:

Ancient wisdom.

Educated advisers.

Royal tradition.

Isaiah says:

Their advice has become foolish.

Knowledge without God cannot guarantee wisdom.

Cross References

Isaiah 30:4

Judah’s officials traveled to Egyptian centers such as Hanes and Zoan seeking political help.

Ezekiel 30:14

God announces judgment upon important Egyptian cities and centers of power.

1 Corinthians 1:20

Paul asks where the wise and learned of this age are, declaring that God exposes the foolishness of worldly wisdom when it stands against Him.

Spiritual Principle

Education and tradition cannot compensate for spiritual blindness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Being intelligent is not the same as being wise.

XII. EGYPT’S WISE MEN CANNOT EXPLAIN GOD’S PLAN

Isaiah 19:12 — “Where Are Your Wise Men?”

> **“Where are your wise men now? Let them tell you what the Lord Almighty has planned against Egypt.”**

Isaiah challenges:

Egyptian wisdom.

If they are so wise:

Can they understand God’s purpose?

Can they explain His judgment?

Human wisdom reaches its boundary when confronted with the sovereign plan of God.

Cross References

1 Corinthians 1:20

God brings human wisdom into question and exposes how limited worldly reasoning is when separated from divine truth.

Isaiah 44:25

God frustrates false signs, exposes diviners, overturns supposedly wise predictions, and reveals the foolishness of those who oppose His Word.

Genesis 41:8

Pharaoh’s magicians and wise men could not interpret his troubling dreams until God gave Joseph the meaning.

Spiritual Principle

The wisest person in the room still needs revelation from God.

XIII. EGYPT’S LEADERS HAVE LED THE NATION ASTRAY

Isaiah 19:13 — Deceived Cornerstones

> **“The princes of Zoan have become fools, the leaders of Memphis are deceived; the cornerstones of her tribes have led Egypt astray.”**

Leaders shape direction.

Egypt’s leaders are:

Deceived.

Therefore:

Egypt is misled.

Leadership failure becomes national confusion.

Cross References

Ezekiel 30:13

God promises to destroy idols and remove false sources of power from important Egyptian centers.

Jeremiah 44:1

Jeremiah speaks to Jews living in several Egyptian cities, showing how Egypt became a major place of settlement and influence.

Hosea 9:6

Memphis is associated with death and burial in Hosea’s warning of judgment and exile.

Spiritual Principle

When those considered cornerstones lose truth, instability spreads throughout the structure.

XIV. EGYPT STAGGERS IN CONFUSION

Isaiah 19:14 — Like a Drunkard

> **“The Lord has poured into them a spirit of confusion. They make Egypt stagger in all she does, as a drunkard staggers in his vomit.”**

The image is intentionally humiliating.

Egypt once thought itself:

Wise.

Stable.

Sophisticated.

Now:

It staggers.

No clear direction.

No steady course.

Cross References

Isaiah 29:9

Isaiah describes people staggering in spiritual confusion even though ordinary wine is not the cause of their condition.

Psalm 107:27

People in a violent storm reel and stagger like drunkards, and their human wisdom reaches its limit.

Job 12:25

God can cause leaders to grope in darkness without light and stagger like intoxicated people.

Spiritual Principle

A nation can possess enormous knowledge while lacking direction.

XV. NOTHING EGYPT DOES CAN FIX THE CRISIS

Isaiah 19:15 — Head or Tail

> **“There is nothing Egypt can do—head or tail, palm branch or reed.”**

This means:

High.

Low.

Leader.

Follower.

Powerful.

Weak.

No social class can produce the solution.

Egypt has reached:

Human limitation.

Cross References

Isaiah 9:14

Isaiah earlier described judgment cutting off both head and tail, representing leaders and false guides alike.

Deuteronomy 28:13

Faithful Israel was promised the position of head rather than tail when living under God's covenant blessing.

Deuteronomy 28:44

Under covenant judgment, the order is reversed and others rise above Israel while Israel becomes the tail.

Spiritual Principle

Some crises cannot be solved merely by rearranging human leadership.

XVI. EGYPT TREMBLES BEFORE THE LORD

Isaiah 19:16 — Fear Replaces Confidence

> **“In that day the Egyptians will be like women; they will tremble with fear at the uplifted hand of the Lord Almighty, which He raises against them.”**

The verse uses ancient battlefield imagery to describe:

Fear.

Vulnerability.

Loss of courage.

Egypt’s confidence melts before:

God’s raised hand.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:37

Warriors facing judgment are described as losing courage and becoming unable to stand against what is coming.

Nahum 3:13

The defenders of a proud city are pictured as becoming weak and unable to prevent the enemy from entering.

Exodus 15:14

After God’s deliverance at the Red Sea, surrounding peoples heard what He had done and trembled in fear.

Spiritual Principle

Human boldness changes quickly when people recognize they are opposing God.

XVII. JUDAH BECOMES A SIGN OF FEAR TO EGYPT

Isaiah 19:17 — God’s Purpose Creates Terror

> **“The land of Judah will bring terror to Egypt; everyone who mentions it will be afraid, because of what the Lord Almighty has planned against them.”**

The fear is not because Judah itself is inherently powerful.

The reason is:

> **“what the Lord Almighty has planned.”**

God’s purpose gives significance to Judah.

Cross References

Exodus 15:14

The nations trembled after hearing how God had acted on Israel’s behalf.

Deuteronomy 2:25

God promised to place fear of Israel upon surrounding nations because of what He was doing through His people.

Joshua 2:9

Rahab told the spies that fear had fallen upon the inhabitants of the land because they had heard of the Lord’s mighty acts for Israel.

Spiritual Principle

The power of God's people never lies ultimately in themselves.

XVIII. EGYPTIAN CITIES WILL ACKNOWLEDGE THE LORD

Isaiah 19:18 — Five Cities Speak the Language of Canaan

> **“In that day five cities in Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the Lord Almighty. One of them will be called the City of Destruction.”**

Now the chapter begins turning from:

Judgment.

To:

Restoration.

Egyptian cities begin:

Acknowledging God.

Speaking the language associated with God’s covenant people.

Swearing allegiance to:

The Lord Almighty.

This is extraordinary.

Cross References

Jeremiah 43:13

God announces judgment upon the religious monuments of Egypt, showing that Egyptian idolatry will not remain unchallenged.

Zephaniah 3:9

God promises to purify the speech of peoples so they can call upon the Lord’s name and serve Him together.

Psalm 87:4

Egypt and other nations are pictured among peoples who come to be recognized in connection with Zion and the knowledge of God.

Spiritual Principle

God can turn a place known for idolatry into a place where His name is confessed.

Key Truth

No nation is beyond spiritual transformation.

XIX. AN ALTAR TO THE LORD WILL STAND IN EGYPT

Isaiah 19:19 — Worship in the Heart of Egypt

> **“In that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the heart of Egypt, and a monument to the Lord at its border.”**

The land once filled with:

Egyptian temples.

False gods.

Idols.

Now contains:

An altar to the Lord.

A public monument testifies:

This land acknowledges Him.

Cross References

Exodus 24:4

Moses built an altar to the Lord and set up memorial stones connected with the covenant people.

Genesis 28:18

Jacob set up a stone as a memorial after encountering God and acknowledging the significance of that place.

Malachi 1:11

God declares that His name will be great among the nations and worship will be offered to Him in many places.

Spiritual Principle

God can establish worship in places formerly devoted to idols.

XX. EGYPT WILL CRY TO THE LORD AND RECEIVE A SAVIOR

Isaiah 19:20 — Deliverance for Former Enemies

> **“It will be a sign and witness to the Lord Almighty in the land of Egypt. When they cry out to the Lord because of oppressors, He will send them a Savior and Defender, and He will rescue them.”**

This sounds strikingly similar to Israel's own story.

Egypt cries.

God hears.

God sends:

A Savior.

A Defender.

God rescues.

The former oppressor now needs deliverance itself.

Cross References

Exodus 3:9

God heard Israel’s cries under Egyptian oppression and saw the suffering inflicted upon them.

Nehemiah 9:27

When God’s people cried out during oppression, He heard from heaven and raised deliverers who rescued them according to His great compassion.

Obadiah 1:21

Deliverers are pictured rising to exercise judgment and establish the Lord’s rule.

Spiritual Principle

God’s mercy can reach former enemies.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Savior is not only able to rescue victims of oppression; He can also rescue descendants of former oppressors who turn to Him.

XXI. THE LORD WILL MAKE HIMSELF KNOWN TO EGYPT

Isaiah 19:21 — Egypt Worships the Lord

> **“So the Lord will make Himself known to the Egyptians, and in that day they will acknowledge the Lord. They will worship with sacrifices and offerings; they will make vows to the Lord and keep them.”**

This is genuine transformation.

Egypt does not merely:

Fear God.

It begins:

Knowing God.

Acknowledging God.

Worshiping God.

Keeping commitments to God.

Cross References

Malachi 1:11

God declares that His name will become great among the nations and that worship will rise to Him in places far beyond Israel.

Psalm 68:31

Cush and Egypt are pictured extending themselves toward God in recognition and worship.

Zephaniah 2:11

The Lord will humble false gods, and people from distant nations will worship Him.

Spiritual Principle

God’s goal is not merely that nations fear His power.

It is that they know His name.

XXII. GOD STRIKES AND HEALS EGYPT

Isaiah 19:22 — Judgment Becomes Restoration

> **“The Lord will strike Egypt with a plague; He will strike them and heal them. They will turn to the Lord, and He will respond to their pleas and heal them.”**

This verse captures the entire movement of the chapter.

Strike.

Turn.

Respond.

Heal.

God’s discipline has:

A redemptive purpose.

Egypt turns to:

The Lord.

God responds.

Cross References

Hosea 6:1

The people are called to return to the Lord because although He has allowed them to be torn, He is also the One able to heal and restore them.

Deuteronomy 32:39

God declares that He alone gives life and death, wounds and heals, and no one can rescue from His sovereign hand.

Job 5:18

God wounds but also binds up; He permits injury yet His hands bring healing.

Spiritual Principle

God’s discipline may wound in order to lead people toward healing.

Key Truth

The hand that strikes in righteousness can also heal in mercy.

XXIII. A HIGHWAY CONNECTS EGYPT AND ASSYRIA

Isaiah 19:23 — Former Enemies Worship Together

> **“In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will go to Egypt, and the Egyptians to Assyria. The Egyptians and Assyrians will worship together.”**

This is astonishing.

Egypt.

Assyria.

Two major imperial powers.

Historic rivals.

Now:

Connected.

Traveling freely.

Worshiping together.

The highway represents:

Access.

Peace.

Reconciliation.

Unity.

Cross References

Isaiah 11:16

Isaiah previously promised a highway for the remnant, recalling the great deliverance of the Exodus.

Isaiah 62:10

God commands that a highway be prepared and cleared so His people can return without unnecessary obstacles.

Psalm 68:29

Kings are pictured bringing gifts in recognition of God’s glorious rule.

Spiritual Principle

God can create fellowship between peoples whose history was defined by hostility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God builds the highway, old enemies can travel the same road toward worship.

XXIV. ISRAEL BECOMES THE THIRD WITH EGYPT AND ASSYRIA

Isaiah 19:24 — A Blessing on the Earth

> **“In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the earth.”**

Israel is not pictured here as isolated from the nations.

Instead:

Egypt.

Assyria.

Israel.

Together.

A blessing.

This reflects the larger biblical promise that God's redemptive purpose through Israel would ultimately extend blessing to:

The nations.

Cross References

Ephesians 2:14

Christ is our peace, breaking down the hostility that separated peoples and creating unity in Himself.

Galatians 3:28

In Christ, ethnic, social, and gender distinctions do not create different levels of access to salvation, because believers are one in Him.

Zechariah 8:23

People from many nations will seek the people of God because they recognize that the Lord is with them.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation creates unity without requiring every nation to become identical.

XXV. EGYPT, ASSYRIA, AND ISRAEL RECEIVE GOD’S BLESSING

Isaiah 19:25 — “Egypt My People”

> **“The Lord Almighty will bless them, saying, ‘Blessed be Egypt My people, Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance.’”**

This is one of the most extraordinary statements in Isaiah.

Egypt is called:

> **“My people.”**

Assyria:

> **“The work of My hands.”**

Israel:

> **“My inheritance.”**

These titles reveal breathtaking grace.

Nations once associated with:

Oppression.

War.

Idolatry.

Violence.

Are brought within the language of:

Blessing.

Belonging.

Divine workmanship.

Cross References

Ephesians 2:19

Those once considered outsiders are no longer strangers but become fellow citizens with God’s people and members of His household.

Romans 9:24

God calls His people not only from the Jews but also from among the Gentiles.

Deuteronomy 32:9

Israel is described as the Lord’s special portion and Jacob as His allotted inheritance.

Spiritual Principle

Grace can give former outsiders a new identity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never place someone beyond the reach of a God who can say to Egypt:

“My people.”

XXVI. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 19

1. God Humbles False Gods

Egypt’s idols tremble.

Principle:

Anything worshiped instead of God will eventually be exposed as powerless.

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2. Division Can Become Judgment

Egypt fights itself.

Principle:

Internal conflict can destroy the strength people thought would protect them.

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3. False Religion Cannot Provide True Direction

Egypt consults sorcerers and mediums.

Principle:

Spiritual desperation should drive people toward God, not deeper into darkness.

---

4. Economic Strength Can Collapse

The Nile dries.

Fishing stops.

Textiles suffer.

Workers lose income.

Principle:

Economic systems are never self-sustaining apart from God’s providence.

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5. Human Wisdom Has Limits

Egypt’s wise counselors become foolish.

Principle:

Intelligence without God can still lead an entire nation astray.

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6. God Can Turn Judgment Into Healing

He strikes Egypt.

Then:

He heals Egypt.

Principle:

God’s discipline can become the doorway to restoration when people turn to Him.

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7. Former Enemies Can Be Reconciled

Egypt and Assyria worship together.

Principle:

God can heal hostility older than anyone living remembers.

---

8. God’s Grace Reaches the Nations

Egypt becomes:

“My people.”

Principle:

The saving purpose of God is larger than national boundaries.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 19 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY

God rules over:

Egypt.

Its rulers.

Its river.

Its economy.

Its counselors.

Its future.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A nation may control many resources without ever controlling God.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 19 TEACHES ABOUT IDOLATRY

The idols:

Tremble.

They cannot:

Save.

Guide.

Heal.

Egypt’s religious system proves powerless.

Spiritual Principle

A god that collapses when trouble comes was never God.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 19 TEACHES ABOUT DIVISION

Brother against brother.

City against city.

Kingdom against kingdom.

Key Truth

Division weakens from within what enemies may struggle to defeat from without.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 19 TEACHES ABOUT THE OCCULT

When Egypt loses direction, it turns to:

Sorcerers.

Mediums.

Spiritists.

God exposes the futility of those sources.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Confusion should never become permission to seek forbidden guidance.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 19 TEACHES ABOUT THE ECONOMY

The chapter traces economic collapse:

Water fails.

Agriculture fails.

Fishing fails.

Textiles fail.

Employment suffers.

Spiritual Principle

Economic prosperity rests upon more unseen dependencies than people realize.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 19 TEACHES ABOUT WISDOM

Egypt had an ancient reputation for wisdom.

Yet:

Its counselors fail.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The wisdom of yesterday cannot save people who refuse the God of today.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 19 TEACHES ABOUT LEADERSHIP

Egypt’s leaders:

Mislead.

Confuse.

Fail.

The nation follows.

Spiritual Principle

Leadership without truth multiplies confusion.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 19 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

Egypt once inspired fear.

Now:

Egypt trembles.

Key Truth

Those who make others afraid can someday discover fear themselves.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 19 TEACHES ABOUT REPENTANCE

Egypt turns to:

The Lord.

That turning changes everything.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Repentance is the hinge between discipline and restoration.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 19 TEACHES ABOUT HEALING

God strikes.

God heals.

This does not make judgment meaningless.

It shows that judgment can serve:

Restoration.

Spiritual Principle

God’s goal in discipline is not always destruction.

Sometimes it is return.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 19 TEACHES ABOUT WORSHIP

Egypt begins:

Acknowledging.

Sacrificing.

Making vows.

Keeping vows.

Worship becomes:

Real.

Deliberate.

Faithful.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True worship changes allegiance, not merely vocabulary.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 19 TEACHES ABOUT THE NATIONS

Egypt.

Assyria.

Israel.

All appear together.

God’s kingdom vision is:

International.

Spiritual Principle

God’s redemptive purpose cannot be contained within one human boundary.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 19 TEACHES ABOUT RECONCILIATION

Egypt and Assyria were not natural partners.

Yet:

A highway connects them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can create roads where history built walls.

XL. THE LORD RIDES ON A SWIFT CLOUD

The chapter opens with:

God coming.

Egypt cannot hide.

Spiritual Principle

God does not need human transportation to arrive where judgment is needed.

XLI. WHEN IDOLS TREMBLE

Egypt’s gods looked impressive to:

Egyptians.

But before the Lord:

They tremble.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never fear an idol more than the God before whom every idol shakes.

XLII. A KINGDOM AGAINST ITSELF

Jesus later stated the same principle.

Division produces:

Instability.

Spiritual Principle

Unity around truth strengthens.

Division rooted in rebellion destroys.

XLIII. THE DRYING NILE

Egypt’s economy depended deeply upon:

Water.

God touches:

The river.

The entire system feels it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can reveal dependence by touching one thing upon which many other things rely.

XLIV. THE FISHERMAN’S EMPTY NET

Isaiah brings judgment down to ordinary life.

The fisherman sees:

No fish.

No income.

No future.

Spiritual Principle

Large historical events are lived out in small homes.

XLV. THE WEAVER WITHOUT HOPE

The flax worker and linen maker remind us:

Economic judgment reaches people who never sit in royal palaces.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Always remember workers when discussing nations.

XLVI. THE FOOLISH COUNSELORS

Egypt's advisers have:

Titles.

Education.

Heritage.

But:

No answer.

Spiritual Principle

Credentials cannot produce spiritual insight by themselves.

XLVII. THE SPIRIT OF CONFUSION

Egypt staggers.

Nothing seems clear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When truth is abandoned, more information may still fail to produce direction.

XLVIII. FIVE CITIES TURN

Verse 18 marks a dramatic transition.

Some in Egypt begin:

Acknowledging the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

God can plant confession in the very territory once dominated by idolatry.

XLIX. THE ALTAR IN EGYPT

Imagine the contrast.

A land known for:

Egyptian gods.

Now contains:

An altar to the Lord.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can establish a testimony in territory long claimed by false worship.

L. EGYPT CRIES TO THE LORD

Once:

Israel cried because of Egypt.

Now:

Egypt cries because of oppressors.

And God hears.

Spiritual Principle

God does not refuse mercy merely because someone comes from the wrong history.

LI. A SAVIOR AND DEFENDER

God sends deliverance.

This language fits the larger biblical pattern of salvation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human beings do not merely need better circumstances.

They need a Savior.

LII. HE WILL STRIKE AND HEAL

These words belong together.

Strike.

Heal.

Judgment.

Mercy.

Spiritual Principle

The God who exposes the wound is also able to restore the patient.

LIII. THE HIGHWAY OF RECONCILIATION

Highways in Isaiah often represent:

Return.

Access.

Restoration.

Here:

Former enemies use the same road.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace does not merely forgive enemies separately.

It can turn enemies into fellow worshipers.

LIV. EGYPT, ASSYRIA, AND ISRAEL

Three nations.

Different histories.

One blessing.

Spiritual Principle

God’s future is larger than the divisions that dominate the present.

LV. “EGYPT MY PEOPLE”

This may be the most surprising phrase in the chapter.

Egypt.

The land once associated with:

Pharaoh.

Slavery.

Idolatry.

Now:

> **“My people.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace writes new names over old histories.

LVI. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What happens when the Lord comes into Egypt?

Egypt’s idols tremble and its people lose courage.

Question 2

What form of internal judgment occurs?

Egyptians turn against one another in civil conflict.

Question 3

Where do the Egyptians seek guidance?

They turn to idols, sorcerers, mediums, and spiritists.

Question 4

What happens to Egypt’s political independence?

It falls under harsh rule.

Question 5

What happens to the Nile?

Its waters dry and the river system deteriorates.

Question 6

How does this affect the economy?

Agriculture, fishing, textiles, and wage earners all suffer.

Question 7

What happens to Egypt’s famous wisdom?

Its counselors become foolish and unable to understand God’s plan.

Question 8

What happens to Egypt’s leaders?

They become confused and lead the nation astray.

Question 9

Does the chapter end with Egypt destroyed forever?

No.

The prophecy moves toward repentance, worship, healing, and blessing.

Question 10

What happens in five Egyptian cities?

They begin acknowledging and swearing allegiance to the Lord.

Question 11

What is built in Egypt?

An altar to the Lord and a monument bearing witness to Him.

Question 12

What happens when Egypt cries to God?

He sends a Savior and Defender and rescues them.

Question 13

What does Isaiah 19:22 teach?

God strikes Egypt and then heals Egypt when the people turn to Him.

Question 14

What connects Egypt and Assyria?

A highway symbolizing restored access and peace.

Question 15

What do Egypt and Assyria do together?

They worship the Lord.

Question 16

What role does Israel have?

Israel becomes the third nation in this picture of blessing.

Question 17

What names does God give the three nations?

Egypt:

“My people.”

Assyria:

“The work of My hands.”

Israel:

“My inheritance.”

LVII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 19 asks several searching questions.

What Idols Would Tremble If God Confronted Them?

Money?

Career?

Politics?

Reputation?

Possessions?

Is There Division in My Life?

Family?

Church?

Relationships?

Am I creating:

Peace?

Or conflict?

Where Do I Seek Guidance?

God’s Word?

Prayer?

Wise counsel?

Or forbidden and unreliable sources?

What Am I Depending Upon Like Egypt Depended Upon the Nile?

Income?

Health?

Business?

A particular person?

Do I Confuse Intelligence With Wisdom?

Am I educated but spiritually dependent?

Who Is Leading Me?

Are they guiding me toward truth?

Do I Believe God Can Heal What He Has Exposed?

When discipline comes:

Do I turn toward Him?

Have I Written Anyone Off?

Could God someday call them:

“My people”?

Do I Believe Old Enemies Can Be Reconciled?

What wall might God want to replace with a highway?

LVIII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Can Turn the Land of Idols Into the Land of Worship”

Egypt begins with:

Trembling idols.

It ends with:

An altar to the Lord.

Principle:

No place, nation, family, or life is beyond the transforming reach of God.

LIX. FROM JUDGMENT TO WORSHIP

Isaiah 19 has a remarkable structure.

First:

Egypt is judged.

Then:

Egypt fears.

Then:

Egypt turns.

Then:

Egypt worships.

Then:

Egypt is healed.

Spiritual Principle

God’s discipline can become part of a redemptive journey.

LX. HUMAN SYSTEMS CAN FAIL TOGETHER

In Egypt:

Religion fails.

Government fails.

Economy fails.

Wisdom fails.

Leadership fails.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God sometimes allows every substitute to weaken so people finally recognize the One they truly need.

LXI. GOD'S MERCY TOWARD FORMER ENEMIES

Egypt had oppressed Israel.

Assyria had devastated Israel.

Yet both appear in the final blessing.

Spiritual Principle

Grace is greater than historical hostility.

LXII. THE HIGHWAY WHERE ENEMIES MEET

The highway is one of the chapter's most beautiful symbols.

On it:

Egyptians travel north.

Assyrians travel south.

They meet.

Not for war.

For worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God changes hearts, roads once used for armies can become roads used by worshipers.

LXIII. “ASSYRIA THE WORK OF MY HANDS”

Assyria had been:

A rod of judgment.

A violent empire.

Yet the final vision speaks of:

God's workmanship.

Spiritual Principle

God can redefine the future of those known only by their past.

LXIV. “ISRAEL MY INHERITANCE”

Israel remains:

God's inheritance.

But now the blessing has expanded.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's faithfulness to Israel and His mercy toward the nations are not competitors in Isaiah's vision.

LXV. SIX GREAT REVERSALS IN ISAIAH 19

1. Idols Tremble → The Lord Is Worshiped

2. Civil War → Shared Worship

3. Confusion → Knowledge of the Lord

4. Oppression → A Savior and Defender

5. Striking → Healing

6. Enemies → Blessing Together

Key Truth

God is able to transform judgment into restoration when people turn toward Him.

LXVI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 19 begins with Egypt trembling.

It ends with Egypt blessed.

That alone should make us stop and think.

At the beginning:

God comes.

The idols shake.

The people panic.

The nation divides.

The economy collapses.

The leaders lose direction.

The counselors become foolish.

Nothing appears secure.

Egypt discovers that:

Its gods cannot save.

Its river cannot save.

Its economy cannot save.

Its wisdom cannot save.

Its government cannot save.

That is a painful lesson.

But God does not leave Egypt there.

The chapter turns.

Egypt begins:

Acknowledging the Lord.

An altar appears.

A monument stands.

The Egyptians cry out.

God responds.

He sends:

A Savior.

A Defender.

Then:

“He will strike them and heal them.”

That sentence is the heart of the chapter.

Sometimes God exposes what is broken because He intends to heal what is broken.

Sometimes He removes:

False security.

False gods.

False confidence.

So people can finally discover:

The true Savior.

Then Isaiah gives us an even larger vision.

Egypt and Assyria.

Ancient powers.

Historic enemies.

Travel the same highway.

And worship:

Together.

That is what God can do.

People who once fought can worship together.

People who once feared one another can walk the same road.

People separated by:

History.

Politics.

Ethnicity.

War.

Can become united in recognizing:

The Lord.

Then comes the astonishing blessing:

> **“Blessed be Egypt My people, Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance.”**

Do not miss the grace in those words.

Egypt:

My people.

Assyria:

My workmanship.

Israel:

My inheritance.

Therefore:

Never decide that someone is too far gone.

Never decide that a nation is beyond God.

Never decide that an enemy can never become a brother.

Never decide that judgment means God has no purpose beyond judgment.

The chapter that begins with trembling idols ends with worship.

The chapter that begins with division ends with unity.

The chapter that begins with fear ends with blessing.

That is the transforming power of God.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are Lord over every nation.

You are greater than:

Idols.

Economies.

Governments.

Rulers.

Wisdom.

Armies.

Father, expose every false god in our lives.

If we are trusting in:

Money.

Position.

Human wisdom.

Political power.

Our own strength.

Bring our hearts back to You.

Protect us from division.

Make us:

Peacemakers.

Truthful.

Patient.

Humble.

Father, give our leaders wisdom.

Keep them from leading people into confusion.

Give us discernment to recognize the difference between:

Intelligence.

And wisdom.

Father, thank You that You are the God who:

Strikes.

And heals.

Corrects.

And restores.

When Your discipline comes:

Help us turn toward You rather than away from You.

Thank You that You hear people who cry to You.

Thank You for our Savior and Defender.

Thank You for Jesus Christ.

Father, bring reconciliation where old hostility remains.

Build highways where people have built walls.

Bring together people who once stood against one another.

Make us one in truth and worship.

And Father, thank You that Your grace reaches the nations.

Thank You that You can call former outsiders:

“My people.”

Give us hearts large enough to celebrate Your mercy wherever You give it.

May the nations know You.

May the nations worship You.

May the nations be healed by You.

And may Your name be glorified throughout the earth.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“The Lord will strike Egypt with a plague; He will strike them and heal them. They will turn to the Lord, and He will respond to their pleas and heal them.” — Isaiah 19:22**

Central Truth

God humbles Egypt’s idols, economy, leaders, wisdom, and false religion, yet His purpose moves beyond judgment toward repentance, healing, worship, reconciliation, and blessing, demonstrating that even former enemies can become united under the saving rule of the Lord.

Isaiah 19 in One Sentence

Isaiah announces the humbling of Egypt’s idols, economy, rulers, and wisdom, but then reveals a stunning future in which Egypt turns to the Lord, receives healing and deliverance, worships alongside Assyria, joins Israel as a blessing on the earth, and is called by God, “My people.”

Isaiah Chapter 20 — A Sign Against Egypt and Cush

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 20 is one of the shortest chapters in the book of Isaiah, but its message is powerful.

The chapter centers on a dramatic prophetic sign.

Isaiah is commanded to:

Remove his sackcloth.

Remove his sandals.

Walk barefoot and exposed.

And continue doing so for:

Three years.

This unusual action is not meaningless.

Isaiah becomes:

A living prophecy.

His appearance symbolizes the humiliation that will come upon:

Egypt.

Cush.

These nations had become objects of political trust.

People hoped:

Egypt could help.

Cush could help.

An alliance could protect them from:

Assyria.

But God shows that the very nations people are trusting for rescue will themselves be conquered and humiliated.

The central issue in Isaiah 20 is therefore not merely:

Egypt.

Cush.

Assyria.

It is:

Trust.

Where will God's people place their confidence?

In:

Political alliances?

Military strength?

Foreign nations?

Diplomacy?

Or:

The Lord?

Isaiah's prophetic sign gives the answer in the strongest possible way.

If Egypt and Cush cannot save themselves:

They cannot become ultimate saviors for others.

The chapter ends with a painful realization:

> **“See what has happened to those we looked to for help.”**

And then comes the unavoidable question:

> **“How then can we escape?”**

The answer is not stated directly in this short chapter, but Isaiah's larger message has already made it clear:

Escape is found not in:

Egypt.

Cush.

Assyria.

Human alliances.

But in:

The Lord.

The central truth of Isaiah 20 is:

God uses Isaiah’s dramatic prophetic sign to expose the weakness of human alliances, warn that Egypt and Cush will themselves be humiliated by Assyria, and teach His people that no earthly power can provide the deliverance that belongs to the Lord alone.

I. ASSYRIA CAPTURES ASHDOD

Isaiah 20:1 — A Historical Crisis

> **“In the year that the commander of the army, sent by Sargon king of Assyria, came to Ashdod, fought against it, and captured it—”**

The chapter begins with a historical event.

Assyria attacks:

Ashdod.

Ashdod was one of the important cities of:

Philistia.

The Assyrian king sends his military commander.

Ashdod is:

Attacked.

Captured.

This event demonstrates:

Assyria is advancing.

Its military power is real.

Nations throughout the region have reason to fear.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:17

The king of Assyria sent high-ranking military officials with a large army toward Jerusalem, showing how aggressively Assyria projected its power throughout the region.

Amos 1:8

God announces judgment against Philistine cities, including Ashdod, declaring that their rulers and remaining power will be cut off.

Zephaniah 2:4

The prophet announces that Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, and Ekron will experience judgment and loss.

Spiritual Principle

Historical events can become warnings about where people are placing their confidence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When world events shift, the first question should not merely be:

“Who is strongest?”

But:

“Where is my trust?”

II. GOD COMMANDS ISAIAH TO BECOME A LIVING SIGN

Isaiah 20:2 — Sackcloth and Sandals Removed

> **“At that time the Lord spoke through Isaiah son of Amoz. He said, ‘Take off the sackcloth from your waist and the sandals from your feet.’ So Isaiah obeyed and walked around naked and barefoot.”**

This was a dramatic prophetic command.

Isaiah had worn:

Sackcloth.

That often represented:

Mourning.

Prophetic grief.

Humility.

Now God tells him:

Remove it.

Remove the sandals.

Isaiah obeys.

The description of being “naked” in prophetic contexts can refer to being stripped down to minimal clothing rather than necessarily total nudity.

The point is:

Humiliation.

Exposure.

Captivity.

Isaiah's life becomes:

A message.

Cross References

Micah 1:8

Micah says he will mourn, lament, go barefoot, and strip himself in grief because of the coming judgment upon his people.

Ezekiel 4:4

God commanded Ezekiel to perform unusual physical actions as prophetic signs portraying the consequences of Israel's sin.

1 Kings 20:31

Servants of the defeated Syrian king put sackcloth around themselves as a sign of humiliation and submission while pleading for mercy.

Spiritual Principle

God sometimes teaches through actions as well as words.

Key Truth

Isaiah did not merely preach the prophecy.

He embodied it.

III. ISAIAH WALKS AS A SIGN FOR THREE YEARS

Isaiah 20:3 — A Long-Lasting Prophetic Warning

> **“Then the Lord said, ‘Just as My servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot for three years as a sign and a wonder against Egypt and Cush,”**

Three years is significant.

This is not:

A momentary illustration.

A one-day sermon.

A brief object lesson.

For three years:

Isaiah carries the message physically.

Every time people see him:

They are reminded.

Egypt will be humiliated.

Cush will be humiliated.

Do not trust them.

Cross References

Ezekiel 24:24

God says Ezekiel himself will become a sign to the people so that when the announced events happen, they will recognize the Lord's message.

Ezekiel 4:3

Ezekiel is commanded to perform a symbolic action that becomes a sign of coming judgment against Jerusalem.

Hosea 1:2

God used Hosea's personal life as part of a prophetic sign portraying Israel's spiritual unfaithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

God's warnings are often persistent because His mercy gives people time to listen.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A repeated warning is evidence not merely of judgment, but also of patience.

IV. EGYPT AND CUSH WILL BE LED AWAY HUMILIATED

Isaiah 20:4 — Captivity and Shame

> **“So the king of Assyria will lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Cush, young and old alike, stripped and barefoot, with their buttocks exposed—to the shame of Egypt.”**

Isaiah's sign now becomes clear.

What Isaiah symbolized:

Captivity.

Humiliation.

Exposure.

Defeat.

Will happen to:

Egypt.

Cush.

The judgment affects:

Young.

Old.

No age group is exempt.

The great political powers people trusted are themselves unable to stand.

Cross References

Nahum 3:5

God warns a proud city that He will expose its shame publicly, revealing its disgrace before nations.

2 Kings 17:6

Assyria captured Samaria and carried Israel into exile, demonstrating its established practice of deporting conquered populations.

2 Chronicles 28:15

After captives had been humiliated and stripped, compassionate men clothed them, gave them sandals, fed them, and helped them return.

Spiritual Principle

The power people trust can itself become powerless.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not make a savior out of something that still needs saving.

V. THOSE WHO TRUSTED EGYPT AND CUSH WILL BE ASHAMED

Isaiah 20:5 — False Confidence Exposed

> **“Those who trusted in Cush and boasted in Egypt will be dismayed and put to shame.”**

This is the spiritual heart of the chapter.

The problem is:

Trust.

People trusted:

Cush.

They boasted:

In Egypt.

They believed these nations could provide:

Protection.

Security.

Military assistance.

Deliverance.

God shows:

Their confidence was misplaced.

Cross References

Jeremiah 2:36

God rebukes His people for constantly changing political alliances and warns that Egypt will bring shame just as other foreign alliances had disappointed them.

Jeremiah 17:5

The person who places ultimate trust in human strength while turning the heart away from the Lord is under a curse because human power cannot replace God.

Isaiah 30:3

Judah's dependence upon Pharaoh and Egypt will become a source of shame and humiliation rather than true protection.

Spiritual Principle

What we boast in reveals what we trust.

Key Truth

Misplaced confidence eventually becomes disappointment.

VI. THE PEOPLE ASK, “HOW CAN WE ESCAPE?”

Isaiah 20:6 — The Failure of Human Rescue

> **“In that day the people of this coastland will say, ‘See what has happened to those we looked to for help, those we relied on for deliverance from the king of Assyria! How then can we escape?’”**

The final verse brings the message home.

People look toward:

Egypt.

Cush.

And suddenly realize:

They cannot save us.

Why?

Because:

They cannot save themselves.

The question becomes:

> **“How then can we escape?”**

This is where false trust leads.

First:

Confidence.

Then:

Disappointment.

Then:

Fear.

Cross References

Isaiah 30:2

Judah is rebuked for going down to Egypt seeking Pharaoh's protection without first consulting the Lord.

Jeremiah 37:7

God warns Judah that Egypt's army, which came out to help them against Babylon, would not provide lasting rescue because it would return to its own land.

Psalm 146:3

God's people are warned not to place ultimate trust in rulers or human beings because they do not possess the power to save.

Spiritual Principle

Human help can be useful.

It must never become ultimate.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If your savior needs a savior, you have chosen the wrong savior.

VII. SIX GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 20

1. God Can Use Dramatic Signs

Isaiah becomes:

A living prophecy.

Principle:

God communicates truth in ways people cannot easily ignore.

---

2. God Warns Before Judgment

Isaiah walks as a sign for:

Three years.

Principle:

God's warnings reveal His patience.

---

3. Human Alliances Have Limits

Egypt and Cush appear powerful.

Yet:

They fall.

Principle:

Never turn temporary human strength into ultimate security.

---

4. False Trust Leads to Shame

Those who boasted in Egypt become:

Ashamed.

Principle:

Whatever replaces God as ultimate trust will eventually disappoint.

---

5. Powerful Nations Also Need Deliverance

Egypt and Cush cannot save themselves.

Principle:

No nation possesses independent saving power.

---

6. Salvation Belongs to the Lord

The chapter ends by exposing human helplessness.

Principle:

The failure of false saviors should turn our eyes toward the true Savior.

VIII. WHAT ISAIAH 20 TEACHES ABOUT PROPHETIC SIGNS

Isaiah does not merely:

Speak.

He acts.

His body becomes part of the message.

This happens elsewhere with:

Ezekiel.

Hosea.

Jeremiah.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God sometimes makes the messenger's life part of the sermon.

IX. WHAT ISAIAH 20 TEACHES ABOUT OBEDIENCE

God gives Isaiah a difficult command.

Isaiah:

Obeys.

He does not negotiate.

He does not ask whether the sign will make him popular.

Spiritual Principle

Obedience is still obedience when the command is uncomfortable.

X. WHAT ISAIAH 20 TEACHES ABOUT TRUST

This is the chapter's dominant spiritual issue.

The people trusted:

Egypt.

Cush.

God wanted them trusting:

Him.

Key Truth

The question is not whether we trust.

Everyone trusts something.

The question is:

What?

XI. WHAT ISAIAH 20 TEACHES ABOUT POLITICAL ALLIANCES

Political agreements may have legitimate practical value.

But Isaiah warns against treating alliances as:

Ultimate security.

Judah was tempted to depend upon foreign power more than God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Use human means wisely, but never worship human means.

XII. WHAT ISAIAH 20 TEACHES ABOUT EGYPT

Egypt repeatedly appears in Isaiah as:

A tempting refuge.

Judah sees:

Chariots.

Armies.

Strength.

God sees:

A limited nation.

Spiritual Principle

What looks powerful from ground level still appears small beneath God's throne.

XIII. WHAT ISAIAH 20 TEACHES ABOUT CUSH

Cush was also:

Strong.

Influential.

Respected.

But not:

Sovereign.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Reputation for strength does not equal the ability to deliver.

XIV. WHAT ISAIAH 20 TEACHES ABOUT ASSYRIA

Assyria is once again shown as:

A conquering power.

God permits Assyria to humble other nations.

Yet Isaiah has already taught:

Assyria itself remains under God's judgment.

Spiritual Principle

The instrument of judgment is never greater than the Judge.

XV. WHAT ISAIAH 20 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN POWER

Egypt.

Cush.

Assyria.

Each appears powerful.

But all remain:

Temporary.

Limited.

Accountable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human powers rotate.

God remains.

XVI. WHAT ISAIAH 20 TEACHES ABOUT FALSE SECURITY

The people believe:

If Assyria comes:

Egypt will help.

Cush will help.

Then God says:

Watch what happens to Egypt and Cush.

Spiritual Principle

False security feels secure only until it is tested.

XVII. WHAT ISAIAH 20 TEACHES ABOUT SHAME

The word appears in relation to:

Egypt.

Those who trusted Egypt.

There is:

National shame.

Personal shame.

The failure of false trust becomes visible.

Key Truth

Trusting what cannot save eventually exposes the weakness of our confidence.

XVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 20 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S WARNINGS

Three years is a long time to see Isaiah's sign.

God is saying:

Pay attention.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God repeats a warning, do not mistake repetition for irrelevance.

XIX. THE YEAR ASHDOD FELL

The prophecy is anchored in:

History.

A real military event.

A real king.

A real city.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical faith is not detached from history.

God works in real events.

XX. ISAIAH THE LIVING SERMON

Imagine seeing Isaiah repeatedly.

Barefoot.

Stripped of normal prophetic clothing.

Every appearance asks:

Why?

The answer:

Egypt.

Cush.

Captivity.

False trust.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes the most memorable sermon is the one people can see.

XXI. THREE YEARS OF WARNING

God could have used:

Three minutes.

He used:

Three years.

Why?

The warning needed to become unavoidable.

Spiritual Principle

God may warn repeatedly before allowing consequences to arrive.

XXII. THE HUMILIATION OF GREAT POWERS

Egypt and Cush are described as:

Captives.

Exiles.

Barefoot.

Exposed.

The contrast is intentional.

Before:

Powerful.

After:

Humiliated.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human pride should remain humble because circumstances can reverse quickly.

XXIII. THE DANGER OF BOASTING IN EGYPT

The people did not merely:

Use Egypt.

They:

Boasted in Egypt.

The political alliance became:

Emotional confidence.

Spiritual dependence.

Spiritual Principle

A practical tool becomes an idol when confidence moves from God to the tool.

XXIV. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HELP AND HOPE

People may help us.

Governments may help us.

Friends may help us.

Doctors may help us.

Employers may help us.

But none should become:

Ultimate hope.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Receive human help gratefully while keeping divine trust exclusively with God.

XXV. “SEE WHAT HAS HAPPENED”

The people are forced to reconsider their assumptions.

They thought:

Egypt is strong.

Cush is secure.

Now:

Look.

Spiritual Principle

Sometimes God teaches us by allowing us to see the weakness of what we trusted.

XXVI. “HOW THEN CAN WE ESCAPE?”

This is the final question.

It is actually a good question when it leads toward:

God.

The failure of false deliverers creates the opportunity to seek:

The true Deliverer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The collapse of false hope can become the beginning of true faith.

XXVII. HUMAN SAVIORS AND THE TRUE SAVIOR

The problem is not that all human assistance is wrong.

The problem is asking human assistance to perform:

God's role.

Spiritual Principle

Human beings can assist.

Only God can ultimately save.

XXVIII. EIGHT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 20

1. Powerful Nations → Captive Nations

2. Confidence → Shame

3. Boasting → Dismay

4. Clothing → Exposure

5. Diplomacy → Defeat

6. Human Help → Human Helplessness

7. False Security → Fear

8. Earthly Deliverers → Need for the Lord

Key Truth

Everything changes when what people trust proves unable to save.

XXIX. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What historical event begins Isaiah 20?

The Assyrian commander attacks and captures Ashdod.

Question 2

Who sent the Assyrian commander?

Sargon king of Assyria.

Question 3

What does God command Isaiah to remove?

His sackcloth and sandals.

Question 4

Why does Isaiah walk barefoot and exposed?

He becomes a prophetic sign of the humiliation coming upon Egypt and Cush.

Question 5

How long does Isaiah perform this sign?

Three years.

Question 6

What will happen to Egypt and Cush?

Their people will be taken away as captives and exiles by Assyria.

Question 7

Why is their humiliation important for Judah?

Judah and surrounding peoples were tempted to trust those nations for protection.

Question 8

What happens to those who trusted Cush?

They become dismayed.

Question 9

What happens to those who boasted in Egypt?

They are put to shame.

Question 10

What question do the coastland people ask?

> **“How then can we escape?”**

Question 11

What does the chapter teach about human alliances?

They cannot provide ultimate security.

Question 12

What does the chapter teach about God's warnings?

God mercifully warns before consequences arrive.

Question 13

What does Isaiah's obedience teach?

God's servants must obey even when the assignment is difficult or personally uncomfortable.

Question 14

Who alone can provide ultimate deliverance?

The Lord.

XXX. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 20 asks several searching questions.

What Am I Trusting?

If trouble comes, what is my first thought?

Money?

Connections?

Government?

People?

God?

Who Is My Egypt?

What person, institution, resource, or system have I mentally decided:

“I will be safe as long as I have this”?

Who Is My Cush?

Where have I placed confidence because something appears:

Strong?

Reliable?

Influential?

Am I Boasting in Human Help?

Have I moved from:

Gratitude.

To:

Dependence?

Do I Listen to God's Warnings?

Or do I require consequences before I take Him seriously?

Am I Willing to Obey When Obedience Is Uncomfortable?

Would I follow God if:

People misunderstand?

People stare?

People criticize?

What Happens to My Faith When Human Help Fails?

Do I panic?

Or turn more deeply toward God?

Can I Distinguish Between Help and Salvation?

Do I appreciate human help while still knowing:

Only God is my ultimate Deliverer?

XXXI. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Never Trust a Deliverer Who Cannot Deliver Himself”

Egypt looked strong.

Cush looked powerful.

But both would become:

Captives.

Principle:

Place ultimate confidence only in the One who never needs rescue Himself.

XXXII. WHEN GOD MAKES THE MESSAGE VISIBLE

Isaiah's body becomes:

A visual sermon.

Every day:

The warning continues.

Spiritual Principle

God knows how to make truth memorable when people are reluctant to listen.

XXXIII. THE COST OF PROPHETIC OBEDIENCE

Isaiah's assignment involved:

Humility.

Exposure.

Embarrassment.

Persistence.

Three years.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A faithful servant does not measure obedience by comfort.

XXXIV. GOD'S WARNING IS MERCY

The sign occurs:

Before.

The captivity.

That matters.

God warns first.

Spiritual Principle

A warning is an invitation to change direction before consequences arrive.

XXXV. POLITICAL TRUST VERSUS SPIRITUAL TRUST

Judah's temptation was:

Political.

But the underlying problem was:

Spiritual.

Their diplomacy revealed where the heart trusted.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Political decisions can become spiritual problems when practical alliances replace confidence in God.

XXXVI. WHEN STRONG NATIONS BECOME WEAK

Egypt and Cush become living examples.

Today's protector may become tomorrow's prisoner.

Spiritual Principle

Never build permanent confidence on changing power.

XXXVII. THE SHAME OF FALSE CONFIDENCE

Isaiah says people will be:

Dismayed.

Ashamed.

Why?

Because:

The thing they believed would save them fails publicly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

False confidence eventually produces true disappointment.

XXXVIII. “THOSE WE LOOKED TO FOR HELP”

This phrase is revealing.

They looked:

Toward Egypt.

Toward Cush.

But not first toward:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Where the eyes turn first often reveals where the heart trusts most.

XXXIX. WHEN HUMAN HELP COLLAPSES

Sometimes God allows human supports to fail.

Not because:

All human help is evil.

But because:

It was carrying spiritual weight it was never designed to carry.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may remove a false crutch so we rediscover the strength of the Rock.

XL. HOW THEN CAN WE ESCAPE?

This question can lead toward:

Despair.

Or:

Faith.

If no human power can provide final rescue:

Look higher.

Spiritual Principle

Helplessness can become spiritually useful when it drives us toward God.

XLI. FIVE GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 20

1. Assyria Advances

Ashdod falls.

2. God Warns

Isaiah becomes a sign.

3. Egypt and Cush Fall

Their strength is exposed.

4. False Trust Collapses

Those who depended upon them are ashamed.

5. The Great Question Remains

> **“How then can we escape?”**

Key Truth

When human saviors fail, God's people must rediscover that deliverance belongs to the Lord.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 20 SAYS TO BELIEVERS TODAY

Isaiah 20 does not teach:

Never accept help.

Never cooperate with people.

Never use practical resources.

It teaches:

Never turn them into God.

There is a difference between:

Using resources.

And:

Trusting resources ultimately.

There is a difference between:

Receiving help.

And:

Making the helper your savior.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Use the boat.

Trust the Lord of the sea.

XLIII. THE FAILURE OF FALSE SAVIORS

Every false savior eventually fails because every created thing is:

Limited.

Human.

Temporary.

Spiritual Principle

Only the eternal God can carry eternal trust.

XLIV. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 20 is only six verses.

But its question reaches deeply into every human heart:

What are you trusting to save you?

Judah and the surrounding peoples saw:

Assyria.

They were afraid.

Then they looked toward:

Egypt.

Cush.

They thought:

Those nations are powerful.

They have resources.

They have armies.

They can protect us.

God responds by making Isaiah:

A living warning.

For three years:

He walks barefoot and exposed.

Every time someone sees him:

The message is the same.

Egypt will be humbled.

Cush will be humbled.

Do not place ultimate confidence there.

That message remains relevant.

Our “Egypt” may be:

Money.

Our “Cush” may be:

Influence.

It may be:

Government.

Retirement savings.

A job.

A doctor.

A family member.

A political alliance.

A military.

A denomination.

A ministry.

A friend.

Any of these may have legitimate value.

But none of them can become:

God.

None of them can guarantee:

Tomorrow.

Life.

Security.

Deliverance.

Isaiah teaches us:

Accept help.

But trust God.

Use resources.

But trust God.

Seek wise counsel.

But trust God.

Make plans.

But trust God.

Because every human resource has:

Limits.

The chapter ends:

“How then can we escape?”

That question sounds frightening until we remember:

Isaiah has been pointing toward the answer all along.

Not:

Egypt.

Not:

Cush.

Not:

Assyria.

The Lord.

The failure of earthly saviors is not meant merely to make us afraid.

It is meant to redirect:

Our trust.

Our eyes.

Our hearts.

Back toward God.

Therefore:

Do not wait until your Egypt falls before learning to trust the Lord.

Do not wait until your Cush is carried away before recognizing where salvation truly comes from.

Build your confidence now upon:

The God who never needs rescue.

The God who never becomes captive.

The God who never loses control.

The God who alone is worthy of ultimate trust.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You alone are our true refuge.

You alone are our ultimate Deliverer.

Forgive us for placing too much confidence in:

People.

Money.

Governments.

Institutions.

Human strength.

Political alliances.

Our own wisdom.

Father, we thank You for every person and resource You use to help us.

But keep us from turning Your gifts into our gods.

Teach us to distinguish between:

Human assistance.

And divine salvation.

Father, give us hearts like Isaiah.

Give us courage to obey even when obedience is:

Uncomfortable.

Embarrassing.

Difficult.

Costly.

Help us follow You more than we follow public opinion.

Thank You for warning us before consequences come.

Give us ears to hear Your warnings.

Give us humility to respond before discipline becomes necessary.

When human help fails:

Keep us from despair.

Turn our eyes toward You.

When our Egypt falls:

Remind us You remain.

When our Cush becomes weak:

Remind us You remain strong.

When the question rises:

“How then can we escape?”

Remind us that salvation belongs to You.

May our confidence rest in:

You alone.

Our Rock.

Our Refuge.

Our Defender.

Our Savior.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“Those who trusted in Cush and boasted in Egypt will be dismayed and put to shame.” — Isaiah 20:5**

Central Truth

God uses Isaiah’s dramatic prophetic sign to warn that Egypt and Cush will themselves be humiliated by Assyria, exposing the weakness of human alliances and teaching His people that earthly powers may provide temporary help but only the Lord can provide ultimate deliverance.

Isaiah 20 in One Sentence

Isaiah becomes a living prophetic sign for three years, portraying the coming humiliation of Egypt and Cush under Assyria and warning everyone who trusted those nations that human power cannot become a true savior, because lasting deliverance belongs to the Lord alone.

Isaiah Chapter 21 — The Burdens of Babylon, Dumah, and Arabia

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 21 contains three prophetic burdens:

Babylon.

Dumah.

Arabia.

Each section is different, but all three communicate the same larger truth:

God rules over nations, watches the course of history, and brings His Word to pass at the appointed time.

The chapter begins with Babylon.

Isaiah sees an invading force sweeping forward like:

A whirlwind.

The vision is harsh.

It disturbs him physically.

He feels:

Pain.

Fear.

Trembling.

Anguish.

The prophet is not emotionally detached from what he sees.

Then comes the picture of Babylon:

Eating.

Drinking.

Relaxing.

Unaware that judgment is approaching.

Suddenly:

“Rise up, you princes, oil the shields!”

The celebration becomes:

Battle.

Isaiah is then told to post:

A watchman.

The watchman’s responsibility is simple:

See.

Stay alert.

Report faithfully.

Eventually the announcement comes:

“Babylon is fallen, is fallen!”

Her idols are shattered.

Her apparent glory collapses.

The chapter then turns toward:

Dumah.

A voice calls from Seir:

“Watchman, what is left of the night?”

The answer is mysterious:

“The morning is coming, but also the night.”

There is:

Hope.

But also:

Continuing warning.

Morning is coming.

Yet darkness has not disappeared forever.

Finally Isaiah turns to Arabia.

Caravans flee.

Refugees need:

Water.

Food.

Shelter.

The warriors of Kedar are reduced.

And God gives a precise timetable:

“Within one year.”

The chapter therefore moves from:

Babylon’s fall.

To Dumah’s question.

To Arabia’s deadline.

The central truth of Isaiah 21 is:

The Lord reveals the downfall of proud Babylon, calls His watchmen to remain alert and faithful, reminds those in spiritual night that morning and warning both remain, and declares that even the glory of Arabia will fall exactly according to His appointed time.

I. THE INVADER COMES LIKE A WHIRLWIND

Isaiah 21:1 — The Burden of the Desert by the Sea

> **“This is the burden concerning the Desert by the Sea: Like whirlwinds sweeping through the south, an invader comes from the desert, from a land of terror.”**

The image is violent.

A desert whirlwind moves:

Suddenly.

Powerfully.

Uncontrollably.

So comes the invading force.

The title:

> **“Desert by the Sea”**

is commonly connected with Babylon and the surrounding region.

The point is clear:

Judgment is approaching rapidly.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:2

The fall of Babylon is to be publicly announced among the nations, declaring that its idols and political glory will be put to shame.

Habakkuk 1:6

God says He is raising up a fierce conquering nation that moves across the earth and seizes territories not its own.

Zechariah 9:14

The Lord is pictured appearing over His people, with His judgment advancing like a storm driven by powerful winds.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment may seem distant until suddenly it is moving like a storm.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not mistake calm conditions for a guarantee that no storm is coming.

II. ISAIAH SEES A HARSH VISION

Isaiah 21:2 — Elam and Media Are Summoned

> **“A harsh vision has been shown to me: The traitor betrays, the destroyer destroys.**
> **‘Go up, Elam! Attack, Media! I will put an end to all the groaning she caused.’”**

Isaiah calls the vision:

Harsh.

Babylon itself had caused:

Groaning.

Oppression.

Destruction.

Now God raises others against Babylon.

Elam.

Media.

The empire that made others suffer will itself face judgment.

Cross References

Jeremiah 51:11

The kings of the Medes are stirred up against Babylon because the Lord has determined judgment upon the empire.

Daniel 5:28

Daniel tells Babylon’s ruler that the kingdom has been divided and handed over to the Medes and Persians.

Jeremiah 51:28

The nations are commanded to prepare the Medes and their rulers for war against Babylon.

Spiritual Principle

A nation that causes groaning does not remain beyond accountability.

Key Truth

God hears the suffering powerful empires create.

III. THE VISION PHYSICALLY DISTRESSES ISAIAH

Isaiah 21:3 — Pain Like Labor

> **“At this my body is racked with pain, pangs seize me like a woman in labor; I am too distressed to hear, too shaken to see.”**

The prophet does not watch destruction casually.

The vision affects:

His body.

His emotions.

His ability to process what he sees.

The comparison with childbirth communicates:

Intensity.

Inevitability.

Pain.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:43

When Babylon’s king hears news of the coming invasion, weakness and anguish seize him like labor pains.

1 Thessalonians 5:3

Sudden judgment is compared to labor pains coming upon a pregnant woman, from which there is no easy escape.

Psalm 48:6

Fear and trembling seize kings like the pains of a woman in childbirth.

Spiritual Principle

A true prophetic burden is not merely information.

It carries emotional weight.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If judgment never troubles the messenger, the messenger may not understand the message.

IV. THE EVENING BECOMES TERROR

Isaiah 21:4 — Fear Replaces Anticipation

> **“My heart pounds, fear grips me; the evening I longed for has turned into terror for me.”**

What seemed like:

An evening of rest.

Becomes:

A night of fear.

The expected calm is shattered.

Cross References

Daniel 5:6

Belshazzar’s face changed, his thoughts terrified him, his body weakened, and his knees shook when God’s message of judgment appeared.

Psalm 55:4

The psalmist describes a heart writhing within him while the terrors of death fall upon him.

Daniel 5:30

That very night Babylon’s king was killed, bringing the royal feast to a sudden and final end.

Spiritual Principle

A night of celebration can become a night of judgment very quickly.

V. BABYLON FEASTS WHILE DANGER APPROACHES

Isaiah 21:5 — “Rise Up, You Princes!”

> **“They set the table, they spread out rugs, they eat, they drink. ‘Rise up, you princes, oil the shields!’”**

The contrast is sharp.

They are:

Eating.

Drinking.

Relaxing.

Then:

Alarm.

Preparation for battle.

The moment of comfort becomes:

Emergency.

Cross References

Daniel 5:1

Belshazzar held a great feast for many nobles and drank wine with them on the night Babylon’s kingdom fell.

Daniel 5:30

Before that night was over, Belshazzar was killed.

Jeremiah 51:39

God says Babylon’s rulers will feast and become intoxicated before being overcome in a judgment from which they will not recover.

Spiritual Principle

Pleasure can hide approaching danger without removing it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never let comfort make you spiritually careless.

VI. GOD ORDERS A WATCHMAN TO BE POSTED

Isaiah 21:6 — Report What You See

> **“This is what the Lord said to me: ‘Post a watchman. Let him report what he sees.’”**

The watchman has a clear responsibility.

He is not told to:

Invent.

Exaggerate.

Speculate.

He must:

Watch.

See.

Report.

Cross References

Ezekiel 3:17

God appoints Ezekiel as a watchman and tells him to hear the divine warning and pass it faithfully to the people.

Habakkuk 2:1

Habakkuk stations himself at his watchpost and waits attentively to see how God will answer him.

Ezekiel 33:7

Ezekiel is again appointed as a watchman who must faithfully communicate God’s warning.

Spiritual Principle

Faithful ministry requires vigilance and accurate proclamation.

Key Truth

A watchman is responsible to report what God reveals, not what people prefer to hear.

VII. THE WATCHMAN MUST STAY FULLY ALERT

Isaiah 21:7 — Watch the Movement Carefully

> **“When he sees chariots with teams of horsemen, riders on donkeys or camels, let him be alert, fully alert.”**

The command is:

Watch carefully.

Not casually.

The watchman must recognize signs of:

Movement.

Approach.

Change.

Cross References

Jeremiah 51:21

God describes military forces and animals being used in the breaking of Babylon’s strength.

2 Kings 9:17

A watchman standing on a tower saw an approaching company and immediately reported what he observed.

2 Kings 9:20

The watchman continued carefully observing the advancing chariot and reported the distinctive way it was being driven.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual vigilance requires attentiveness to what is actually happening.

VIII. THE WATCHMAN REMAINS AT HIS POST

Isaiah 21:8 — Day and Night

> **“Then the watchman cried out: ‘Like a lion I stand on the watchtower, O Lord, day after day, and I stay at my post every night.’”**

The watchman is:

Persistent.

Patient.

Alert.

He does not abandon the post because:

Nothing happened yesterday.

Nothing happened last night.

He keeps watching.

Cross References

Habakkuk 2:1

Habakkuk resolves to remain at his watch and wait for the Lord’s answer.

Ezekiel 33:2

A watchman is selected to stand guard and sound warning when danger approaches.

Amos 3:8

When a lion roars, people naturally fear; when the Lord speaks, the prophet is compelled to proclaim the message.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness often means staying at the post longer than expected.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not leave your assignment merely because fulfillment has taken longer than you hoped.

IX. BABYLON HAS FALLEN

Isaiah 21:9 — The Great Announcement

> **“Look, here comes a chariot with horsemen! And he calls out: ‘Babylon is fallen, is fallen! All the images of her gods lie shattered on the ground!’”**

This is the climax of the Babylon section.

The message is:

Definite.

Final.

Repeated.

> **“Babylon is fallen, is fallen!”**

Not only:

The empire.

But:

Its gods.

Its idols.

Its religious confidence.

Everything collapses together.

Cross References

Revelation 14:8

An angel announces the fall of symbolic Babylon, representing the collapse of the corrupt world system opposed to God.

Revelation 18:2

A mighty heavenly messenger again announces that Babylon the Great has fallen and become a place of desolation.

Jeremiah 50:2

Babylon’s fall is declared publicly, and its idols are exposed and shamed.

Spiritual Principle

When a false system collapses, its false gods are exposed with it.

Key Truth

Every Babylon eventually hears:

“Fallen.”

X. GOD’S PEOPLE HAVE BEEN CRUSHED LIKE GRAIN

Isaiah 21:10 — The Message Has Been Faithfully Delivered

> **“My people, crushed like grain on a threshing floor, this is what I have heard from the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, the God of Israel, and I have told you.”**

Isaiah turns toward:

God’s afflicted people.

They have been:

Crushed.

Pressed.

Beaten down.

Like grain on a threshing floor.

Yet the prophet gives them:

The Word of God.

Cross References

Jeremiah 51:33

Babylon is compared to a threshing floor prepared for the appointed harvest of judgment.

Micah 4:12

God gathers nations like sheaves brought to a threshing floor, though they do not understand His purpose.

Matthew 3:12

John the Baptist describes the Messiah separating wheat from chaff, gathering what belongs to Him and judging what does not.

Spiritual Principle

God’s Word brings perspective to people who feel crushed.

XI. A VOICE CALLS FROM SEIR

Isaiah 21:11 — The Burden of Dumah

> **“This is the burden concerning Dumah: Someone calls to me from Seir, ‘Watchman, what is left of the night? Watchman, what is left of the night?’”**

The question is repeated.

That gives it:

Urgency.

Weariness.

Longing.

The night feels:

Long.

Heavy.

Uncertain.

The person wants to know:

How much longer?

Cross References

Genesis 36:8

Esau settled in the hill country of Seir, establishing the geographic connection with Edom.

Ezekiel 25:12

Edom is judged for acting in vengeance against Judah and increasing guilt through hostility.

Obadiah 1:1

Obadiah delivers a prophecy concerning Edom and announces divine judgment against its pride and violence.

Spiritual Principle

People living in darkness eventually ask:

How long until morning?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual night creates hunger for light.

XII. MORNING IS COMING, BUT ALSO NIGHT

Isaiah 21:12 — Hope and Warning Together

> **“The watchman replies, ‘The morning is coming, but also the night. If you want to ask, then ask; come back yet again.’”**

The answer is mysterious but powerful.

Morning:

Is coming.

There is:

Hope.

Relief.

Change.

But:

Night also comes.

The warning remains.

The invitation:

Ask.

Return.

Come again.

There is urgency in seeking truth.

Cross References

John 9:4

Jesus says the works of God must be done while there is opportunity because a time comes when the present opportunity ends.

Romans 13:12

Paul says the night is far spent and the day is near, calling believers to cast away the works of darkness and live in the light.

2 Peter 1:19

The prophetic Word is compared to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises.

Spiritual Principle

Hope does not eliminate the need for repentance.

Key Truth

Morning is coming, but that does not make spiritual darkness harmless.

XIII. ARABIAN CARAVANS CAMP IN THE THICKETS

Isaiah 21:13 — The Burden of Arabia

> **“This is the burden concerning Arabia: You caravans of Dedanites, who camp in the thickets of Arabia,”**

The scene changes again.

Caravans that normally:

Travel.

Trade.

Move confidently.

Now hide in:

Thickets.

The commercial traveler becomes:

A refugee.

Cross References

Jeremiah 25:23

Dedan, Tema, and other Arabian peoples are included among nations warned of coming judgment.

Ezekiel 27:20

Dedan is known as a trading partner, emphasizing its role in regional commerce.

Genesis 25:3

Dedan is listed within the ancestral lines associated with Arabian peoples descended through Abraham’s family.

Spiritual Principle

Trade and prosperity can be disrupted quickly by conflict.

XIV. WATER AND FOOD ARE BROUGHT TO THE FUGITIVES

Isaiah 21:14 — Compassion in Crisis

> **“Bring water for the thirsty; you who live in Tema, bring food for the fugitives.”**

This verse changes the tone.

People are:

Thirsty.

Hungry.

Fleeing.

The inhabitants of Tema are told:

Help them.

Bring:

Water.

Food.

Practical compassion matters.

Cross References

Job 6:19

Caravans from Tema search expectantly for water, showing how vital water was to desert travelers.

Genesis 25:15

Tema is listed among the descendants of Ishmael and became associated with Arabian peoples.

1 Kings 17:10

During famine, Elijah asked a widow for water and food, highlighting the life-preserving importance of hospitality during crisis.

Spiritual Principle

Compassion should become practical.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When someone is fleeing the sword, sometimes the most spiritual thing you can offer first is water and bread.

XV. THE PEOPLE ARE FLEEING FROM WAR

Isaiah 21:15 — Sword, Bow, and Battle

> **“They are fleeing from the sword, from the drawn sword, from the bent bow and the heat of battle.”**

The refugees are not moving for:

Convenience.

Adventure.

Trade.

They are running from:

Violence.

Weapons.

Battle.

Cross References

Jeremiah 49:8

The people of Dedan are warned to flee and hide deeply because judgment is approaching the region.

Jeremiah 49:28

God announces judgment against Kedar and the kingdoms of Arabia, describing an enemy raised against them.

Jeremiah 49:29

Their tents, flocks, possessions, and camels are taken as fear spreads around them.

Spiritual Principle

War turns normal life into survival.

XVI. KEDAR'S GLORY WILL END WITHIN ONE YEAR

Isaiah 21:16 — A Precise Deadline

> **"This is what the Lord has told me: Within one year, counted as precisely as a hired worker counts, all the glory of Kedar will come to an end."**

The prophecy becomes precise.

One year.

Not:

Approximately.

Not:

Eventually.

But carefully counted.

A hired worker counts time closely because:

Wages.

Contract.

Service.

Depend upon it.

So does this deadline.

Cross References

Isaiah 16:14

Isaiah similarly announced a carefully measured period for Moab's glory to be humbled.

Genesis 25:13

Kedar is identified among the descendants of Ishmael and became associated with significant Arabian tribes.

Ezekiel 27:21

Arabia and the leaders of Kedar are known for trade involving flocks and livestock.

Spiritual Principle

God not only knows what will happen.

He knows when.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human glory operates on a clock God already sees.

XVII. KEDAR'S WARRIORS WILL BE FEW

Isaiah 21:17 — The Lord Has Spoken

> **"The survivors of the archers, the warriors of Kedar, will be few. The Lord, the God of Israel, has spoken."**

Kedar had:

Archers.

Warriors.

Military reputation.

After judgment:

Few remain.

The chapter ends with the strongest possible guarantee:

> **"The Lord, the God of Israel, has spoken."**

That settles the matter.

Cross References

Isaiah 10:19

A once-mighty military force is reduced until so few remain that even a child could count them.

Psalm 120:5

The psalmist laments living among peoples associated with Meshech and Kedar, regions known symbolically with hostility and distance.

Isaiah 42:11

The settlements of Kedar are later called to lift their voices in praise when the Lord's glory is proclaimed.

Spiritual Principle

Military strength can be reduced.

God's Word cannot.

Key Truth

The final authority in Isaiah 21 is not:

Babylon.

Dumah.

Arabia.

It is:

"The Lord has spoken."

XVIII. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 21

1. Babylon's Fall Is Certain

Its power.

Pleasure.

Idols.

All collapse.

Principle:

No empire opposed to God remains permanent.

---

2. Prophetic Truth Carries Weight

Isaiah suffers emotionally under the vision.

Principle:

God’s message should affect the messenger before it affects the audience.

---

3. Watchmen Must Stay Alert

The watchman remains:

Day.

Night.

Principle:

Faithful service requires perseverance.

---

4. Watchmen Must Report Honestly

He reports what he sees.

Principle:

Ministry is stewardship of truth, not manufacture of truth.

---

5. Night Does Not Last Forever

Morning comes.

Principle:

Darkness is never eternal where God has promised light.

---

6. Morning Does Not Remove Every Warning

The watchman also says:

Night comes.

Principle:

Hope should produce readiness, not carelessness.

---

7. Refugees Deserve Compassion

Water and food are provided.

Principle:

Biblical faith sees the person behind the crisis.

---

8. God Sets the Timetable of Nations

Kedar receives:

One year.

Principle:

God’s Word is precise and dependable.

XIX. WHAT ISAIAH 21 TEACHES ABOUT BABYLON

Babylon:

Appears powerful.

Celebrates.

Feasts.

Then:

Falls.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never measure permanence by present prosperity.

XX. WHAT ISAIAH 21 TEACHES ABOUT IDOLATRY

Babylon’s idols fall:

With Babylon.

That is important.

The gods cannot save:

The empire that trusted them.

Spiritual Principle

False gods fall with the systems built around them.

XXI. WHAT ISAIAH 21 TEACHES ABOUT THE PROPHET

Isaiah is:

Shaken.

Pained.

Afraid.

Alert.

Faithful.

He still delivers the message.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Courage is not absence of emotion.

It is faithfulness despite emotion.

XXII. WHAT ISAIAH 21 TEACHES ABOUT WATCHMEN

Watchmen must:

Stand.

Look.

Listen.

Discern.

Report.

Persist.

Spiritual Principle

A sleepy watchman endangers others.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 21 TEACHES ABOUT VIGILANCE

The watchman stays:

Day after day.

Night after night.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual vigilance is not a temporary burst of attention.

It is sustained faithfulness.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 21 TEACHES ABOUT NIGHT

Dumah asks:

What remains?

How much longer?

This is the question of people experiencing:

Darkness.

Uncertainty.

Waiting.

Spiritual Principle

God is not offended by sincere questions from people waiting in the night.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 21 TEACHES ABOUT MORNING

The answer contains hope:

> **“The morning is coming.”**

Darkness has:

A limit.

Key Truth

God can place an ending on the night.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 21 TEACHES ABOUT WARNING

The same verse says:

> **“But also the night.”**

That prevents false optimism.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Biblical hope is not denial of danger.

It is confidence in God while taking danger seriously.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 21 TEACHES ABOUT COMPASSION

Tema is told:

Bring water.

Bring food.

Not:

Debate the refugees.

Judge them.

Ignore them.

Spiritual Principle

Need sometimes requires immediate mercy before extended explanation.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 21 TEACHES ABOUT WAR

War produces:

Flight.

Thirst.

Hunger.

Fear.

Displacement.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never romanticize what forces families to run from drawn swords.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 21 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S TIMING

Kedar:

One year.

Moab earlier:

Three years.

God sees:

The calendar.

Spiritual Principle

Prophecy reminds us that time itself remains under God's rule.

XXX. THE FEAST BEFORE THE FALL

Babylon is:

Eating.

Drinking.

Relaxing.

Then:

Battle.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Comfort without watchfulness can become spiritual blindness.

XXXI. THE WATCHTOWER

The watchtower gives:

Perspective.

Distance.

Visibility.

But only if someone is:

Watching.

Spiritual Principle

A good position is useless without attentiveness.

XXXII. “BABYLON IS FALLEN”

This phrase echoes far beyond Isaiah 21.

Revelation later adopts it.

Babylon becomes a larger symbol of:

Proud world power.

Corruption.

Opposition to God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Whatever Babylon represents in any age, its final word is never:

Victory.

It is:

Fallen.

XXXIII. THE CRUSHED GRAIN

God’s people feel like:

Grain under threshing.

Isaiah does not ignore their pain.

He brings them:

God’s Word.

Spiritual Principle

People under pressure need more than explanation.

They need truth from God.

XXXIV. “WHAT IS LEFT OF THE NIGHT?”

This is one of Isaiah’s great questions.

It is the cry of:

The weary.

The suffering.

The waiting.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Night questions are easier to endure when we remember morning belongs to God.

XXXV. “COME BACK AGAIN”

The watchman invites continued inquiry.

Ask.

Return.

Do not remain indifferent.

Spiritual Principle

Keep seeking truth while there is opportunity.

XXXVI. WATER FOR THE THIRSTY

This is beautifully practical.

A fleeing person may first need:

Water.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Compassion becomes credible when it meets real needs.

XXXVII. FOOD FOR THE FUGITIVES

People escaping conflict lose access to:

Home.

Food.

Routine.

Security.

God’s Word recognizes their vulnerability.

Spiritual Principle

Hospitality can become a form of mercy in times of crisis.

XXXVIII. THE ONE-YEAR DEADLINE

Kedar’s glory seems stable.

God says:

One year.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never let present greatness convince you that God’s calendar does not exist.

XXXIX. THE FEW SURVIVING ARCHERS

Archers represented:

Military strength.

Skill.

Defense.

Yet only:

A few.

Remain.

Spiritual Principle

God can reduce a military reputation to a remnant.

XL. THREE BURDENS, ONE LORD

Babylon.

Dumah.

Arabia.

Different places.

Different circumstances.

Same truth:

God rules.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Nations change.

God’s sovereignty does not.

XLI. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What three regions are addressed in Isaiah 21?

Babylon.

Dumah.

Arabia.

Question 2

How is Babylon’s approaching invasion described?

Like a whirlwind sweeping across the land.

Question 3

Who is called to attack Babylon?

Elam and Media.

Question 4

How does the vision affect Isaiah?

He experiences intense physical and emotional distress.

Question 5

What are Babylon’s rulers doing before the crisis suddenly reaches them?

Eating and drinking at a feast.

Question 6

What does God tell Isaiah to post?

A watchman.

Question 7

What must the watchman do?

Remain alert and report faithfully what he sees.

Question 8

How long does the watchman remain at his post?

Day after day and night after night.

Question 9

What announcement does he finally make?

> **“Babylon is fallen, is fallen!”**

Question 10

What happens to Babylon’s idols?

They are shattered.

Question 11

What question comes from Seir?

> **“Watchman, what is left of the night?”**

Question 12

What answer is given?

Morning is coming, but so is night; the hearers are invited to keep asking and return.

Question 13

Who needs help in Arabia?

Fugitives fleeing battle.

Question 14

What help should be given?

Water and food.

Question 15

How long before Kedar’s glory is brought down?

Within one year.

Question 16

What will happen to Kedar’s warriors?

Only a few will remain.

Question 17

What guarantees the prophecy?

> **“The Lord, the God of Israel, has spoken.”**

XLII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 21 asks several searching questions.

Am I Spiritually Alert?

Or am I:

Sleepy?

Distracted?

Careless?

Am I Faithful at My Post?

Have I abandoned something God called me to because results were slow?

Do I Speak Truthfully?

Or do I shape the message according to what people want?

Have I Become Too Comfortable?

Could my “feast” be making me blind to spiritual danger?

What Night Am I Walking Through?

Am I asking:

“How much longer?”

Can I remember:

Morning is coming?

Am I Taking Warning Seriously?

Does hope make me:

Prepared?

Or careless?

Do I See People in Crisis?

Would I bring:

Water?

Food?

Help?

What Glory Am I Assuming Will Always Remain?

Career?

Money?

Reputation?

Influence?

Strength?

Do I Trust God’s Timing?

Can I believe:

The Lord has spoken?

XLIII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Stay at the Watchtower Until God Tells You What You Need to See”

The watchman watches:

Day.

Night.

He does not quit.

Eventually:

The message comes.

Principle:

Faithfulness means remaining alert at your God-given post until the truth becomes clear.

XLIV. THE BURDENED PROPHET

Isaiah feels:

Pain.

Fear.

Distress.

This tells us:

Prophecy is not entertainment.

Spiritual Principle

God’s truth should never become spectacle when it concerns real suffering.

XLV. THE CELEBRATION THAT ENDS SUDDENLY

Babylon’s feast reminds us:

Pleasure can produce false security.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Enjoy God’s gifts without allowing enjoyment to make you spiritually asleep.

XLVI. THE WATCHMAN’S JOB

The watchman does not control:

The army.

The weather.

The king.

His responsibility is:

Faithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

You are accountable for your assignment, not for controlling every outcome.

XLVII. THE MESSAGE THE WATCHMAN CANNOT CHANGE

He sees:

Babylon fallen.

He reports:

Babylon fallen.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Truth does not become kinder by becoming false.

Faithfulness requires saying what God reveals.

XLVIII. MORNING AND NIGHT

This tension is central.

There is:

Hope.

But also:

Urgency.

Spiritual Principle

The promise of morning should make us faithful during the night.

XLIX. THE REFUGEES OF ARABIA

Isaiah makes room in prophecy for:

The thirsty.

The hungry.

The displaced.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God sees individuals inside national crises.

L. THE GLORY OF KEDAR

Glory ends.

God’s Word remains.

Spiritual Principle

The glory of man has a deadline.

The Word of God does not.

LI. FIVE GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 21

1. Vision

Isaiah sees Babylon’s fall.

2. Vigilance

The watchman waits.

3. Announcement

Babylon falls.

4. Question

Dumah asks about the night.

5. Deadline

Arabia receives one year.

Key Truth

God reveals, watches, warns, fulfills, and governs the timing of nations according to His Word.

LII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 21 is a chapter for people who live between:

Warning.

And fulfillment.

Isaiah sees the storm coming.

He feels the burden.

Then God tells him:

Post a watchman.

That gives us an important lesson.

We live in a world filled with:

Noise.

Movement.

Conflict.

Change.

And God calls His people to:

Watch.

Not panic.

Watch.

Not speculate endlessly.

Watch.

Not sleep.

The faithful watchman stands:

Day after day.

Night after night.

He waits until there is something true to report.

Then he says:

“Babylon is fallen, is fallen!”

That announcement reminds us:

Every proud empire eventually reaches its limit.

Every false god eventually falls.

Every Babylon has:

An ending.

Then comes the cry from the darkness:

“Watchman, what is left of the night?”

Maybe that is the question of someone reading this chapter.

How much longer?

How much longer will:

The trial last?

The grief last?

The uncertainty last?

The darkness last?

The watchman answers:

“The morning is coming.”

Hold onto that.

But he also says:

“But also the night.”

Do not become careless.

Keep:

Seeking.

Watching.

Returning.

Listening.

Finally we see Arabia.

People are:

Running.

Thirsty.

Hungry.

God's Word does not speak of them only as:

Statistics.

Foreigners.

A nation.

They are:

People needing water.

People needing food.

That should shape our compassion.

And then:

Kedar receives one year.

Human glory receives:

A deadline.

God's Word receives:

The final sentence.

> **“The Lord, the God of Israel, has spoken.”**

So:

Stay awake.

Stay faithful.

Do not abandon your post.

Do not trust Babylon.

Do not fear the night as though morning cannot come.

Help people who are hurting.

And trust the Word of the Lord.

Because:

Empires fall.

Night passes.

Human glory fades.

But what God has spoken:

Stands.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You see:

Nations.

Kings.

Armies.

Watchmen.

Refugees.

The frightened.

The weary.

Father, give us the heart of Isaiah.

Do not let us become emotionally cold toward suffering.

When Your Word speaks of judgment:

Give us seriousness.

Compassion.

Humility.

Make us faithful watchmen.

Help us:

Stay awake.

Stand at our post.

See clearly.

Listen carefully.

Speak truthfully.

Keep us from:

Speculation.

Exaggeration.

Fear.

Carelessness.

Father, when the night feels long:

Help us remember:

Morning is coming.

Give hope to those asking:

“How much longer?”

But also keep us spiritually prepared.

May hope never make us careless.

Father, give us compassion for:

Refugees.

The thirsty.

The hungry.

Those fleeing violence.

Help us not merely talk about suffering.

Teach us to bring:

Water.

Food.

Help.

Comfort.

Father, protect us from trusting human glory.

Babylon falls.

Kedar’s glory fades.

But You remain.

When worldly power looks permanent:

Remind us that You set the timetable.

When fear rises:

Remind us that You have spoken.

Thank You that Your Word is sure.

May we build our lives on:

Your truth.

Your promises.

Your sovereignty.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“Look, here comes a chariot with horsemen! And he calls out: ‘Babylon is fallen, is fallen! All the images of her gods lie shattered on the ground!’” — Isaiah 21:9**

Central Truth

God reveals the downfall of Babylon, calls His servants to faithful vigilance, reminds those waiting through spiritual night that morning and warning both remain, shows compassion toward those displaced by war, and proves through the fall of Kedar that every nation and every human glory remains subject to His appointed time and certain Word.

Isaiah 21 in One Sentence

Isaiah sees Babylon’s terrifying fall, posts a watchman who faithfully announces its collapse, hears Dumah asking how much night remains, calls for compassion toward Arabia’s fugitives, and declares that Kedar’s glory will end on God’s precise timetable because the Lord has spoken.

Isaiah Chapter 22 — The Burden of the Valley of Vision

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 22 turns the prophetic focus back toward:

Jerusalem.

Judah.

The city is called:

> **“The Valley of Vision.”**

This title is striking.

Jerusalem was the place where:

God’s prophets spoke.

God’s revelation was heard.

The temple stood.

The people possessed spiritual privilege.

Yet possessing revelation did not guarantee:

Faithfulness.

Repentance.

Wisdom.

The chapter opens with:

Noise.

Commotion.

Rooftops filled with people.

Fear spreading.

Rulers fleeing.

Isaiah weeping.

The city is facing a day of:

Turmoil.

Trampling.

Confusion.

Yet the spiritual problem is deeper than military danger.

The people respond to crisis with:

Weapons.

Walls.

Reservoirs.

Engineering.

Strategic planning.

These actions are not condemned merely because practical preparation is wrong.

The problem is revealed in verse 11:

> **“But you did not look to its Maker, or have regard for the One who planned it long ago.”**

They prepared everything:

Except their hearts.

They repaired:

Walls.

But not:

Their relationship with God.

They secured:

Water.

But ignored:

The One who provided it.

God called them to:

Weeping.

Mourning.

Humility.

Repentance.

Instead they chose:

Eating.

Drinking.

Celebration.

Fatalistic indulgence.

“Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”

The second half of the chapter then focuses on two leaders:

Shebna.

Eliakim.

Shebna represents:

Pride.

Self-promotion.

Personal legacy.

Misused authority.

Eliakim represents:

Service.

Responsibility.

Stability.

Entrusted authority.

Shebna carves a prestigious tomb for himself.

God removes him.

Eliakim is given:

The robe.

The sash.

Authority.

The key of David.

He becomes like:

A peg driven into a firm place.

Yet even Eliakim is not ultimate.

The final verse warns that even the strong peg will eventually give way.

That keeps the reader from placing ultimate confidence even in a faithful human leader.

The chapter therefore moves from:

National self-reliance.

To failed repentance.

To proud leadership.

To faithful leadership.

And finally to the truth that:

Only God is ultimate.

The central truth of Isaiah 22 is:

Judah's practical preparations cannot save a people who refuse to look to God, prideful leadership will be humbled, faithful leadership can be entrusted with real authority, yet no human leader is ultimate—true and lasting security belongs to the Lord alone.

I. JERUSALEM FILLS THE ROOFTOPS

Isaiah 22:1 — The Valley of Vision in Confusion

> **"This is the burden concerning the Valley of Vision: What is the matter with you now, that you have all gone up to the rooftops,"**

The city is unsettled.

People gather:

On rooftops.

They want to:

See.

Watch.

Understand.

Something serious is happening.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:38

Jeremiah describes widespread mourning on rooftops and in public places as devastation overtakes a land.

2 Samuel 15:23

When David fled Jerusalem, the people wept loudly as the king and his followers crossed away from the city.

2 Kings 19:3

During Assyria’s threat, Judah described the day as one of distress, rebuke, and humiliation because the nation lacked strength to deliver itself.

Spiritual Principle

Crisis often exposes what people were ignoring before the crisis arrived.

II. JERUSALEM IS NOISY BUT NOT SECURE

Isaiah 22:2 — A City Full of Commotion

> **“You noisy, uproarious town, a city full of commotion? Your slain were not killed by the sword, nor did they die in battle.”**

The city is:

Loud.

Busy.

Confused.

Yet the casualties are unusual.

The people have died in ways associated with:

Siege.

Famine.

Panic.

Collapse.

Not necessarily direct battlefield combat.

Cross References

Lamentations 2:11

The prophet describes overwhelming grief because children and families suffer in the streets during Jerusalem’s collapse.

2 Chronicles 32:18

Assyrian representatives shouted loudly toward Jerusalem in an attempt to frighten and demoralize the people.

Jeremiah 4:19

Jeremiah describes deep internal anguish as he hears the sound of war and the trumpet announcing approaching disaster.

Spiritual Principle

Noise and activity can exist in a city that has lost spiritual stability.

III. JUDAH’S RULERS FLEE

Isaiah 22:3 — Leadership Collapses Under Pressure

> **“All your rulers have fled together; they are captured by the archers. All who were caught were taken together, though they tried to escape from afar.”**

Those expected to:

Lead.

Stand.

Protect.

Instead:

Flee.

Leadership collapses when courage disappears.

Cross References

2 Kings 25:4

When Jerusalem was finally breached, the king and soldiers attempted to escape by night.

Jeremiah 39:4

Zedekiah and his soldiers fled from Jerusalem when they saw the Babylonian forces breaking into the city.

Amos 2:14

God warns that even the swift will not escape, the strong will lose strength, and warriors will be unable to save themselves.

Spiritual Principle

Position does not create courage automatically.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A title can give authority, but only character gives leadership.

IV. ISAIAH WEEPS OVER HIS PEOPLE

Isaiah 22:4 — “Let Me Weep Bitterly”

> **“Therefore I said, ‘Turn away from me; let me weep bitterly. Do not try to comfort me for the destruction of my people.’”**

Isaiah is deeply affected.

He does not announce judgment:

Coldly.

Proudly.

Casually.

He says:

Let me weep.

Cross References

Jeremiah 9:1

Jeremiah wishes his eyes were an endless fountain of tears so he could mourn continually for the destruction of his people.

Lamentations 1:16

The writer weeps because the comforter who might restore strength seems far away while enemies prevail.

Jeremiah 13:17

Jeremiah says he will weep privately and deeply because pride is leading God’s people into captivity.

Spiritual Principle

Truth and compassion belong together.

Key Truth

A faithful prophet can announce judgment while grieving the destruction sin brings.

V. THE LORD APPOINTS A DAY OF TROUBLE

Isaiah 22:5 — Turmoil, Trampling, and Confusion

> **“For the Lord, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, has a day of turmoil, trampling, and confusion in the Valley of Vision—a breaking down of walls and cries for help in the mountains.”**

This is not random chaos.

Isaiah says:

The Lord has appointed:

A day.

The city experiences:

Turmoil.

Trampling.

Confusion.

Walls fall.

Cries rise.

Cross References

2 Kings 25:1

Babylon eventually besieged Jerusalem, surrounded the city, and built siege works against it.

Micah 1:6

God announces that Samaria will be reduced to ruins and its stones cast down under judgment.

Ezekiel 7:7

Ezekiel warns that a day of turmoil and judgment is approaching rather than ordinary celebration.

Spiritual Principle

There are moments when God allows what people relied upon to be shaken.

VI. ELAM AND KIR PREPARE FOR BATTLE

Isaiah 22:6 — Foreign Forces Advance

> **“Elam took up the quiver, with chariots and horsemen, and Kir prepared the shields.”**

The enemy is organized.

Prepared.

Armed.

The military threat is real.

Cross References

Jeremiah 49:35

God declares that He will break the bow of Elam, showing both the military reputation of Elam and God’s authority over it.

Genesis 10:22

Elam is listed among the ancient descendants of Shem.

2 Kings 16:9

Assyria captured Damascus and deported its people to Kir, connecting Kir with imperial power and deportation.

Spiritual Principle

God can use real historical nations to discipline His people.

VII. THE VALLEYS FILL WITH CHARIOTS

Isaiah 22:7 — The Enemy Reaches the Gates

> **“Your choicest valleys were full of chariots, and horsemen took their stand at the gates.”**

The danger is no longer distant.

It is:

Near.

Visible.

At the gates.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:17

A great Assyrian army came against Jerusalem and took up position near the city.

2 Chronicles 32:9

Sennacherib sent forces against Jerusalem while he continued military operations elsewhere.

Joel 3:14

Joel pictures multitudes gathered in the valley of decision where divine judgment is near.

Spiritual Principle

Warnings eventually become visible realities when ignored long enough.

VIII. JUDAH LOOKS TO ITS WEAPONS

Isaiah 22:8 — Trust in the House of the Forest

> **“Judah’s defenses were stripped away, and on that day you looked to the weapons in the House of the Forest.”**

Judah looks toward:

Weapons.

Arsenals.

Military equipment.

The House of the Forest contained important royal resources.

The issue is not that weapons themselves are sinful.

The issue is:

What they trust.

Cross References

1 Kings 7:2

Solomon built the House of the Forest of Lebanon as an impressive royal structure.

1 Kings 10:17

Solomon placed hundreds of shields in the House of the Forest of Lebanon, demonstrating its role in royal display and military storage.

2 Kings 20:13

Hezekiah showed Babylonian visitors his treasures, armory, and valuable possessions.

Spiritual Principle

Practical preparation becomes idolatry when it replaces trust in God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Use the weapon if necessary, but never worship the armory.

IX. JUDAH SECURES ITS WATER SUPPLY

Isaiah 22:9 — The Lower Pool

> **“You saw the many breaches in the City of David; you collected water from the lower pool.”**

The people recognize:

Weak walls.

Limited water access.

They respond practically.

They gather:

Water.

This is wise strategy.

But strategy alone is not enough.

Cross References

2 Chronicles 32:3

Hezekiah consulted leaders and military officials about blocking water sources outside the city so invading Assyrians could not use them.

2 Kings 20:20

Hezekiah's accomplishments included constructing a pool and tunnel to bring water into Jerusalem.

Nehemiah 3:16

The area around the City of David and its water systems later became part of Jerusalem's restoration work.

Spiritual Principle

Practical wisdom is good.

It simply cannot replace spiritual dependence.

X. HOUSES ARE TORN DOWN TO STRENGTHEN THE WALL

Isaiah 22:10 — Emergency Fortification

> **"You counted the houses of Jerusalem and tore some down to strengthen the wall."**

The crisis demands sacrifice.

Some houses are dismantled.

The stones are reused.

The wall is strengthened.

Humanly speaking:

This is strategic.

But Isaiah is moving toward the greater issue:

They rebuilt the wall without returning to God.

Cross References

2 Chronicles 32:5

Hezekiah repaired broken sections of Jerusalem's wall, strengthened its defenses, and built additional fortifications.

Nehemiah 4:7

Enemies became angry when they learned Jerusalem’s walls were being repaired and the gaps were being closed.

2 Kings 25:10

When Babylon later conquered Jerusalem, its army broke down the walls surrounding the city.

Spiritual Principle

A stronger wall cannot compensate for a distant heart.

XI. JUDAH BUILDS A RESERVOIR BUT FORGETS ITS MAKER

Isaiah 22:11 — The Central Spiritual Failure

> **“You built a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool, but you did not look to its Maker, or have regard for the One who planned it long ago.”**

This is the spiritual center of the chapter.

Judah:

Plans.

Builds.

Stores.

Repairs.

Prepares.

But:

Does not look to God.

That is the problem.

They trust:

Engineering.

Weapons.

Walls.

Water systems.

But ignore:

The One behind history.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:20

Hezekiah constructed a pool and tunnel system to bring water into Jerusalem.

Isaiah 37:26

God declares that long before historical events occurred, He had already determined and planned them according to His sovereign purpose.

2 Chronicles 32:30

Hezekiah redirected the upper waters of Gihon and brought them into Jerusalem through engineering works.

Spiritual Principle

Preparation without prayer can become another form of pride.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do everything wisdom requires—then remember the One upon whom wisdom itself depends.

XII. GOD CALLS THE PEOPLE TO MOURNING

Isaiah 22:12 — The Right Response

> **“The Lord, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, called you that day to weeping and mourning, to shaved heads and sackcloth.”**

God calls for:

Repentance.

Humility.

Grief.

The crisis is supposed to awaken them spiritually.

Cross References

Joel 1:13

God calls priests and worshipers to mourn, wear sackcloth, and cry out because judgment has affected the land.

Joel 2:12

The Lord calls His people to return to Him wholeheartedly with fasting, weeping, and mourning.

Jeremiah 6:26

God calls His people to put on sackcloth and mourn bitterly because destruction is approaching.

Spiritual Principle

God’s warnings are invitations to repent before consequences become final.

XIII. THE PEOPLE CHOOSE PLEASURE INSTEAD

Isaiah 22:13 — “Let Us Eat and Drink”

> **“But instead, there was joy and gladness, killing oxen and slaughtering sheep, eating meat and drinking wine. You said, ‘Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.’”**

God called for:

Mourning.

They chose:

Celebration.

Instead of repentance:

Indulgence.

Their attitude is:

If death is coming:

Enjoy everything now.

This is fatalism without faith.

Cross References

1 Corinthians 15:32

Paul quotes the idea “Let us eat and drink, because tomorrow we die” to show the emptiness of life if there were no resurrection.

Luke 12:19

Jesus describes a rich man telling himself to relax, eat, drink, and enjoy life because he believes his future is secure.

Amos 6:3

People ignore approaching disaster while living comfortably and indulging themselves.

Spiritual Principle

Pleasure can become a way of avoiding repentance.

Key Truth

Entertainment cannot heal a guilty heart.

XIV. DELIBERATE REBELLION BRINGS SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES

Isaiah 22:14 — Sin Refused Repentance

> **“The Lord of Heaven’s Armies revealed this to me: ‘Surely this sin will not be forgiven you until you die,’ says the Lord, the Lord of Hosts.”**

This is severe because the rebellion is:

Deliberate.

Persistent.

Defiant.

God called them to repent.

They consciously chose:

Indulgence.

Cross References

Ezekiel 24:13

God says He attempted to cleanse His people, but because they refused cleansing, judgment remained until His indignation was satisfied.

Numbers 15:30

A person who sins deliberately and defiantly against the Lord treats God’s authority with contempt and bears serious guilt.

Hebrews 10:26

Hebrews warns that deliberately persisting in sin after receiving knowledge of the truth leaves a person facing judgment rather than treating grace casually.

Spiritual Principle

The refusal to repent can harden sin into defiance.

XV. GOD CONFRONTS SHEBNA

Isaiah 22:15 — The Proud Steward

> **“This is what the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, says: ‘Go to Shebna, the steward over the palace, and say to him:”**

Shebna holds an influential government position.

He is:

A steward.

A palace official.

A man with authority.

But God examines leaders as closely as nations.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:18

Shebna later appears among Judah’s royal officials during the Assyrian crisis.

Isaiah 36:3

Shebna is named among the officials who meet the Assyrian representative outside Jerusalem.

2 Kings 19:2

Royal officials, including Shebna, are sent to Isaiah during the Assyrian crisis seeking prophetic direction.

Spiritual Principle

Public office never places a person beyond God’s evaluation.

XVI. SHEBNA BUILDS A MONUMENT TO HIMSELF

Isaiah 22:16 — A Tomb on the Heights

> **“‘What are you doing here, and who gave you the right to cut out a tomb here for yourself—hewing your grave on the height, carving your resting place in the rock?’”**

Shebna appears consumed with:

Legacy.

Status.

Recognition.

He wants an impressive tomb.

A permanent memorial.

God questions:

His right.

His motives.

Cross References

Matthew 27:60

Joseph of Arimathea owned a new tomb cut into rock, illustrating the kind of prestigious rock-hewn burial place known in the biblical world.

Genesis 50:5

Joseph explained that Jacob had made arrangements for burial in a tomb prepared for him in Canaan.

Job 21:32

Job describes the wicked being carried to the grave and having watch kept over the tomb, highlighting human attempts to preserve honor even in death.

Spiritual Principle

Pride is concerned not only with present recognition but also with controlling how it will be remembered.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not spend your life carving a monument to yourself.

XVII. GOD WILL THROW SHEBNA DOWN

Isaiah 22:17 — Human Greatness Humbled

> **“Beware! The Lord is about to throw you away violently, O mighty man.”**

Shebna thinks himself:

Mighty.

God can:

Throw him away.

The contrast exposes:

Human fragility.

Cross References

James 1:10

The rich are reminded to recognize their low position because earthly prosperity passes quickly like a flower.

Luke 1:52

God brings powerful rulers down from their thrones and lifts up the humble.

Job 40:11

God challenges Job to consider whether he can humble every proud person and bring arrogance low.

Spiritual Principle

No human position is secure when pride sets itself against God.

XVIII. SHEBNA WILL BE HURLED FAR AWAY

Isaiah 22:18 — Glory Becomes Disgrace

> **“He will roll you up tightly like a ball and hurl you into a large country. There you will die, and there your splendid chariots will remain—a disgrace to your master’s house.”**

Shebna wanted:

Honor in Jerusalem.

Instead:

Exile.

His impressive chariots become:

Disgrace.

Cross References

Jeremiah 22:28

A rejected ruler is compared to a broken and unwanted vessel cast away into another land.

1 Samuel 2:30

God declares that those who honor Him will be honored, while those who despise Him will be treated with contempt.

Proverbs 16:18

Pride goes before destruction, and arrogance prepares the way for downfall.

Spiritual Principle

Symbols of status can become monuments to failure.

XIX. SHEBNA IS REMOVED FROM OFFICE

Isaiah 22:19 — Authority Taken Away

> **“I will depose you from your office, and you will be ousted from your position.”**

God gave:

Authority.

God can remove:

Authority.

No leadership position is owned permanently.

Cross References

1 Samuel 15:23

Saul’s rebellion against God resulted in God rejecting him from continuing as king.

Daniel 5:20

Nebuchadnezzar was removed from royal glory when pride hardened his heart.

Luke 1:52

God brings down rulers from their thrones and exalts the humble.

Spiritual Principle

Leadership is stewardship, not ownership.

XX. GOD CALLS ELIakIM HIS SERVANT

Isaiah 22:20 — A Different Kind of Leader

> **“In that day I will summon My servant Eliakim son of Hilkiah.”**

Notice the difference.

Shebna is known by:

Office.

Ambition.

Eliakim is called:

> **“My servant.”**

That is the higher title.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:18

Eliakim son of Hilkiah served as a major palace official during Hezekiah’s reign.

Isaiah 36:3

Eliakim is identified as being over the royal household when Assyria threatens Jerusalem.

Isaiah 37:2

Hezekiah sends Eliakim and other officials to Isaiah during the crisis to seek the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest title in leadership is:

Servant.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before God asks whether you are important, He asks whether you are faithful.

XXI. ELIakIM RECEIVES AUTHORITY

Isaiah 22:21 — A Father to Judah

> **“I will clothe him with your robe, fasten your sash around him, and hand your authority over to him. He will be a father to those who live in Jerusalem and to the people of Judah.”**

The symbols of office transfer.

Robe.

Sash.

Authority.

But Eliakim’s leadership is described relationally:

> **“A father.”**

His authority should provide:

Protection.

Care.

Responsibility.

Cross References

Genesis 41:42

Pharaoh clothed Joseph with symbols of authority and publicly elevated him to administrative leadership.

Isaiah 9:6

The promised Messiah is described with titles expressing enduring authority, care, strength, and peace.

Job 29:16

Job describes himself as becoming like a father to the needy and advocating for those whose situations he did not know.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical authority should protect more than promote the person holding it.

XXII. ELIakIM RECEIVES THE KEY OF DAVID

Isaiah 22:22 — Authority to Open and Shut

> **“I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.”**

The key symbolizes:

Access.

Authority.

Stewardship.

Administrative control.

Eliakim receives real delegated authority within David’s royal house.

The New Testament later uses this language ultimately of:

Christ.

Cross References

Revelation 3:7

Jesus is identified as the Holy and True One who possesses the key of David, opening what no one can shut and shutting what no one can open.

Matthew 16:19

Jesus gives kingdom authority symbolized by keys, involving responsibility connected with binding and loosing.

Job 12:14

When God tears something down, no one can rebuild it; when He shuts someone in, no human being can simply open the way.

Spiritual Principle

All legitimate human authority is delegated.

Key Truth

Eliakim carries a key.

Christ ultimately possesses the key.

XXIII. ELIakIM IS LIKE A PEG IN A FIRM PLACE

Isaiah 22:23 — Stability and Honor

> **“I will drive him like a peg into a firm place; he will be a seat of honor for the house of his father.”**

The image is:

Stability.

A firmly driven peg can support:

Weight.

Objects.

Responsibilities.

Eliakim becomes dependable.

Cross References

Ezra 9:8

Ezra describes God giving His people a secure foothold—a peg in His holy place—during a time of restoration.

Zechariah 10:4

From Judah will come the cornerstone, the tent peg, and strong leadership through which God establishes stability.

Hebrews 6:19

The believer’s hope is described as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul.

Spiritual Principle

Faithful leaders provide stability for others.

XXIV. ELIakIM CARRIES THE WEIGHT OF HIS FAMILY

Isaiah 22:24 — Many Depend on Him

> **“All the glory of his family will hang on him: its offspring and offshoots—all its lesser vessels, from the bowls to all the jars.”**

Many people will depend upon:

Eliakim.

The picture is of vessels hanging from:

A peg.

His position supports:

Family.

Household.

Responsibilities.

Cross References

John 1:16

From Christ’s fullness believers continually receive grace upon grace.

Colossians 1:19

God was pleased for all fullness to dwell in Christ.

Ephesians 1:22

God placed all things under Christ’s authority and gave Him as head over everything for the church.

Spiritual Principle

Authority creates responsibility for those who depend upon you.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The higher the peg, the greater the weight hanging from it.

XXV. EVEN THE STRONG PEG WILL GIVE WAY

Isaiah 22:25 — No Human Leader Is Ultimate

> **“But in that day,” declares the Lord of Hosts, “the peg driven into a firm place will give way. It will be cut down and fall, and the load hanging on it will be destroyed.” The Lord has spoken.”**

This final verse prevents us from making Eliakim:

Ultimate.

He may be:

Faithful.

Stable.

Honorable.

But:

Human.

Temporary.

The final hope cannot rest in:

Eliakim.

Any steward.

Any leader.

The imagery presses us beyond human leadership toward the truly eternal holder of:

David’s key.

Cross References

Jeremiah 22:24

God declares that even someone compared to a signet ring on His hand can be removed if judgment requires it.

Matthew 24:2

Jesus warns that even Jerusalem’s impressive structures would one day be torn down completely.

Ezekiel 15:2

Ezekiel asks what advantage an ordinary vine branch has over other wood when it cannot bear its intended fruit.

Spiritual Principle

Even faithful human leadership is temporary.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Thank God for good leaders.

Never turn them into God.

XXVI. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 22

1. Self-Reliance Without God Fails

Judah strengthens:

Walls.

Water systems.

Weapons.

But forgets:

God.

Principle:

Preparation is wise; self-reliance is not.

---

2. Crisis Should Produce Repentance

God called for:

Weeping.

Mourning.

Principle:

A warning is wasted when it produces entertainment instead of repentance.

---

3. Pleasure Cannot Solve Spiritual Crisis

Judah responds:

> **“Let us eat and drink.”**

Principle:

Indulgence can distract from guilt without removing it.

---

4. Pride Corrupts Leadership

Shebna builds a monument to himself.

Principle:

Leadership becomes dangerous when legacy matters more than service.

---

5. God Can Remove Leaders

Shebna loses his office.

Principle:

Authority is always held on temporary assignment.

---

6. God Raises Servant Leaders

Eliakim is called:

> **“My servant.”**

Principle:

God values faithfulness more than self-promotion.

---

7. Leadership Carries Weight

Many people hang upon Eliakim’s authority.

Principle:

Position creates responsibility.

8. Christ Alone Is Ultimate

Even Eliakim’s peg eventually gives way.

Principle:

Every human leader is temporary; Christ alone is eternally sufficient.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 22 TEACHES ABOUT SELF-RELIANCE

Judah did many practical things correctly.

The failure was:

Spiritual.

They looked at:

Weapons.

Walls.

Water.

But not:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The sin was not preparation.

The sin was preparation without dependence.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 22 TEACHES ABOUT REPENTANCE

God wanted:

Weeping.

Mourning.

Humility.

The people wanted:

Pleasure.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance takes seriously what sin has done.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 22 TEACHES ABOUT PLEASURE

Pleasure is not inherently sinful.

But here pleasure becomes:

Escape.

Defiance.

Refusal to repent.

Key Truth

Celebration at the wrong time can become rebellion.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 22 TEACHES ABOUT LEADERSHIP

The chapter gives two portraits:

Shebna.

Eliakim.

One seeks:

Self-glory.

One is called:

Servant.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The difference between bad leadership and good leadership often begins with whom the leader is trying to exalt.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 22 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

Shebna is concerned with:

Tomb.

Height.

Legacy.

Chariots.

Position.

God removes:

Everything.

Spiritual Principle

Pride tries to make temporary importance permanent.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 22 TEACHES ABOUT SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Eliakim becomes:

A father.

A steward.

A holder of responsibility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Servant leadership uses authority for the good of those beneath it.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 22 TEACHES ABOUT THE KEY OF DAVID

The key represents:

Authority.

Access.

Stewardship.

Eliakim holds it temporarily.

Revelation applies the ultimate language to:

Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Principle

Delegated authority points toward ultimate authority.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 22 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

Eliakim can be understood as a historical servant whose office provides a pattern that finds a greater fulfillment in Christ.

Christ possesses:

The true key of David.

His authority is not temporary.

What He opens:

No one shuts.

What He shuts:

No one opens.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Eliakim is a faithful peg.

Christ is the eternal King.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 22 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN SECURITY

Jerusalem trusts:

Walls.

Weapons.

Water.

Leaders.

Every one has:

Limits.

Spiritual Principle

Anything created becomes dangerous when asked to provide ultimate security.

XXXVI. THE VALLEY OF VISION THAT COULD NOT SEE

This title contains irony.

Jerusalem is:

The Valley of Vision.

Yet its people fail to:

Look to God.

They possess revelation.

But lack:

Spiritual sight.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Being surrounded by truth does not guarantee that you are looking at it.

XXXVII. ROOFTOPS AND COMMOTION

The people look outward.

They survey:

The city.

The enemy.

The crisis.

But not:

The Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Crisis can turn our eyes everywhere except where they most need to look.

XXXVIII. ISAIAH’S TEARS

Isaiah again demonstrates:

Compassion.

The message of judgment breaks his heart.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Preach warning with tears, not superiority.

XXXIX. THE ARMORY

Weapons are useful.

But they cannot:

Forgive sin.

Restore fellowship with God.

Guarantee deliverance.

Spiritual Principle

Tools are useful servants and dangerous gods.

XL. THE RESERVOIR

Water preparation was sensible.

But the people trusted the:

Reservoir.

While forgetting:

Its Maker.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not let successful planning make you forget the One who gave you the ability to plan.

XLI. “YOU DID NOT LOOK TO ITS MAKER”

This is perhaps the great accusation of the chapter.

They:

Looked.

Just not:

To God.

Spiritual Principle

The direction of your eyes reveals the direction of your trust.

XLII. WHEN GOD CALLS FOR TEARS

There is:

A time to laugh.

And:

A time to weep.

Judah laughs when God says:

Weep.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual maturity recognizes what season the soul is in.

XLIII. “LET US EAT AND DRINK”

This is more than celebration.

It is:

Resignation without repentance.

Spiritual Principle

Fatalism says:

“We are going to die anyway.”

Faith says:

“Let us turn to God while there is still time.”

XLIV. SHEBNA’S TOMB

Shebna tries to secure:

A permanent legacy.

But God controls:

His office.

His future.

His burial place.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not carve your name into stone while neglecting to write faithfulness into your life.

XLV. ELIakIM THE SERVANT

God’s introduction is simple:

> **“My servant.”**

That is higher than:

Steward.

Official.

Governor.

Spiritual Principle

Heaven measures greatness differently from earth.

XLVI. THE KEY ON THE SHOULDER

The key symbolizes weighty responsibility.

Access belongs to the steward.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Authority is not decoration.

It is responsibility carried on the shoulder.

XLVII. THE FIRM PEG

People depend on stable leaders.

That is good.

But verse 25 reminds us:

No peg made of human flesh is permanent.

Spiritual Principle

Respect leaders.

Depend ultimately on God.

XLVIII. FROM SHEBNA TO ELIakIM TO CHRIST

The chapter presents a progression.

Shebna:

Proud steward.

Eliakim:

Faithful steward.

Christ:

Ultimate King.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human leadership improves when it reflects Christ, but only Christ can bear eternal trust.

XLIX. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What is Jerusalem called in Isaiah 22?

The Valley of Vision.

Question 2

What are the people doing at the beginning?

Gathering on rooftops during the city’s turmoil.

Question 3

How does Isaiah respond to the coming destruction?

He weeps bitterly.

Question 4

What kind of day does the Lord appoint?

A day of turmoil, trampling, confusion, broken walls, and cries for help.

Question 5

What practical steps does Judah take?

They examine weapons, repair breaches, secure water, dismantle houses, and strengthen defenses.

Question 6

What is wrong with those preparations?

Not the preparations themselves, but the fact that the people fail to look to God.

Question 7

What does God call the people to do?

Weep, mourn, humble themselves, and repent.

Question 8

How do they respond?

They feast, drink, and say:

> **“Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”**

Question 9

Who is Shebna?

A royal steward or palace official.

Question 10

What appears to reveal Shebna’s pride?

His concern with creating an impressive tomb and lasting personal legacy.

Question 11

What happens to Shebna?

God removes him from office and humiliates him.

Question 12

Who replaces him?

Eliakim son of Hilkiah.

Question 13

How is Eliakim described?

As God’s servant and as a fatherly leader to Jerusalem and Judah.

Question 14

What is placed on Eliakim’s shoulder?

The key of the house of David.

Question 15

What does the key symbolize?

Delegated authority over access and administration within David’s royal household.

Question 16

How does Revelation use this imagery?

It applies the ultimate authority of the key of David to Jesus Christ.

Question 17

What does the peg symbolize?

Stability and dependable leadership.

Question 18

Why does the peg eventually give way?

To remind us that even faithful human leaders remain temporary and limited.

L. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 22 asks several searching questions.

What Do I Look To First in a Crisis?

Money?

Plans?

Experts?

Resources?

Or God?

Am I Preparing Without Praying?

Have my practical actions replaced spiritual dependence?

Is God Calling Me to Repent About Something?

Am I responding seriously?

Or distracting myself?

Do I Use Pleasure to Avoid Conviction?

Do I eat, drink, scroll, shop, work, or entertain myself so I do not have to face God?

Am I Building My Own Monument?

Am I more concerned about:

Recognition?

Legacy?

Status?

Than faithfulness?

How Do I Use Authority?

To serve?

Or to promote myself?

Am I Carrying Responsibility Like Eliakim?

Do people experience me as:

Protective?

Dependable?

Fatherly?

Faithful?

Have I Made a Human Leader Too Important?

Have I hung more weight on a person than any human being can bear?

Do I Trust Christ as the True Holder of David’s Key?

Is my ultimate confidence in:

Him?

LI. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Build the Wall, Fill the Reservoir, Prepare the Weapons—but Do Not Forget the Maker”

Isaiah 22 does not condemn:

Wisdom.

Planning.

Preparation.

The condemnation is:

Godless self-reliance.

Principle:

Use every wise means God provides while placing ultimate trust only in the God who provides them.

LII. THE DANGER OF PREPARATION WITHOUT PRAYER

Judah prepares extensively.

But preparation becomes:

Substitution.

Spiritual Principle

The best human strategy is still incomplete without dependence upon God.

LIII. THE SIN OF WRONG RESPONSE

God sends:

Warning.

They answer with:

Indulgence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A crisis becomes more dangerous when it hardens the heart instead of softening it.

LIV. THE LEADER WHO WANTED TO BE REMEMBERED

Shebna wanted:

A grave on the height.

God wanted:

Faithful service.

Spiritual Principle

A reputation after death is less important than obedience before death.

LV. THE LEADER GOD CALLED “MY SERVANT”

Eliakim’s greatest credential is not:

Education.

Position.

Influence.

It is:

God’s approval as a servant.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The best leader is first a servant under authority.

LVI. THE KEY AND THE PEG

The key speaks of:

Authority.

The peg speaks of:

Stability.

A faithful leader needs both.

Spiritual Principle

Authority without stability becomes dangerous.

Stability without responsibility becomes passive.

LVII. THE LOAD HANGING ON THE PEG

Families.

People.

Institutions.

Responsibilities.

Leadership affects:

Others.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before seeking greater authority, ask whether you are prepared to carry greater weight.

LVIII. EVEN GOOD LEADERS HAVE LIMITS

Eliakim is far better than Shebna.

Yet:

He is still not Christ.

Spiritual Principle

Godly leadership should point people toward God, not make them dependent upon the leader as though he were God.

LIX. SEVEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 22

1. Vision → Spiritual Blindness

Jerusalem has revelation but fails to look to God.

2. Preparation → Self-Reliance

The city acts wisely but trusts wrongly.

3. Mourning → Feasting

God calls for repentance; the people choose indulgence.

4. Pride → Humiliation

Shebna exalts himself and is removed.

5. Self-Promotion → Service

Eliakim is called God’s servant.

6. Temporary Authority → Ultimate Authority

Eliakim holds David’s key temporarily; Christ holds it ultimately.

7. Firm Peg → Failing Peg

Even a faithful human leader cannot bear eternal dependence.

Key Truth

Human preparation and leadership are valuable only when they remain subordinate to God.

LX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 22 speaks powerfully to people who know how to:

Plan.

Build.

Prepare.

Organize.

Fix.

Respond.

Judah saw the crisis.

They did not sit still.

They examined:

Weapons.

Walls.

Water.

Houses.

Defenses.

Much of that was practical wisdom.

But Isaiah says:

> **“You did not look to its Maker.”**

That is the danger.

You can do many right things while missing the most important thing.

You can:

Make a budget.

See a doctor.

Strengthen a ministry.

Repair a church.

Prepare for retirement.

Plan for emergencies.

Study.

Work.

Organize.

And still forget:

God.

The answer is not:

Stop planning.

The answer is:

Plan while looking to God.

Prepare while trusting God.

Work while praying.

Build while remembering:

The Builder.

Then the chapter warns us against escaping conviction through pleasure.

God says:

Mourn.

The people say:

Eat.

Drink.

Enjoy.

Tomorrow we die.

This attitude still exists.

When people do not want to face eternity, they often try to make the present louder.

More:

Entertainment.

Pleasure.

Consumption.

Distraction.

But distraction does not equal forgiveness.

Then we meet:

Shebna.

He wants:

A monument.

A prestigious grave.

A lasting name.

God removes him.

That should challenge every leader.

Do not build:

Your kingdom.

Your brand.

Your monument.

Your legacy.

Serve.

Then comes:

Eliakim.

God calls him:

“My servant.”

He receives:

Authority.

Responsibility.

The key.

He becomes:

A firm peg.

This is the kind of leader people need.

Stable.

Responsible.

Protective.

Faithful.

Yet Isaiah ends by saying:

Even the peg gives way.

Why?

Because no human being can carry ultimate weight.

Not:

A pastor.

A president.

A parent.

A teacher.

A friend.

A church leader.

A government official.

Only Christ can bear that weight.

Eliakim had:

The key of David.

Jesus possesses:

The key of David.

Eliakim could:

Open.

Shut.

Temporarily.

Christ’s authority is:

Ultimate.

Therefore:

Prepare wisely.

Repent honestly.

Lead humbly.

Serve faithfully.

But trust ultimately in:

Christ.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for giving us wisdom to:

Plan.

Prepare.

Build.

Work.

Protect.

But forgive us when our planning becomes:

Self-reliance.

Forgive us when we look to:

Walls.

Weapons.

Money.

People.

Systems.

But fail to look to You.

Teach us to prepare with:

Prayer.

Faith.

Dependence.

Father, when You call us to repentance:

Help us listen.

Keep us from drowning conviction in:

Entertainment.

Pleasure.

Busyness.

Food.

Drink.

Distraction.

Give us tender hearts.

Father, protect leaders from the spirit of Shebna.

Deliver us from:

Pride.

Self-promotion.

Vanity.

Legacy-building.

Give us the spirit of Eliakim:

Service.

Faithfulness.

Responsibility.

Stability.

Help every leader remember:

Authority is borrowed.

Office is temporary.

Influence is stewardship.

Father, thank You for Jesus Christ.

Thank You that He holds the true key of David.

Thank You that what He opens no one can shut.

What He shuts no one can open.

Keep us from hanging ultimate hope on any human peg.

May our confidence rest completely in:

Christ.

Our King.

Our Refuge.

Our eternal foundation.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“You built a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool, but you did not look to its Maker, or have regard for the One who planned it long ago.” — Isaiah 22:11**

Central Truth

Judah’s practical preparations cannot save a people who refuse to look to God, prideful leadership like Shebna’s will be humbled, faithful leadership like Eliakim’s may be entrusted with real authority, yet every human leader remains temporary and ultimate security belongs to Christ alone.

Isaiah 22 in One Sentence

Isaiah mourns Jerusalem’s self-reliant response to crisis, condemns its refusal to repent, announces the removal of proud Shebna, describes the rise of faithful Eliakim with the key of David, and ultimately shows that no wall, weapon, reservoir, office, or human leader can replace trust in the Lord.

Isaiah Chapter 23 — The Burden Against Tyre

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 23 turns to one of the most famous commercial cities of the ancient world:

Tyre.

Tyre was known for:

Trade.

Shipping.

Merchants.

Ports.

Wealth.

Influence.

International connections.

Its ships traveled widely.

Its traders were honored.

Its merchants became like princes.

Its economic reach touched nations far beyond its own coast.

But Isaiah announces:

Tyre will fall.

Its harbor will be lost.

Its ships will mourn.

Its trade network will be shaken.

Its proud influence will be humbled.

The chapter therefore speaks directly to the danger of placing confidence in:

Commerce.

Markets.

Trade.

Wealth.

Reputation.

Economic power.

Tyre had become:

A marketplace of nations.

But the Lord shows that no marketplace is greater than:

The Maker of nations.

One of the chapter's most important questions appears in verse 8:

> **"Who planned this against Tyre?"**

The answer comes immediately:

> **"The Lord Almighty planned it."**

Why?

> **"To bring down her pride and to humble all who were honored on the earth."**

The issue is not commerce itself.

Trade is not condemned merely because it produces prosperity.

The deeper problem is:

Pride.

Self-glory.

Confidence in wealth.

Tyre’s economic influence had become part of its arrogance.

Yet Isaiah 23 does not end with permanent destruction.

Tyre is forgotten for:

Seventy years.

Then trade returns.

But the final verse introduces a remarkable transformation.

Her profits are no longer merely:

Hoarded.

Stored.

Used for self-glory.

Instead:

They are set apart for the Lord.

This creates a powerful movement through the chapter:

Wealth.

Pride.

Judgment.

Silence.

Restoration.

Consecration.

The central truth of Isaiah 23 is:

God humbles Tyre’s pride, exposes the weakness of economic power, controls the rise and fall of commercial kingdoms, limits judgment according to His purpose, and can even reclaim material wealth so that what was once used for selfish glory becomes devoted to Him.

I. THE SHIPS OF TARSHISH ARE TOLD TO WAIL

Isaiah 23:1 — Tyre Loses House and Harbor

> **“This is the burden concerning Tyre: Wail, you ships of Tarshish, for Tyre is destroyed and left without house or harbor. From the land of Cyprus news has reached them.”**

The first response to Tyre’s fall is:

Wailing.

Why?

Because Tyre was central to:

Trade.

Shipping.

Harbor commerce.

The destruction affects:

Merchants.

Ships.

Foreign ports.

International business.

Cross References

Ezekiel 27:25

Ships from Tarshish carried Tyre’s merchandise, helping make the city wealthy and commercially influential across the seas.

Ezekiel 26:15

Coastal lands tremble when they hear the sound of Tyre’s fall and the cries coming from its destruction.

Genesis 10:4

Tarshish is listed among the descendants associated with maritime peoples, providing an ancient connection with seafaring regions.

Spiritual Principle

Economic collapse rarely affects only one city.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When one major center falls, people far away can feel the consequences.

II. SIDON’S MERCHANTS ARE SILENCED

Isaiah 23:2 — Wealth from the Sea

> **“Be silent, you people of the coast, you merchants of Sidon, whose seafarers filled you with wealth.”**

Sidon and Tyre were closely connected.

Their prosperity came through:

Seafarers.

Merchants.

Trade routes.

The sea brought:

Goods.

Revenue.

Influence.

Now:

Silence.

Cross References

Ezekiel 28:21

The Lord directs prophetic judgment toward Sidon and announces that He will reveal His holiness through what happens there.

Joel 3:4

Tyre and Sidon are challenged concerning their treatment of God’s people and warned that their actions will bring consequences.

Ezekiel 27:8

Skilled sailors from Sidon and nearby coastal regions served aboard Tyre’s ships and helped sustain its maritime strength.

Spiritual Principle

Prosperity can disappear even where the economic system once seemed deeply established.

III. TYRE WAS THE MARKETPLACE OF NATIONS

Isaiah 23:3 — Wealth from the Nile

> **“On the great waters came the grain of Shihor; the harvest of the Nile was her revenue. She was the marketplace of nations.”**

This verse shows Tyre’s reach.

Egypt produced:

Grain.

Harvest.

Agricultural wealth.

Tyre transported and traded it.

Tyre profited from:

Other lands.

Other harvests.

Other economies.

It became:

A marketplace of nations.

Cross References

Ezekiel 27:3

Tyre is described as a major center of maritime trade, positioned at the entrance of the sea and trading with many peoples.

Jeremiah 2:18

God challenges His people for seeking help from foreign powers associated with Egyptian and other river systems rather than trusting Him.

Ezekiel 27:33

Tyre’s merchandise supplied many nations, and its wealth enriched kings across the earth.

Spiritual Principle

Commercial importance does not create spiritual permanence.

Key Truth

Being necessary to the market does not make a city necessary to God.

IV. SIDON IS ASHAMED

Isaiah 23:4 — The Sea Stronghold Loses Its Children

> **“Be ashamed, O Sidon, for the sea has spoken—the stronghold of the sea has said: ‘I have neither labored nor given birth; I have raised no sons nor brought up daughters.’”**

The imagery describes:

Loss.

Emptiness.

Depopulation.

The once productive sea city speaks as though:

Its children are gone.

Its future has disappeared.

Cross References

Ezekiel 26:19

Tyre is compared to a city overwhelmed by deep waters and brought down into desolation.

Isaiah 54:1

Isaiah elsewhere uses the image of a barren woman who later experiences surprising restoration and fruitfulness.

Jeremiah 47:4

Philistine and coastal powers such as Tyre and Sidon are shown unable to rescue one another when judgment comes.

Spiritual Principle

A city may possess wealth while still losing the very people who gave it life.

V. EGYPT TREMBLES AT TYRE’S FALL

Isaiah 23:5 — The News Spreads

> **“When the news comes to Egypt, they will be in anguish at the report about Tyre.”**

Egypt is affected emotionally and economically.

Tyre’s fall means:

Trade disruption.

Regional instability.

Loss of commerce.

The event is too large to remain local.

Cross References

Ezekiel 26:15

The coastlands tremble when Tyre falls because surrounding peoples recognize the seriousness of the disaster.

Ezekiel 26:16

Rulers of the sea step down in grief, remove their royal garments, and sit trembling because of Tyre’s collapse.

Ezekiel 32:10

Nations and kings are astonished and afraid when they witness the sudden fall of a major power.

Spiritual Principle

The collapse of a great economy creates fear in economies connected to it.

VI. THE PEOPLE ARE TOLD TO FLEE

Isaiah 23:6 — Wailing on the Coast

> **“Cross over to Tarshish; wail, you people of the coast.”**

Those connected with Tyre are told to:

Leave.

Mourn.

Seek elsewhere.

The city that once drew traders now sends people away.

Cross References

Ezekiel 27:12

Tarshish traded valuable metals and merchandise with Tyre because of Tyre’s extensive commercial system.

Jonah 1:3

Jonah found a ship sailing toward Tarshish, illustrating the reputation of Tarshish as a distant maritime destination.

Ezekiel 27:26

Tyre’s ships are pictured driven into danger on the sea until destructive forces overwhelm its commercial strength.

Spiritual Principle

The place that once attracted people through prosperity can become the place they flee from in crisis.

VII. THE OLD CITY OF REVELRY IS BROUGHT LOW

Isaiah 23:7 — Ancient Tyre Humbled

> **“Is this your city of revelry, the old, old city, whose feet carried her far away to settle in distant lands?”**

Tyre was:

Ancient.

Joyful.

Expansive.

Its influence traveled.

Its colonies and commercial reach spread.

Yet Isaiah asks:

Is this really that same city?

The fall makes former glory difficult to recognize.

Cross References

Ezekiel 26:17

A lament is raised over Tyre, the renowned city that once exercised great maritime influence but has been brought down.

Joshua 19:29

Tyre appears as an established fortified coastal city in the early territorial descriptions of the land.

Ezekiel 27:3

Tyre boasted of its beauty and commercial greatness as a city occupying a powerful maritime position.

Spiritual Principle

Longevity does not guarantee permanence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Being old enough to have survived many crises does not mean you will survive every crisis.

VIII. WHO PLANNED TYRE’S FALL?

Isaiah 23:8 — Merchants Like Princes

> **“Who planned this against Tyre, the bestower of crowns, whose merchants were princes, whose traders were honored in the earth?”**

Tyre’s merchants had extraordinary status.

Commerce brought:

Prestige.

Political influence.

Honor.

Economic elites became like:

Princes.

The question is:

Who could bring down such a city?

Cross References

Ezekiel 28:2

The ruler of Tyre became proud because of wealth and power, thinking of himself in terms far greater than a mortal ruler should.

Revelation 18:11

Merchants mourn the fall of symbolic Babylon because the collapse of the great commercial system destroys their market.

Ezekiel 27:21

Tyre traded with Arabian regions, including Kedar, showing the vast reach of its international commerce.

Spiritual Principle

Economic influence can create a sense of invincibility.

IX. THE LORD PLANNED TYRE'S HUMILIATION

Isaiah 23:9 — Pride Brought Down

> **"The Lord Almighty planned it, to bring down her pride and to humble all who were honored on the earth."**

Here is the answer.

Not:

Chance.

Market instability.

Human rivalry alone.

Ultimately:

The Lord.

Why?

Pride.

God opposes:

Self-exaltation.

Arrogance.

Glory that refuses to honor Him.

Cross References

James 4:6

God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

Proverbs 16:18

Pride prepares the way for destruction, and an arrogant spirit comes before a fall.

Ezekiel 28:17

Tyre’s ruler became proud because of beauty and corrupted wisdom because of splendor, leading to humiliation.

Spiritual Principle

Pride can turn blessing into judgment.

Key Truth

God does not oppose wealth merely because it exists.

He opposes the pride that wealth can produce.

X. TARSHISH LOSES ITS HARBOR

Isaiah 23:10 — Commercial Structure Breaks Down

> **“Till your land overflows like the Nile, O daughter of Tarshish, for you no longer have a harbor.”**

A harbor organizes:

Trade.

Movement.

Shipping.

Without it:

Commerce becomes disordered.

The whole structure changes.

Cross References

Amos 8:8

The land is pictured heaving and rising like the Nile under divine judgment.

Judges 5:21

A river becomes part of the imagery of sweeping power and overwhelming movement during battle.

Ezekiel 27:26

Tyre’s ships are carried into destructive waters until the force that sustained commerce becomes the setting of disaster.

Spiritual Principle

Systems depend upon key structures that can fail.

XI. GOD STRETCHES HIS HAND OVER THE SEA

Isaiah 23:11 — Kingdoms Tremble

> **“The Lord has stretched out His hand over the sea and made kingdoms tremble. He has given an order concerning Phoenicia to destroy its strongholds.”**

Tyre’s strength was:

Maritime.

God’s authority extends:

Over the sea.

The sea that brought Tyre:

Wealth.

Cannot protect Tyre from:

God.

Cross References

Ezekiel 26:3

God declares Himself against Tyre and says many nations will come against it like waves of the sea.

Haggai 2:6

God promises to shake heaven, earth, sea, and dry land according to His sovereign purpose.

Nahum 1:4

The Lord rebukes the sea and dries it, demonstrating His authority over waters and natural strength.

Spiritual Principle

No economic or geographic advantage lies beyond God’s authority.

XII. SIDON FINDS NO REST

Isaiah 23:12 — Flight Does Not Guarantee Safety

> **“He said, ‘You will no longer rejoice, O oppressed virgin daughter of Sidon. Arise and cross over to Cyprus; even there you will find no rest.’”**

They may flee.

But:

Rest does not automatically follow relocation.

The problem reaches beyond geography.

Cross References

Ezekiel 28:22

God announces judgment against Sidon so that His holiness will be recognized among those who once resisted Him.

Lamentations 1:3

Judah’s exiles are pictured finding no rest among the nations while enemies overtake them in their distress.

Deuteronomy 28:65

God warns that covenant rebellion can result in scattering among nations with no resting place and continual anxiety.

Spiritual Principle

Changing location cannot always change the deeper problem.

XIII. BABYLON ITSELF BECOMES AN EXAMPLE

Isaiah 23:13 — Another Great Power in Ruins

> **“Look at the land of the Babylonians! This people no longer exists. The Assyrians founded it for desert creatures; they set up siege towers, they stripped its fortresses bare and turned it into ruins.”**

Isaiah points to:

Another example.

Cities fall.

Empires change.

Fortresses become:

Ruins.

Tyre should learn:

No greatness is untouchable.

Cross References

Habakkuk 1:6

Babylon is described as a fierce rising power that moves through lands and takes territories.

Jeremiah 51:37

Babylon is foretold to become heaps of ruins and a desolate dwelling place.

Nahum 3:7

A fallen city becomes an object of horror as people distance themselves from its destruction.

Spiritual Principle

History contains warnings for every present power.

XIV. THE SHIPS OF TARSHISH WAIL AGAIN

Isaiah 23:14 — The Fortress Is Destroyed

> **“Wail, you ships of Tarshish; your fortress is destroyed.”**

The section closes as it began.

Ships:

Mourning.

Why?

The commercial center upon which they relied is gone.

Cross References

Ezekiel 27:26

Tyre’s commercial ships are overwhelmed by destructive forces on the sea.

Ezekiel 27:27

Tyre’s wealth, merchants, sailors, military men, and merchandise all fall together when the city’s maritime power collapses.

Revelation 18:17

Merchants and shipmasters mourn because immense commercial wealth disappears in a very short time.

Spiritual Principle

When a system is built around one great center, the fall of that center affects everyone connected to it.

XV. TYRE WILL BE FORGOTTEN FOR SEVENTY YEARS

Isaiah 23:15 — Judgment Has a Measured Period

> **“In that day Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years, the span of a king’s life. At the end of seventy years it will happen to Tyre as in the song of the prostitute:”**

Tyre’s judgment has:

A duration.

Seventy years.

The city will not dominate commerce as before.

It becomes:

Forgotten.

Cross References

Jeremiah 25:11

Judah and surrounding nations are told they will experience a seventy-year period connected with Babylonian domination.

Jeremiah 29:10

God promises that after the seventy-year period is completed, He will act according to His Word and bring restoration.

2 Chronicles 36:21

The land's period of desolation is connected with the completion of the seventy years announced by the prophets.

Spiritual Principle

God can place limits upon judgment just as He places limits upon prosperity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The same God who sets the beginning of a season also knows its ending.

XVI. TYRE SEEKS TO BE REMEMBERED

Isaiah 23:16 — The Song of the Forgotten Prostitute

> **"Take a harp, walk through the city, you forgotten prostitute; play the harp well, sing many songs, so that you will be remembered."**

The picture is symbolic.

Tyre is compared to:

A prostitute seeking customers.

Why?

Because Tyre's trade relationships are pictured as:

Commercial seduction.

The city seeks renewed attention.

Cross References

Revelation 17:1

Symbolic Babylon is portrayed as a prostitute whose corrupt influence extends over peoples and kingdoms.

Nahum 3:4

A wicked city is compared to an alluring prostitute who deceives nations through corruption and manipulation.

Ezekiel 16:15

Jerusalem is rebuked for misusing God-given beauty and turning spiritual privilege into unfaithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

People and systems can become desperate to recover lost influence.

XVII. TYRE RETURNS TO INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Isaiah 23:17 — Commerce Returns

> **“At the end of seventy years, the Lord will deal with Tyre. She will return to her trade and prostitute herself with all the kingdoms of the world on the face of the earth.”**

Tyre’s commercial life returns.

Again it trades widely.

But Isaiah still describes the activity with morally charged imagery.

The problem remains:

Commerce without consecration.

Cross References

Revelation 17:2

Earthly rulers become entangled with the corrupt world system portrayed as an immoral woman.

Ezekiel 16:26

Jerusalem is accused of seeking corrupt relationships with powerful neighbors rather than remaining faithful to God.

Nahum 3:4

A city’s seductive political and economic influence is described as corrupting nations.

Spiritual Principle

Restored opportunity is not automatically spiritual restoration.

Key Truth

You can recover success without recovering holiness.

XVIII. TYRE’S PROFITS WILL BE SET APART FOR THE LORD

Isaiah 23:18 — Wealth Consecrated to God

> **“Yet her profits and her earnings will be set apart for the Lord. They will not be stored or hoarded. Her profits will go to those who live before the Lord, for abundant food and fine clothing.”**

This is the surprising ending.

Tyre’s wealth was once:

A source of pride.

Self-glory.

Economic domination.

Now:

It is consecrated.

The money itself is not inherently evil.

Its purpose changes.

Instead of:

Hoarding.

Self-exaltation.

It becomes:

Provision.

Service.

Dedication to God.

Cross References

Micah 4:13

The wealth and gain of conquered nations are ultimately devoted to the Lord of all the earth.

Revelation 21:24

The nations bring their glory into the holy city, showing earthly honor redirected toward God’s kingdom.

Zechariah 14:20

Ordinary things become marked as holy to the Lord, showing the comprehensive consecration of life under God’s rule.

Spiritual Principle

God can redeem resources previously used for selfish purposes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The answer to corrupt wealth is not merely less wealth.

It is wealth brought under the lordship of God.

XIX. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 23

1. Wealth Cannot Prevent Judgment

Tyre was enormously wealthy.

Still:

It fell.

Principle:

Money is powerful, but it is not sovereign.

---

2. Pride Corrupts Prosperity

Tyre’s economic success produced arrogance.

Principle:

Blessing becomes spiritually dangerous when gratitude becomes pride.

---

3. Economic Power Is Temporary

Tyre was:

The marketplace of nations.

Then:

Silent.

Principle:

Markets rise and fall beneath God’s providence.

---

4. God Rules the Seas and Trade Routes

Tyre’s maritime strength could not escape His hand.

Principle:

No commercial network operates outside God’s authority.

---

5. Judgment Has an Appointed Limit

Tyre is forgotten:

Seventy years.

Principle:

God controls both the severity and duration of a season.

---

6. Restoration Does Not Automatically Equal Repentance

Tyre returns to trade.

But the imagery remains morally troubling.

Principle:

Recovered prosperity is not proof of recovered spirituality.

---

7. God Can Redeem Material Resources

Tyre’s profits become devoted to Him.

Principle:

What once served pride can be redirected toward worship and provision.

---

8. All Wealth Ultimately Belongs to God

Tyre’s earnings are no longer merely hoarded.

Principle:

Resources find their highest purpose when placed under God’s authority.

XX. WHAT ISAIAH 23 TEACHES ABOUT WEALTH

Tyre possessed:

Revenue.

Markets.

Ships.

Merchants.

Trade routes.

Yet all these were:

Temporary.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Wealth is a tool.

It becomes dangerous when treated as identity, security, or god.

XXI. WHAT ISAIAH 23 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

Verse 9 gives God’s purpose clearly:

> **“To bring down her pride.”**

Tyre’s problem was deeper than:

Business.

It was:

Arrogance.

Spiritual Principle

Prosperity tests humility.

XXII. WHAT ISAIAH 23 TEACHES ABOUT BUSINESS

Business itself is not condemned.

The chapter criticizes:

Pride.

Corruption.

Self-glory.

Misuse of wealth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Commerce can serve people or consume people depending on the heart governing it.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 23 TEACHES ABOUT ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

Tyre functioned as:

A regional commercial hub.

Many nations depended upon:

Its port.

Its ships.

Its merchants.

Its markets.

Spiritual Principle

Interconnected economies create interconnected consequences.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 23 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY

The question:

> **“Who planned this?”**

The answer:

> **“The Lord Almighty.”**

Key Truth

God is not merely Lord of temples.

He is Lord of:

Ports.

Markets.

Ships.

Money.

Nations.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 23 TEACHES ABOUT JUDGMENT

Judgment reaches:

Tyre.

Sidon.

Merchants.

Ships.

Trade partners.

The entire system feels it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride may be concentrated at the top, but its collapse can affect everyone below.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 23 TEACHES ABOUT RESTORATION

Tyre does not disappear permanently.

Trade returns.

Spiritual Principle

God can allow restoration even after severe judgment.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 23 TEACHES ABOUT CONSECRATION

The final verse changes the purpose of wealth.

Profits become:

Holy.

Dedicated.

Useful for God’s purposes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Biblical stewardship asks not only:

“How much do I have?”

But:

“Whose is it, and what is it for?”

XXVIII. THE MARKETPLACE OF NATIONS

Tyre had become indispensable in human eyes.

But God shows:

No economic center is indispensable to Him.

Spiritual Principle

The world may call something “too big to fail.”

God never does.

XXIX. MERCHANTS WHO WERE PRINCES

Tyre gave merchants:

Prestige.

Social power.

Influence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Success can quietly change from something you possess into something that possesses you.

XXX. THE LORD STRETCHES HIS HAND OVER THE SEA

The sea represented:

Tyre’s strength.

God stretches His hand over:

That very strength.

Spiritual Principle

God often exposes false security by touching the exact thing people trust most.

XXXI. NO REST IN CYPRUS

Escape does not create:

Peace.

The fugitives travel.

Still:

No rest.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Geographic change cannot guarantee spiritual rest.

XXXII. THE SHIPS WAIL

The ships are personified because:

Commerce itself seems to grieve.

Spiritual Principle

Economic collapse can silence even the busiest systems.

XXXIII. SEVENTY YEARS OF FORGETFULNESS

Imagine Tyre:

Once famous.

Then forgotten.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fame has a short memory.

God does not.

XXXIV. THE DESIRE TO BE REMEMBERED

The song of the prostitute represents:

A desperate effort to regain attention.

Spiritual Principle

When identity is built upon popularity, being forgotten feels like death.

XXXV. RESTORED BUT NOT YET TRANSFORMED

Tyre returns to commerce.

But renewed success alone does not guarantee:

Holiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A restored bank account does not necessarily mean a restored heart.

XXXVI. PROFITS SET APART FOR THE LORD

The ending gives hope.

Resources once associated with:

Pride.

Can become:

Consecrated.

Spiritual Principle

God can change not only what we possess but why we possess it.

XXXVII. FROM HOARDING TO PROVIDING

Verse 18 says the profits will not simply be:

Stored.

Hoarded.

Instead:

They provide.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God gives resources not merely for accumulation but also for service.

XXXVIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What city is the focus of Isaiah 23?

Tyre.

Question 2

Why do the ships of Tarshish wail?

Because Tyre’s harbor and commercial strength are destroyed.

Question 3

What made Tyre wealthy?

International shipping, seafaring, trade, and the exchange of goods from many nations.

Question 4

How important was Tyre economically?

Isaiah calls it:

> **“The marketplace of nations.”**

Question 5

How does Egypt respond to Tyre’s fall?

With anguish.

Question 6

How old and established was Tyre?

It was already known as an ancient and influential city.

Question 7

What question does Isaiah ask about Tyre’s downfall?

> **“Who planned this against Tyre?”**

Question 8

What is the answer?

The Lord Almighty planned it.

Question 9

Why does God humble Tyre?

To bring down its pride and humble its earthly glory.

Question 10

Can Tyre’s maritime power protect it?

No.

The Lord stretches His hand over the sea.

Question 11

How long is Tyre forgotten?

Seventy years.

Question 12

What happens afterward?

Tyre returns to international trade.

Question 13

Does renewed commerce automatically mean spiritual purity?

No.

Isaiah still uses the image of prostitution to describe corrupt commercial relationships.

Question 14

What eventually happens to Tyre’s profits?

They are set apart for the Lord.

Question 15

What does that teach about wealth?

Resources can be redirected from selfish accumulation toward God’s purposes.

XXXIX. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 23 asks several searching questions.

What Gives Me Security?

Money?

Business?

Retirement?

Property?

Investments?

Or:

God?

Has Success Produced Pride?

Have blessings made me:

More thankful?

Or:

More self-important?

What Happens If My Market Changes?

Would my identity survive financial loss?

Am I Measuring My Worth by Economic Value?

What happens when:

Income changes?

Influence changes?

Recognition changes?

Am I Building a Life Around Being Remembered?

Do I need people to:

Notice?

Admire?

Remember?

Am I Hoarding What God Intended Me to Steward?

Could some of my resources become:

Food?

Clothing?

Ministry?

Mercy?

Service?

Are My Profits Consecrated?

Does God have authority over:

How I earn?

How I spend?

How I save?

How I give?

XL. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Can Take Wealth Off the Throne and Put It on the Altar”

Tyre’s wealth begins as:

Pride.

It ends as:

Consecration.

Principle:

Money becomes safest when it stops ruling the heart and starts serving the Lord.

XLI. WHEN THE MARKET BECOMES AN IDOL

Tyre’s economy was impressive.

But its success became connected to:

Pride.

Spiritual Principle

An economic system becomes spiritually dangerous when people begin trusting it more than God.

XLII. THE CITY TOO IMPORTANT TO FAIL

Tyre likely appeared:

Essential.

Connected.

Influential.

But:

It fell.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse economic importance with divine necessity.

XLIII. GOD AND THE MERCHANT PRINCES

The merchants were:

Honored.

Powerful.

Influential.

God still humbled them.

Spiritual Principle

Business success does not place anyone beyond spiritual accountability.

XLIV. WHEN THE HARBOR DISAPPEARS

The harbor represented:

Access.

Trade.

Income.

Connection.

Without it:

Everything changes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A blessing can become a point of vulnerability if it becomes the only foundation beneath your life.

XLV. THE SEVENTY-YEAR SILENCE

Tyre’s voice fades.

Its influence disappears.

Spiritual Principle

God can teach humility through obscurity.

XLVI. RETURNING TO TRADE

God allows:

Economic return.

This shows:

Judgment is not always the final chapter.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A second opportunity should produce humility, not a return to old pride.

XLVII. THE LORD CLAIMS THE PROFITS

The final verse says:

The wealth belongs to:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Ownership is temporary.

Stewardship is spiritual.

XLVIII. TYRE AND CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

Isaiah 23 reminds believers that:

Resources.

Skills.

Business.

Influence.

Can all be:

Consecrated.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely ask for part of our worship.

He claims authority over our economics too.

XLIX. SIX GREAT REVERSALS IN ISAIAH 23

1. Bustling Harbor → No Harbor

2. Marketplace of Nations → Silence

3. Merchant Princes → Humiliation

4. Revelry → Wailing

5. Fame → Seventy Years Forgotten

6. Profits for Pride → Profits for the Lord

Key Truth

God can overturn both the status and purpose of wealth.

L. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 23 speaks directly to:

Wealth.

Business.

Commerce.

Success.

Influence.

Tyre was extraordinarily successful.

Its ships traveled.

Its merchants prospered.

Its markets connected nations.

Its traders were honored.

From a human perspective:

Tyre had everything.

But God saw something deeper:

Pride.

The city’s blessings had become part of its arrogance.

That is the danger of prosperity.

Money can begin as:

Provision.

Then become:

Security.

Then:

Identity.

Then:

Pride.

Then:

A god.

Isaiah asks:

> **“Who planned this against Tyre?”**

The answer is:

> **“The Lord Almighty.”**

Why?

To humble pride.

That means God cares not only about whether we have wealth.

He cares about:

What wealth is doing to us.

Are we:

Thankful?

Generous?

Humble?

Faithful?

Or:

Arrogant?

Greedy?

Self-sufficient?

Tyre also reminds us that economic systems are fragile.

Ships.

Harbors.

Trade routes.

Markets.

Profits.

All can change.

Therefore:

Work hard.

Build wisely.

Save responsibly.

Conduct business honestly.

But never make the market:

Your god.

Then comes the surprising ending.

Tyre’s profits become:

Set apart for the Lord.

That is redemption.

God does not merely destroy the resource.

He changes:

Its purpose.

What once served:

Pride.

Can serve:

God.

What once accumulated:

For self.

Can provide:

For others.

What once glorified:

Tyre.

Can glorify:

The Lord.

That applies personally.

Your:

Money.

Business.

Talents.

Property.

Career.

Influence.

Resources.

Can all become:

Consecrated.

The question is not simply:

“How much do I possess?”

The greater question is:

“How much of what I possess belongs under the authority of God?”

The answer is:

All of it.

So:

Do not boast in wealth.

Do not fear losing status.

Do not build identity on market success.

Do not hoard what God wants you to steward.

Put your resources:

On the altar.

Because Tyre teaches us:

The safest place for wealth is not:

The vault.

It is:

Under the lordship of God.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are Lord over:

Nations.

Cities.

Markets.

Ships.

Commerce.

Wealth.

Forgive us when we trust:

Money.

Income.

Business.

Investments.

Possessions.

More than we trust You.

Father, protect us from pride.

When You bless us:

Make us thankful.

When we prosper:

Make us humble.

When we succeed:

Keep us dependent.

Remind us that every good thing comes through Your providence.

Father, if our identity has become tied to:

Success.

Recognition.

Income.

Influence.

Free us from that bondage.

Teach us that our worth rests in You.

Thank You that You can redeem what was once used wrongly.

Take our:

Resources.

Talents.

Possessions.

Opportunities.

Profits.

And use them for:

Your glory.

Your people.

Mercy.

Provision.

Ministry.

Father, teach us not to hoard what You have entrusted to us.

Give us wisdom to:

Save responsibly.

Spend faithfully.

Give generously.

Steward honestly.

And remember:

Everything belongs to You.

May our wealth never become:

Our master.

May it become:

Your servant.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"The Lord Almighty planned it, to bring down her pride and to humble all who were honored on the earth." — Isaiah 23:9**

Central Truth

God humbles Tyre's proud dependence upon wealth and international commerce, demonstrates His authority over markets, seas, cities, and kingdoms, limits judgment according to His purpose, and ultimately shows that even material profits can be redeemed and set apart for the service of the Lord.

Isaiah 23 in One Sentence

Isaiah announces the downfall of wealthy Tyre, mourned by ships and merchants across the nations, explains that the Lord planned its humiliation because of pride, declares a seventy-year period of obscurity, and ends with the remarkable promise that Tyre's restored profits will ultimately be set apart for the Lord rather than hoarded for selfish gain.

Isaiah Chapter 24 — The Lord’s Judgment on the Whole Earth

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 24 marks a major expansion in the prophetic vision.

The previous chapters focused on specific nations:

Babylon.

Moab.

Damascus.

Cush.

Egypt.

Tyre.

But now Isaiah looks beyond individual kingdoms.

The subject becomes:

The whole earth.

The scope is:

Universal.

The chapter describes:

Judgment.

Desolation.

Mourning.

Broken social structures.

Silenced celebrations.

Shaken creation.

Punishment of earthly and heavenly powers.

And finally:

The glorious reign of the Lord.

Isaiah begins with a terrifying announcement:

“Behold, the Lord lays the earth waste, makes it desolate, turns it upside down, and scatters its inhabitants.”

No class of people escapes.

Priest.

People.

Servant.

Master.

Buyer.

Seller.

Borrower.

Lender.

The judgment reaches:

Everyone.

Why?

Isaiah gives the spiritual reason:

“The earth is defiled by its people.”

Humanity has:

Broken God’s laws.

Violated His decrees.

Broken covenant obligations.

Sin has not remained private.

It has affected:

People.

Society.

Creation.

The earth itself is pictured:

Mourning.

Withering.

Staggering.

Breaking apart.

The chapter also shows the collapse of human joy apart from God.

Music stops.

Parties end.

Wine becomes bitter.

Cities are ruined.

Gates are destroyed.

Yet in the middle of judgment:

A remnant sings.

Voices rise from the west.

The east glorifies the Lord.

The islands praise His name.

Songs are heard from:

The ends of the earth.

The refrain becomes:

“Glory to the Righteous One!”

This is one of the great truths of Isaiah 24:

Judgment does not silence worship.

Even while the world shakes:

God has worshipers.

The chapter then intensifies.

Terror.

Pit.

Snare.

The earth shakes violently.

The foundations tremble.

The earth staggers like a drunkard under the weight of sin.

Finally, God judges not only:

Earthly kings.

But also:

The powers in the heavens.

The chapter concludes with the Lord reigning:

On Mount Zion.

In Jerusalem.

In glory.

The central truth of Isaiah 24 is:

Human sin has defiled the earth and brought universal accountability before God, yet even amid worldwide judgment God preserves worshipers, defeats earthly and spiritual powers, and ultimately reigns in glory as the righteous King over all creation.

I. THE LORD LAYS THE EARTH WASTE

Isaiah 24:1 — Worldwide Judgment

> **“Behold, the Lord lays the earth waste, makes it desolate, turns it upside down, and scatters its inhabitants.”**

The chapter begins with:

The Lord.

He is not reacting helplessly.

He is:

Acting.

Judging.

Scattering.

The scope is:

The earth.

Cross References

Jeremiah 4:23

Jeremiah sees the land in prophetic vision as empty, disordered, and devastated, using language that recalls the formless condition of creation.

Zephaniah 1:2

The Lord announces a sweeping judgment in which He will remove people, animals, birds, and other living things from the face of the land.

Revelation 6:14

In apocalyptic judgment, the sky is pictured withdrawing like a scroll while mountains and islands are moved from their places.

Spiritual Principle

God’s authority is not local.

He is Lord of:

The whole earth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who created the world has authority to judge the world.

II. JUDGMENT REACHES EVERY SOCIAL CLASS

Isaiah 24:2 — No Class Is Exempt

> **“It will be the same for everyone: for people and priests, for servants and masters, for maids and mistresses, for buyers and sellers, for lenders and borrowers, for creditors and debtors.”**

Isaiah names:

Religious leaders.

Ordinary people.

Workers.

Employers.

Business people.

Financial classes.

Judgment does not respect:

Title.

Income.

Position.

Status.

Cross References

Hosea 4:9

God declares that priest and people alike will be judged according to their conduct because religious office does not excuse rebellion.

Ezekiel 7:12

In the day of judgment, normal economic distinctions between buyer and seller lose their significance because wrath reaches the entire society.

Job 3:19

In death, both small and great are together, and servants are released from the authority of earthly masters.

Spiritual Principle

God does not judge according to social rank.

Key Truth

The ground is level before divine accountability.

III. THE LAND WILL BE EMPTIED

Isaiah 24:3 — The Lord Has Spoken

> **“The land will be completely emptied and utterly plundered, for the Lord has spoken this word.”**

The certainty comes from:

God’s Word.

Not merely:

Political probability.

Military analysis.

Human speculation.

Cross References

Nahum 2:10

A conquered city is pictured emptied, plundered, devastated, with hearts melting and courage disappearing.

Zephaniah 1:18

Neither silver nor gold will be able to deliver people when the day of the Lord’s wrath comes upon the land.

Jeremiah 25:33

Those struck under divine judgment are pictured scattered throughout the earth without ordinary mourning or burial.

Spiritual Principle

When the Lord has spoken, the issue is certainty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s Word does not need favorable circumstances in order to come true.

IV. THE EARTH MOURNS AND WITHERS

Isaiah 24:4 — Even the Proud Languish

> **“The earth mourns and withers, the world fades and wastes away; even the proud people of the earth languish.”**

Isaiah personifies creation.

The earth:

Mourns.

Withers.

Fades.

Even those considered:

High.

Influential.

Proud.

Are weakened.

Cross References

Hosea 4:3

Because of sin in the land, the earth mourns and living creatures suffer as human rebellion affects the created order.

Jeremiah 12:4

Jeremiah asks how long the land must mourn and vegetation wither because of the wickedness of those living in it.

Amos 1:2

The Lord’s voice in judgment causes pastures to mourn and productive places to dry up.

Spiritual Principle

Sin never remains contained within the sinner.

V. THE EARTH IS DEFILED BY HUMAN SIN

Isaiah 24:5 — Laws Broken, Covenant Violated

> **“The earth is defiled by its people; they have broken God’s laws, violated His decrees, and broken the everlasting covenant.”**

This is the spiritual diagnosis.

The problem is not merely:

Politics.

Environment.

Economics.

War.

The deepest problem is:

Rebellion against God.

People have:

Broken laws.

Violated decrees.

Broken covenant.

Cross References

Genesis 9:16

God speaks of His everlasting covenant concerning the earth and living creatures, remembered through the sign of the rainbow.

Hosea 6:7

God’s people are accused of breaking covenant faithfulness and dealing treacherously with Him.

Jeremiah 3:9

Persistent spiritual unfaithfulness is described as defiling the land through idolatry.

Spiritual Principle

Moral rebellion has consequences that reach beyond individual experience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A polluted heart eventually contributes to a polluted world.

VI. A CURSE DEVOURS THE EARTH

Isaiah 24:6 — Only a Few Remain

> **“Therefore a curse devours the earth; its people bear their guilt. Its inhabitants are burned up, and only a few are left.”**

The word:

Therefore.

Connects:

Sin.

To:

Consequences.

The judgment is not arbitrary.

Humanity bears:

Guilt.

Yet:

A few remain.

Again we see:

Remnant.

Cross References

Malachi 4:6

God warns of judgment coming upon the land if hearts remain hardened and unreconciled.

Zechariah 5:3

A curse is described going out over the land against persistent lawbreaking and falsehood.

Deuteronomy 29:22

Future generations will see the severe consequences brought upon a land because of covenant rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

Grace preserves a remnant even when judgment is widespread.

VII. THE VINE WITHERS

Isaiah 24:7 — Joy Turns to Groaning

> **“The new wine dries up, the vine withers, all who were once joyful now groan.”**

The things associated with:

Celebration.

Harvest.

Abundance.

Are gone.

Joy becomes:

Groaning.

Cross References

Joel 1:10

Fields are ruined, grain is destroyed, wine fails, and oil dries up because devastation has struck the land.

Jeremiah 12:10

Foreign rulers are pictured destroying God’s vineyard and turning a pleasant field into desolation.

Amos 5:11

Those who oppressed others may plant pleasant vineyards but will not enjoy their wine.

Spiritual Principle

Material abundance cannot guarantee lasting joy.

VIII. THE MUSIC STOPS

Isaiah 24:8 — Celebration Is Silenced

> **“The sounds of tambourines have ceased, the noise of revelers has ended, the joyful music of the harp is silent.”**

The world once had:

Music.

Celebration.

Noise.

Now:

Silence.

Cross References

Jeremiah 7:34

God warns that songs of joy, celebration, and marriage will cease because the land will become desolate.

Ezekiel 26:13

God declares that songs and musical instruments will be silenced when judgment falls.

Hosea 2:11

God promises to bring an end to celebrations, festivals, and seasons of rejoicing connected with unfaithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

Joy that ignores God is temporary.

IX. WINE BECOMES BITTER

Isaiah 24:9 — Pleasure Loses Its Sweetness

> **“No longer do they drink wine with song; strong drink tastes bitter to those who drink it.”**

Something once associated with:

Pleasure.

Now tastes:

Bitter.

Judgment changes the experience.

Cross References

Amos 8:10

God warns that festivals can be turned into mourning and songs into lamentation.

Joel 1:5

Those addicted to wine are called to mourn because the supply has been removed.

Isaiah 5:11

Isaiah condemns those who pursue strong drink from morning into night while ignoring the works and ways of God.

Spiritual Principle

Sin can turn what once brought pleasure into bitterness.

X. THE RUINED CITY IS SHUT UP

Isaiah 24:10 — Desolation Replaces Community

> **“The ruined city lies desolate; every house is shut up, with no one allowed to enter.”**

The city once symbolized:

Life.

Community.

Commerce.

Safety.

Now:

Shut doors.

Empty houses.

Desolation.

Cross References

Genesis 1:2

Before God formed and ordered creation, the earth is described as formless, empty, and covered in darkness.

Jeremiah 4:23

Jeremiah uses creation-like language to describe land devastated by judgment, appearing empty and disordered.

Revelation 18:19

Merchants and seafarers mourn the collapse of a great city because its economic glory disappears suddenly.

Spiritual Principle

Cities are not permanent simply because they are full today.

XI. JOY IS BANISHED

Isaiah 24:11 — Gladness Turns to Gloom

> **“People cry out for wine in the streets; all joy turns to gloom, gladness is banished from the earth.”**

The people still desire:

Pleasure.

But:

The source of their joy is gone.

Cross References

Lamentations 5:15

Joy disappears from the heart, and dancing is replaced by mourning.

Amos 5:16

Wailing fills streets and public places because judgment has replaced ordinary life with grief.

Jeremiah 48:33

Joy and gladness disappear from fields and vineyards, and the normal celebrations of harvest cease.

Spiritual Principle

A world that seeks joy apart from God eventually discovers how fragile that joy is.

XII. THE CITY'S GATES ARE DESTROYED

Isaiah 24:12 — Defenses Fall

> **"The city is left in ruins, its gates battered and destroyed."**

Gates represented:

Security.

Administration.

Access.

Defense.

Now:

They are broken.

Cross References

Ezekiel 26:10

An invading army is pictured overwhelming city defenses with horses, chariots, and military force.

Lamentations 2:9

Jerusalem's gates sink into ruins and its defenses are destroyed under judgment.

Micah 5:11

God promises to cut down fortified cities and destroy the strongholds in which people trusted.

Spiritual Principle

Human defenses have limits.

XIII. ONLY GLEANINGS REMAIN

Isaiah 24:13 — A Remnant Among the Nations

> **“So it will be throughout the land among the nations—like the shaking of an olive tree, like the gleaning of grapes after harvest.”**

Again:

The remnant.

Most of the harvest is gone.

A few remain.

Cross References

Isaiah 17:6

Isaiah previously compared survivors to a few olives remaining on the highest branches after the tree has been beaten.

Micah 7:1

Micah compares himself to someone searching after harvest and finding almost no fruit remaining.

Deuteronomy 24:20

God instructed Israel to leave some olives behind after harvest for the poor and vulnerable.

Spiritual Principle

God can preserve a faithful remnant in worldwide crisis.

XIV. VOICES RISE IN PRAISE

Isaiah 24:14 — The Majesty of the Lord Proclaimed

> **“Yet they lift up their voices, they shout for joy; from the west they proclaim the majesty of the Lord.”**

This word matters:

> **“Yet.”**

Judgment is severe.

Yet:

Praise.

Voices still rise.

Cross References

Psalm 93:3

The floods and mighty waters lift their voices, but the Lord remains mightier than their roar.

Zephaniah 3:14

God’s people are called to sing, shout, rejoice, and celebrate because the Lord acts on their behalf.

Psalm 98:4

All the earth is called to shout joyfully to the Lord and break into songs of praise.

Spiritual Principle

Worship can survive what comfort cannot.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When everything else is shaken, true worship still has a voice.

XV. THE LORD IS GLORIFIED FROM EAST TO WEST

Isaiah 24:15 — Worship Among the Nations

> **“Therefore, glorify the Lord in the east, the name of the Lord, the God of Israel, in the islands of the sea.”**

Worship expands:

East.

West.

Islands.

Nations.

The God of Israel receives:

Global praise.

Cross References

Malachi 1:11

God declares that His name will be great among the nations from sunrise to sunset.

Psalm 50:1

The mighty God calls the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

Revelation 7:9

John sees an innumerable multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language standing before God in worship.

Spiritual Principle

God’s name is destined for global honor.

XVI. SONGS COME FROM THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

Isaiah 24:16 — “Glory to the Righteous One”

> **“From the ends of the earth we hear songs: ‘Glory to the Righteous One!’ But I said, ‘I waste away, I waste away! Woe to me! The traitors betray—with treachery they deal treacherously.’”**

Two realities appear at once.

Praise.

Pain.

God is glorified.

Yet:

Evil still grieves Isaiah.

Cross References

Habakkuk 1:13

The prophet struggles with how the holy God can permit treacherous and wicked people to continue acting for a time.

Micah 7:2

Faithfulness seems to disappear as violent and corrupt people pursue one another.

Jeremiah 9:2

Jeremiah longs for distance from a society filled with unfaithfulness and betrayal.

Spiritual Principle

Worship does not require pretending evil is not painful.

XVII. TERROR, PIT, AND SNARE

Isaiah 24:17 — No Easy Escape

> **“Terror, the pit, and the snare await you, people of the earth.”**

The imagery becomes intense.

Escape from:

One danger.

Leads to:

Another.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:43

Jeremiah uses the same sequence of terror, pit, and snare to describe unavoidable judgment.

Amos 5:19

Trying to escape judgment is compared to fleeing from a lion only to meet a bear, then reaching home only to be bitten by a serpent.

Lamentations 3:47

Terror, ruin, destruction, and traps are described as surrounding the suffering people.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment cannot be avoided merely through human maneuvering.

XVIII. THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE EARTH SHAKE

Isaiah 24:18 — Heaven and Earth Respond

> **“Whoever flees at the sound of terror will fall into a pit; whoever climbs out of the pit will be caught in a snare. For the windows of heaven are opened, and the foundations of the earth shake.”**

The language recalls:

The Flood.

Cosmic upheaval.

Divine judgment.

Cross References

Jeremiah 48:44

Whoever escapes one danger falls into another because judgment continues to pursue the rebellious.

Genesis 7:11

During the Flood, the fountains of the great deep broke open and the windows of heaven released overwhelming waters.

Psalm 82:5

When justice collapses and rulers walk in darkness, the foundations of the earth are pictured as shaken.

Spiritual Principle

When God judges, even what seems foundational can move.

XIX. THE EARTH IS BROKEN APART

Isaiah 24:19 — Violent Shaking

> **“The earth is broken apart, it is split open, it is shaken violently.”**

The repetition emphasizes:

Total instability.

Broken.

Split.

Shaken.

Cross References

Nahum 1:5

Mountains quake before the Lord, hills melt, and the earth trembles at His presence.

Haggai 2:6

God promises another great shaking of heaven, earth, sea, and dry land.

Revelation 16:18

A final judgment scene includes an earthquake of extraordinary magnitude unlike previous earthquakes.

Spiritual Principle

Creation itself is not beyond God’s authority.

XX. THE EARTH STAGGERS UNDER THE WEIGHT OF SIN

Isaiah 24:20 — Like a Drunkard

> **“The earth staggers like a drunkard, it sways like a hut in the wind. Its sin weighs heavily on it; it falls and will never rise again.”**

The reason is stated:

> **“Its sin weighs heavily on it.”**

Sin is pictured as:

A crushing load.

The earth cannot bear it indefinitely.

Cross References

Amos 8:8

The land is pictured trembling and rising and falling like the Nile because of judgment.

Job 12:25

God can cause people to grope in darkness and stagger like a drunkard without direction.

Revelation 6:13

The heavens and earth are shaken in apocalyptic judgment as stars fall like fruit shaken from a tree.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is not weightless.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The world may treat sin lightly, but Isaiah pictures it as heavy enough to make the earth stagger.

XXI. GOD JUDGES HEAVENLY AND EARTHLY POWERS

Isaiah 24:21 — Powers Above and Kings Below

> **“In that day the Lord will punish the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below.”**

Judgment reaches:

Earthly rulers.

Spiritual powers.

This reveals:

Cosmic scope.

Cross References

Revelation 6:15

Kings, rulers, commanders, wealthy people, powerful people, and ordinary people all seek to hide when divine judgment arrives.

Ephesians 6:12

Paul explains that spiritual conflict includes rulers, authorities, powers of darkness, and spiritual forces of evil.

Zephaniah 1:5

God condemns those who worship heavenly bodies and combine worship of the Lord with allegiance to false gods.

Spiritual Principle

No earthly or spiritual power stands outside God’s authority.

XXII. THE REBELLIOUS POWERS ARE IMPRISONED

Isaiah 24:22 — Judgment After Many Days

> **“They will be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they will be shut up in prison and after many days they will be punished.”**

The imagery is:

Capture.

Confinement.

Final accountability.

Those who once exercised power become:

Prisoners.

Cross References

Revelation 20:1

An angel is pictured descending with authority to bind and imprison the great spiritual adversary.

1 Peter 3:19

Peter refers to imprisoned spirits in connection with Christ’s victorious proclamation.

2 Peter 2:4

Peter teaches that rebellious angels were not spared but were confined awaiting judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual powers remain creatures under divine authority.

Key Truth

The strongest rebel in creation is still weaker than the Creator.

XXIII. THE LORD REIGNS IN GLORY

Isaiah 24:23 — Zion and Jerusalem

> **“The moon will be disgraced, the sun ashamed; for the Lord Almighty will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before His elders with great glory.”**

This is the climax.

After:

The earth shakes.

Kings fall.

Spiritual powers are judged.

God:

Reigns.

His glory surpasses:

Sun.

Moon.

Created light.

Cross References

Matthew 24:29

Jesus describes cosmic signs in which the sun and moon are darkened and heavenly powers are shaken.

Revelation 21:23

The holy city needs no sun or moon to provide its ultimate light because God’s glory illuminates it and the Lamb is its lamp.

Micah 4:7

The Lord promises to reign over His restored people from Mount Zion from that time onward.

Spiritual Principle

The end of judgment is not chaos.

It is:

God reigning.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The final picture of history is not a ruined throne.

It is the Lord on His throne.

XXIV. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 24

1. Judgment Is Universal

No class escapes.

Principle:

Status cannot shield anyone from God.

---

2. Sin Defiles Creation

Human rebellion affects more than individuals.

Principle:

Sin always reaches farther than the sinner expects.

---

3. Joy Apart from God Is Temporary

Music stops.

Wine becomes bitter.

Principle:

Pleasure cannot survive forever when separated from its Giver.

---

4. Human Cities Are Temporary

The city becomes:

Ruins.

Principle:

Civilization is not the same as permanence.

---

5. God Preserves a Remnant

A few remain like:

Olives.

Grapes.

Principle:

God keeps worship alive even in judgment.

---

6. Worship Can Rise in Crisis

Songs come from:

The ends of the earth.

Principle:

True worship is stronger than circumstances.

---

7. God Judges Earthly Rulers

Kings are accountable.

Principle:

No political office is above God.

---

8. God Judges Spiritual Powers

Heavenly powers are punished.

Principle:

No unseen power rivals God’s sovereignty.

---

9. Sin Has Weight

The earth staggers beneath it.

Principle:

What humanity calls light, God reveals as crushing.

---

10. The Lord Ultimately Reigns

The chapter ends with:

Glory.

Principle:

Judgment clears the stage for the open display of God's righteous reign.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 24 TEACHES ABOUT SIN

Sin:

Defiles.

Breaks.

Weighs down.

Destroys.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never measure sin only by how it feels in the moment.

Measure it by what God says it does.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 24 TEACHES ABOUT CREATION

The earth is pictured:

Mourning.

Withering.

Shaking.

Staggering.

Creation suffers under human rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

Human sin and creation’s brokenness belong to the same fallen story.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 24 TEACHES ABOUT EQUALITY BEFORE GOD

Priest.

People.

Master.

Servant.

Buyer.

Seller.

All face accountability.

Key Truth

Privilege changes responsibility.

It does not eliminate judgment.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 24 TEACHES ABOUT COVENANT

The earth’s inhabitants violate:

God’s laws.

His decrees.

Covenant obligations.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human freedom never means freedom from the Creator’s moral authority.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 24 TEACHES ABOUT JOY

The world’s music ends.

But:

The remnant still sings.

This creates two kinds of joy:

Joy built on circumstances.

Joy built on God.

Spiritual Principle

When circumstantial joy disappears, worship-based joy can remain.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 24 TEACHES ABOUT THE REMNANT

The remnant is pictured as:

Gleanings.

Few.

But still:

Singing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A small worshiping remnant can carry a louder testimony than a large rebellious crowd.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 24 TEACHES ABOUT WORSHIP

Praise comes from:

West.

East.

Islands.

Ends of the earth.

Spiritual Principle

God is building a worshiping people from every direction.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 24 TEACHES ABOUT JUDGMENT

Judgment reaches:

Society.

Economy.

Creation.

Cities.

Kings.

Spiritual powers.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine judgment is comprehensive because sin’s corruption is comprehensive.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 24 TEACHES ABOUT SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Verse 21 reaches beyond:

Human kings.

There are:

Powers in heavenly realms.

But:

God judges them.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual warfare should never produce fear of demons greater than reverence for God.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 24 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S KINGDOM

The final image is:

The Lord reigning.

Not:

Human empire.

Not:

Chaos.

Not:

Satanic power.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every prophecy of shaking should ultimately direct the believer toward the unshakable King.

XXXV. THE EARTH TURNED UPSIDE DOWN

Verse 1 pictures a total reversal.

What appeared:

Stable.

Becomes:

Disordered.

Spiritual Principle

God can overturn structures humanity assumes are permanent.

XXXVI. NO SOCIAL EXEMPTIONS

The list in verse 2 is deliberate.

God names:

Opposites.

Everyone in between is included.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s judgment cannot be bought, borrowed, negotiated, or outranked.

XXXVII. THE CURSE AND THE REMNANT

Judgment devours.

Yet:

A few survive.

Spiritual Principle

Even severe judgment does not erase God's ability to preserve.

XXXVIII. WHEN THE MUSIC STOPS

Isaiah imagines:

No tambourines.

No revelers.

No harp.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not build your soul on a soundtrack that can be silenced.

XXXIX. THE RUINED CITY

Human civilization often says:

We built this.

It will continue.

Isaiah says:

Cities can empty.

Spiritual Principle

Culture is fragile.

God is eternal.

XL. SONGS AMID THE RUINS

This is one of the chapter’s greatest contrasts.

Earth:

Mourns.

Remnant:

Sings.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The believer's song comes from who God is, not merely from what the world looks like.

XLI. “GLORY TO THE RIGHTEOUS ONE”

God remains:

Righteous.

Even in:

Judgment.

Spiritual Principle

God’s holiness does not change when His judgments become severe.

XLII. ISAIAH STILL GRIEVES

Even while hearing songs:

Isaiah says:

> **“I waste away.”**

The prophet holds together:

Praise.

Grief.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual maturity can worship God and grieve evil at the same time.

XLIII. THE PIT AND THE SNARE

The imagery shows:

No escape through cleverness.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance is safer than attempting to outmaneuver judgment.

XLIV. THE EARTH STAGGERS

Imagine:

The planet itself.

Reeling.

Why?

Sin.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin carries more weight than humanity wants to admit.

XLV. THE POWERS ABOVE

Isaiah’s vision goes beyond:

Human politics.

There is a spiritual dimension.

Yet even there:

The Lord reigns.

Spiritual Principle

The unseen world is not outside God's courtroom.

XLVI. KINGS BELOW

Earthly rulers can appear:

Untouchable.

But in verse 21:

They stand under judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every earthly throne exists beneath heaven's throne.

XLVII. THE PRISON OF REBELLION

The rebellious powers are confined.

Their freedom:

Ends.

Spiritual Principle

Evil may operate for a time, but it does not possess unlimited freedom.

XLVIII. THE SUN AND MOON ASHAMED

This is poetic language of:

Superior glory.

The Lord’s glory outshines:

Creation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Even the brightest created light appears dim beside the glory of its Creator.

XLIX. THE LORD REIGNS

These three words answer the chapter:

The Lord reigns.

Spiritual Principle

When everything else shakes:

His throne does not.

L. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What is the scope of Isaiah 24?

The whole earth.

Question 2

Who experiences judgment?

Every social class and level of society.

Question 3

Why is the earth judged?

Because humanity has defiled it through rebellion against God's laws and covenant order.

Question 4

What happens to the earth?

It mourns, withers, is emptied, shaken, and devastated.

Question 5

What happens to human celebrations?

Music stops, wine becomes bitter, and public joy disappears.

Question 6

Does anyone remain?

Yes.

A remnant remains like olives or grapes left after harvest.

Question 7

What does the remnant do?

They praise the Lord.

Question 8

Where is God glorified?

From west to east and from the islands to the ends of the earth.

Question 9

What title is used for God in the songs?

“The Righteous One.”

Question 10

What does Isaiah feel while hearing praise?

He still grieves deeply over treachery and evil.

Question 11

What awaits the rebellious?

Terror, pit, and snare.

Question 12

How is the earth described in verses 19–20?

Broken, split, shaken, staggering, and weighed down by sin.

Question 13

Who is punished in verse 21?

Heavenly powers and earthly kings.

Question 14

What happens to them?

They are confined and later punished.

Question 15

How does the chapter end?

With the Lord reigning in glory on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem.

LI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 24 asks several searching questions.

Do I Take Sin Seriously?

Or have I allowed culture to redefine what God calls rebellion?

What Kind of Joy Am I Building?

Would my joy survive if:

Music stopped?

Money disappeared?

Comfort changed?

Am I Living as Part of the Worshiping Remnant?

Will I praise God when others abandon Him?

What Am I Treating as Unshakable?

Government?

Economy?

Home?

Health?

Society?

Do I Remember That Every Leader Is Accountable to God?

Am I more impressed by earthly thrones than heaven’s throne?

Do I Fear Spiritual Powers?

Or do I remember that God judges them too?

Is Sin Weighing Down My Life?

Is there something I need to:

Confess?

Forsake?

Turn from?

Is My Hope in the Lord’s Reign?

When everything else shakes:

Do I know who remains?

LII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“When the Whole Earth Shakes, the Throne of God Still Stands”

Isaiah 24 moves through:

Waste.

Mourning.

Silence.

Terror.

Earthquake.

Judgment.

And ends with:

God reigning.

Principle:

The believer’s hope is not that nothing will ever shake, but that God remains King when everything else does.

LIII. UNIVERSAL JUDGMENT

Isaiah has moved from:

Nation.

To nation.

Now:

The whole world.

Spiritual Principle

God's moral authority is universal because His Creator authority is universal.

LIV. SIN AND CREATION

The earth suffers under:

Human rebellion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin damages relationships vertically, horizontally, and even creation-wide.

LV. THE END OF EMPTY CELEBRATION

The world’s parties stop.

Spiritual Principle

Pleasure can distract from judgment for a while.

It cannot cancel judgment.

LVI. THE REMNANT STILL SINGS

The people who remain do not merely survive.

They:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God preserves not merely bodies but testimony.

LVII. PRAISE FROM EVERY DIRECTION

East.

West.

Islands.

Ends of earth.

Spiritual Principle

God’s final worshiping community is global.

LVIII. THE WEIGHT OF SIN

Isaiah says sin weighs:

Heavily.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never call light what God says is heavy.

LIX. THE FINAL JUDGMENT OF POWERS

Earthly kings.

Heavenly powers.

All answer to:

One Lord.

Spiritual Principle

No realm exists beyond God’s jurisdiction.

LX. THE GLORY THAT OUTSHINES CREATION

Sun.

Moon.

Dim beside:

The Lord’s glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Creation is impressive.

The Creator is infinitely greater.

LXI. EIGHT GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 24

1. Full Earth → Empty Earth

2. Joy → Groaning

3. Music → Silence

4. Cities → Ruins

5. Multitudes → Remnant

6. Terror → Worship

7. Earthly Kings → Imprisoned Powers

8. Shaking Earth → Reigning Lord

Key Truth

Everything humanity considers permanent can be shaken except the sovereign reign of God.

LXII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 24 is one of the most sweeping judgment passages in Isaiah.

It moves beyond:

One city.

One kingdom.

One empire.

The whole earth stands before:

God.

That should humble us.

Human beings divide themselves into:

Rich.

Poor.

Powerful.

Weak.

Religious.

Secular.

Buyer.

Seller.

Employer.

Employee.

But before God:

All are accountable.

Isaiah tells us why:

The earth is defiled by:

Human rebellion.

God’s laws have been broken.

His decrees have been violated.

Sin is not harmless.

Isaiah pictures it as something so heavy that:

The earth staggers beneath it.

That should change how we think about sin.

The world says:

It is small.

Personal.

Private.

God says:

It defiles.

Breaks.

Weighs down.

Destroys.

Yet the chapter is not without hope.

In the middle of worldwide judgment:

People sing.

That is remarkable.

The world mourns.

The remnant worships.

The parties stop.

The remnant sings.

The cities crumble.

The remnant declares:

“Glory to the Righteous One!”

That is genuine faith.

It worships:

Not merely when life is easy.

But because:

God is worthy.

Then comes the shaking.

The earth breaks.

The foundations tremble.

Human kings fall.

Spiritual powers are imprisoned.

And finally:

God reigns.

That is the ending believers must remember.

The Bible does not promise:

Nothing will shake.

It promises:

God will remain.

Your:

Economy.

Country.

Health.

Plans.

Possessions.

Comfort.

May shake.

But:

God's throne does not.

Therefore:

Take sin seriously.

Build joy deeper than circumstances.

Become part of the worshiping remnant.

Do not fear earthly rulers as though they are ultimate.

Do not fear spiritual powers as though they rival God.

And when the earth shakes:

Look toward Zion.

Because Isaiah’s final word is not:

Desolation.

It is:

Glory.

Not:

Chaos.

But:

Reign.

The Lord Almighty:

Will reign.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are Lord over:

The whole earth.

Every nation.

Every person.

Every ruler.

Every spiritual power.

Forgive us for treating sin lightly.

Help us see rebellion as You see it.

Cleanse us from:

Pride.

Idolatry.

Disobedience.

Unfaithfulness.

Father, when earthly joy fades:

Give us deeper joy in You.

When music stops:

Give us worship.

When circumstances shake:

Give us faith.

When the world grows dark:

Let our voices still proclaim:

“Glory to the Righteous One!”

Father, preserve a faithful people.

Make us part of that remnant.

Keep us from:

Fear.

Compromise.

Spiritual sleep.

Remind us that no earthly king stands above You.

No spiritual power rivals You.

No demon escapes Your authority.

No empire outruns Your judgment.

Father, help us live with eternity in view.

If there is sin weighing heavily upon us:

Lead us to repentance.

If there is an idol in our hearts:

Expose it.

If our joy rests only in earthly circumstances:

Root it deeper in You.

Thank You that the final word is:

Not destruction.

Not darkness.

Not rebellion.

But:

Your reign.

May our hope rest fully in the Lord Almighty who reigns in glory.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"The moon will be disgraced, the sun ashamed; for the Lord Almighty will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before His elders with great glory." — Isaiah 24:23**

Central Truth

Human sin has defiled the earth and brought universal accountability before God, but even amid worldwide judgment the Lord preserves a worshiping remnant, defeats earthly rulers and spiritual powers, and ultimately reveals His glorious and unchallenged reign.

Isaiah 24 in One Sentence

Isaiah announces worldwide judgment upon a sin-defiled earth, describes the collapse of social order, pleasure, cities, and creation itself, hears a faithful remnant praising the Righteous One

from the ends of the earth, and concludes with the Lord judging earthly and heavenly powers and reigning gloriously from Zion.

Isaiah Chapter 25 — A Song of Praise for God’s Salvation

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 25 changes the sound of the prophecy.

Isaiah 24 ended with:

The earth shaken.

Cities ruined.

Earthly kings judged.

Heavenly powers punished.

The Lord reigning gloriously in Zion.

Isaiah 25 responds with:

Praise.

Worship.

Thanksgiving.

Hope.

Salvation.

The chapter begins personally:

> **“O Lord, You are my God.”**

Isaiah does not merely speak about:

A God.

The God.

Israel’s God.

He says:

> **“You are my God.”**

Doctrine becomes:

Devotion.

Prophecy becomes:

Praise.

Isaiah praises God because His plans are:

Ancient.

Faithful.

True.

God is not improvising history.

What He accomplishes has been within His sovereign purpose:

Long ago.

The chapter then contrasts two realities.

God brings down:

The proud city.

The ruthless nations.

Human strongholds.

But He becomes a refuge for:

The poor.

The needy.

The distressed.

To the ruthless:

God is judgment.

To the helpless who trust Him:

God is shelter.

Then Isaiah’s vision rises to one of the most magnificent promises in the Old Testament.

On God’s mountain:

A feast is prepared.

Not merely for:

Israel.

But:

“For all peoples.”

The Lord removes the covering spread over the nations.

Then comes the great promise:

“He will swallow up death forever.”

Death itself will be defeated.

Tears will be wiped away.

Disgrace will be removed.

God’s people will say:

“Surely this is our God; we trusted in Him, and He saved us.”

This is not merely temporary deliverance from one enemy.

The chapter points toward:

Ultimate salvation.

Final victory.

The defeat of death.

The removal of sorrow.

The fulfillment of hope.

The New Testament directly takes up Isaiah 25:8 when Paul describes the resurrection victory accomplished through Christ.

The chapter ends, however, with another contrast.

The Lord’s hand rests in blessing upon:

His mountain.

But Moab represents:

Pride.

Self-exaltation.

Human cleverness.

And pride is brought:

Down.

To the dust.

Therefore Isaiah 25 presents two final destinations:

Those who trust the Lord rejoice in His salvation.

Those who persist in pride are humbled.

The central truth of Isaiah 25 is:

The Lord faithfully accomplishes His eternal purposes, shelters the weak, humbles ruthless pride, prepares salvation for all peoples, defeats death forever, wipes away the tears of His redeemed, and brings everyone who trusted in Him into everlasting joy.

I. ISAIAH PERSONALLY PRAISES THE LORD

Isaiah 25:1 — “You Are My God”

> **“O Lord, You are my God; I will exalt You and praise Your name, for You have done wonderful things, plans formed long ago, faithful and true.”**

Isaiah begins:

Personally.

> **“You are my God.”**

This is:

Faith.

Relationship.

Worship.

Isaiah praises God because His works correspond to:

His ancient plans.

Nothing takes God by surprise.

His purposes are:

Faithful.

True.

Dependable.

Cross References

Psalm 145:1

David declares that he will exalt his God and King and bless the Lord’s name continually.

Exodus 15:2

After deliverance from Egypt, Israel declares that the Lord is their strength and song, that He has become their salvation, and that they will praise and exalt Him.

Revelation 15:3

The redeemed sing that the works of the Lord God Almighty are great and wonderful and that His ways are righteous and true.

Spiritual Principle

Praise becomes deeper when God is not merely:

The God we study.

But:

“My God.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Theology reaches its proper destination when truth about God becomes worship of God.

II. GOD BRINGS THE PROUD CITY TO RUIN

Isaiah 25:2 — Human Strongholds Fall

> **“You have made the city a heap of ruins, the fortified city a ruin. The foreigners’ stronghold is no more; it will never be rebuilt.”**

The specific city is not named.

The image represents:

Proud human power.

Fortified opposition.

A stronghold set against God.

What looked:

Permanent.

Secure.

Untouchable.

Becomes:

Ruins.

Cross References

Isaiah 13:19

Babylon, once the glory of kingdoms and an object of human pride, is destined for overthrow under divine judgment.

Jeremiah 51:37

Babylon is foretold to become a heap of ruins and a desolate place rather than continuing indefinitely in imperial greatness.

Revelation 18:2

The final corrupt city-system opposed to God is declared fallen and reduced to desolation.

Spiritual Principle

No fortress built against God can remain forever.

III. STRONG NATIONS WILL HONOR GOD

Isaiah 25:3 — Ruthless Cities Learn Fear

> **“Therefore strong nations will honor You; cities of ruthless nations will fear You.”**

God’s judgment produces:

Recognition.

The nations that once seemed:

Strong.

Ruthless.

Independent.

Must acknowledge:

God.

Cross References

Psalm 22:27

People from the ends of the earth will remember the Lord, turn toward Him, and worship before Him.

Isaiah 60:3

Nations will come toward the light God gives, and kings will be drawn to the brightness of His glory.

Revelation 15:4

All nations will ultimately recognize the Lord’s holiness and come before Him because His righteous acts have been revealed.

Spiritual Principle

God can make even powerful nations recognize an authority greater than themselves.

IV. GOD IS A REFUGE FOR THE POOR

Isaiah 25:4 — Shelter from the Storm

> **“For You have been a refuge for the poor, a stronghold for the needy in distress, a shelter from the storm, and a shade from the heat. For the breath of the ruthless is like a storm against a wall,”**

God’s greatness is revealed not merely by:

Defeating empires.

But by:

Protecting vulnerable people.

He becomes:

Refuge.

Stronghold.

Shelter.

Shade.

The ruthless are compared to:

A storm.

But God stands between:

The storm.

And:

The needy.

Cross References

Psalm 9:9

The Lord is a secure refuge for oppressed people and a strong place of protection during times of trouble.

Psalm 46:1

God is our refuge and strength, always available and dependable when trouble comes.

Nahum 1:7

The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who seek refuge in Him.

Spiritual Principle

The God powerful enough to judge nations is compassionate enough to shelter the needy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not only the King above the storm.

He is the shelter inside it.

V. GOD SILENCES THE RUTHLESS

Isaiah 25:5 — The Song of Oppression Ends

> **“Like heat in a dry land. But You silence the uproar of foreigners; as heat is reduced by the shadow of a cloud, so the song of the ruthless is stilled.”**

The ruthless appear:

Overwhelming.

Like desert heat.

Then:

A cloud comes.

Shade falls.

The oppressive heat loses its force.

So God quiets:

The ruthless.

Cross References

Isaiah 13:11

God declares that He will punish the world for evil, bring an end to arrogant pride, and humble the haughtiness of the ruthless.

Job 5:11

God raises those who are lowly and gives security to those who mourn and suffer.

Psalm 147:6

The Lord lifts up the humble but brings the wicked down to the ground.

Spiritual Principle

Oppression may be loud.

God can silence it.

VI. GOD PREPARES A FEAST FOR ALL PEOPLES

Isaiah 25:6 — The Banquet on God’s Mountain

> **“On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare a feast for all peoples, a banquet of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine—the best meats and the finest wines.”**

The imagery changes beautifully.

From:

Judgment.

To:

Feasting.

From:

Desolation.

To:

Abundance.

The host is:

The Lord Almighty.

The guests are:

“All peoples.”

This is a picture of:

Salvation.

Fellowship.

Abundance.

Celebration.

Kingdom blessing.

Cross References

Isaiah 55:1

God invites everyone who is thirsty to come freely to the waters and calls those without money to receive food and drink without purchasing salvation through their own resources.

Matthew 22:2

Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to a king preparing a wedding banquet for his son and inviting guests to share in the celebration.

Revelation 19:9

Those invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb are declared blessed because they participate in God’s final celebration of redemption.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation is not pictured as spiritual starvation.

It is pictured as:

A feast.

Key Truth

The God who judges sin invites the redeemed to His table.

VII. GOD REMOVES THE COVERING OVER THE NATIONS

Isaiah 25:7 — The Shroud Is Destroyed

> **“On this mountain He will destroy the shroud that covers all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations.”**

A covering lies over humanity.

The language flows directly toward verse 8 and the defeat of:

Death.

It also carries the idea of the darkness and sorrow covering the nations.

God removes:

The veil.

The shroud.

The covering.

Cross References

2 Corinthians 3:14

Paul describes a spiritual veil remaining over minds that do not perceive God’s truth, a veil removed through Christ.

Ephesians 4:18

Those alienated from God are described as darkened in their understanding because of spiritual ignorance and hardness.

Luke 2:32

Jesus is described as light bringing revelation to the Gentiles and glory to God’s people Israel.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation removes what sin and death have spread over humanity.

VIII. GOD SWALLOWS UP DEATH FOREVER

Isaiah 25:8 — Tears Wiped Away

> **“He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces; He will remove His people’s disgrace from all the earth. The Lord has spoken.”**

This is one of the greatest promises in Isaiah.

Not:

Delay death.

Reduce death.

Ignore death.

But:

> **“Swallow up death forever.”**

Death—the great enemy of humanity—will itself be defeated.

Then:

Tears disappear.

Disgrace disappears.

Death disappears.

The guarantee is:

> **“The Lord has spoken.”**

Cross References

1 Corinthians 15:54

Paul applies Isaiah’s promise to the resurrection, declaring that when mortality is clothed with immortality, the saying is fulfilled that death has been swallowed up in victory.

Revelation 21:4

God will wipe every tear from His people’s eyes; death will no longer exist, and mourning, crying, and pain will pass away.

Hosea 13:14

God speaks of redeeming His people from the power of the grave and overcoming the destructive power of death.

Spiritual Principle

Christian hope does not merely promise coping with death.

It promises:

The defeat of death.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Death gets a chapter in human history.

It does not get the final chapter.

IX. THE REDEEMED REJOICE IN THEIR GOD

Isaiah 25:9 — “We Trusted in Him”

> **“In that day they will say, ‘Surely this is our God; we trusted in Him, and He saved us. This is the Lord, we trusted in Him; let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.’”**

This is the testimony of:

Vindicated faith.

They waited.

They trusted.

They may have endured:

Trials.

Opposition.

Waiting.

Death.

But finally:

Salvation is openly revealed.

They say:

> **“This is our God.”**

Cross References

Psalm 40:3

God puts a new song of praise in the mouth of the delivered person so that others see what He has done and learn to trust Him.

John 20:28

Thomas encounters the risen Christ and responds personally, confessing Him as:

> **“My Lord and my God.”**

Revelation 7:10

The great multitude cries out that salvation belongs to God who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb.

Spiritual Principle

Faith waits now because it knows salvation will eventually be seen.

Key Truth

Those who trust God will never discover that their faith was placed in the wrong Savior.

X. THE LORD’S HAND RESTS ON HIS MOUNTAIN

Isaiah 25:10 — Moab Is Brought Low

> **“The hand of the Lord will rest on this mountain, but Moab will be trampled down in their land, as straw is trampled in a manure pile.”**

There is a dramatic contrast.

On the mountain:

God’s hand rests.

In Moab:

Pride is crushed.

Moab has already represented:

Arrogance.

Boasting.

Self-confidence.

God’s presence means:

Blessing for the trusting.

Judgment for persistent pride.

Cross References

Isaiah 11:14

Isaiah anticipates a future in which Israel’s historic enemies, including Moab, are brought under the authority of God’s restored rule.

Jeremiah 48:42

Moab is brought down as a national power because the nation exalted itself against the Lord.

Zephaniah 2:9

Moab is warned of severe judgment because of pride and hostility, while God preserves a remnant of His people.

Spiritual Principle

The same sovereign hand that protects the humble brings down the proud.

XI. HUMAN CLEVERNESS CANNOT RESCUE PRIDE

Isaiah 25:11 — Moab’s Pride Brought Down

> **“They will spread out their hands in it, as a swimmer spreads out his hands to swim.**
> **But the Lord will bring down their pride despite the cleverness of their hands.”**

The imagery is humiliating.

Moab struggles like:

A swimmer.

Hands spread.

Trying to save itself.

But human cleverness cannot rescue:

Pride.

Cross References

Isaiah 16:6

Moab is described as extremely proud, arrogant, conceited, and boastful, though its boasting proves empty.

Psalm 138:6

Though the Lord is exalted, He pays attention to the humble while recognizing the proud from afar.

Obadiah 1:3

Pride deceives those who feel secure in elevated strongholds and assume no one can bring them down.

Spiritual Principle

Human ingenuity cannot outswim divine judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Skill can solve many problems.

It cannot save pride from God.

XII. THE HIGH FORTIFIED WALLS COME DOWN

Isaiah 25:12 — Pride Reduced to Dust

> **“He will bring down your high fortified walls and lay them low. He will throw them down to the ground, to the dust.”**

Moab trusts:

High walls.

Fortifications.

Defense.

But the movement is:

High.

To:

Low.

Then:

Ground.

Then:

Dust.

This is what God does to pride.

Cross References

Isaiah 26:5

God brings down those dwelling in lofty places, lowering the exalted city until it reaches the dust.

Isaiah 2:12

The day of the Lord comes against everything proud, lofty, and self-exalted so that human arrogance is brought low.

Revelation 18:21

A mighty angel portrays the irreversible fall of Babylon by casting a great stone into the sea, declaring that the proud city will be thrown down.

Spiritual Principle

Every wall pride builds has a height God can reach.

XIII. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 25

1. God’s Plans Are Faithful and True

God formed His purposes:

Long ago.

Principle:

History is not escaping God’s plan.

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2. Praise Should Be Personal

Isaiah says:

> **“You are my God.”**

Principle:

True worship moves from information about God to personal trust in God.

---

3. Human Strongholds Are Temporary

Fortified cities become:

Ruins.

Principle:

Nothing built against God possesses permanent strength.

---

4. God Is Refuge for the Weak

He shelters:

Poor.

Needy.

Distressed.

Principle:

God’s greatness includes His tenderness toward vulnerable people.

---

5. God Will Silence the Ruthless

Oppressors do not remain loud forever.

Principle:

God places limits upon ruthless power.

---

6. Salvation Is a Feast

The Lord prepares a banquet:

For all peoples.

Principle:

God’s kingdom offers abundant fellowship and joy.

---

7. Death Will Be Defeated

God swallows up:

Death.

Forever.

Principle:

The resurrection is not an afterthought; victory over death is central to God's redemptive purpose.

---

8. Tears Will Not Last Forever

God wipes them away.

Principle:

Sorrow has an expiration date in God’s completed salvation.

---

9. Trust Will Be Vindicated

The redeemed say:

> **“We trusted in Him, and He saved us.”**

Principle:

Faith may wait, but it does not wait in vain.

---

10. Pride Will Be Humbled

Moab is brought:

To the dust.

Principle:

The proud are ultimately lowered before the Lord.

XIV. WHAT ISAIAH 25 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S FAITHFULNESS

God’s plans are described as:

Ancient.

Faithful.

True.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God never wakes up needing a new strategy.

What He purposed will stand.

XV. WHAT ISAIAH 25 TEACHES ABOUT PRAISE

Isaiah praises God because of:

Who He is.

What He has done.

What He has planned.

Spiritual Principle

Praise remembers both:

God’s character.

And:

God’s works.

XVI. WHAT ISAIAH 25 TEACHES ABOUT THE POOR

God does not overlook:

The poor.

The needy.

The distressed.

He becomes:

Their refuge.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God measures greatness partly by how power is used toward those who possess little of it.

XVII. WHAT ISAIAH 25 TEACHES ABOUT SALVATION

Salvation is pictured as:

Refuge.

Feast.

Light.

Victory.

Tears removed.

Death defeated.

Joy.

Key Truth

Biblical salvation is far larger than escape from temporary trouble.

XVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 25 TEACHES ABOUT THE NATIONS

The feast is:

> **“For all peoples.”**

Strong nations eventually:

Honor God.

Spiritual Principle

God’s saving purpose extends beyond one ethnic or geographical people.

XIX. WHAT ISAIAH 25 TEACHES ABOUT DEATH

Death appears to humanity as:

Final.

Isaiah says:

God will swallow it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The grave looks permanent only until the God of resurrection speaks.

XX. WHAT ISAIAH 25 TEACHES ABOUT TEARS

God does not merely observe tears.

He:

Wipes them away.

Spiritual Principle

God’s final salvation includes the healing of sorrow.

XXI. WHAT ISAIAH 25 TEACHES ABOUT DISGRACE

God removes His people’s:

Reproach.

Shame.

Disgrace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s final redemption restores what sin and suffering tried to strip away.

XXII. WHAT ISAIAH 25 TEACHES ABOUT TRUST

The redeemed say twice:

> **“We trusted in Him.”**

Trust includes:

Waiting.

Faith.

Confidence.

Dependence.

Spiritual Principle

Trust is faith that remains during the distance between promise and fulfillment.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 25 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

Moab represents persistent:

Pride.

God brings it:

Low.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not negotiate with pride as though pride were His equal.

He brings it down.

XXIV. “O LORD, YOU ARE MY GOD”

These words deserve personal reflection.

Isaiah does not hide behind:

National faith.

Family faith.

Religious heritage.

He personally confesses:

> **“You are my God.”**

Spiritual Principle

No one can live forever on borrowed faith.

XXV. “PLANS FORMED LONG AGO”

God is not reacting to history.

He is accomplishing:

Purpose.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What surprises us has never surprised God.

XXVI. THE RUINED CITY

Isaiah 24 described:

Worldwide shaking.

Isaiah 25 praises God because:

Proud strongholds fall.

Spiritual Principle

God’s judgment upon evil is part of the believer’s hope because injustice will not reign forever.

XXVII. THE SHELTER IN THE STORM

The ruthless are:

Storm.

God is:

Shelter.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You do not need to be stronger than the storm when you know where the shelter is.

XXVIII. THE SHADE IN THE HEAT

In a dry land:

Shade can mean:

Relief.

Protection.

Survival.

So God protects:

The needy.

Spiritual Principle

God does not always remove the heat immediately.

Sometimes He provides shade within it.

XXIX. THE FEAST

The Lord Himself prepares:

The banquet.

Salvation is therefore:

His provision.

Not:

Human achievement.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You do not earn a seat at God’s table by bringing a better meal.

You receive what He provides.

XXX. ALL PEOPLES

This language matters.

The nations are not merely:

Judged.

They are also:

Invited into blessing.

Spiritual Principle

God’s kingdom purpose has always been larger than human tribal boundaries.

XXXI. THE SHROUD OVER THE NATIONS

The covering is:

Removed.

Darkness gives way to:

Revelation.

Death gives way to:

Life.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely improve the darkness.

He removes the covering.

XXXII. “HE WILL SWALLOW UP DEATH FOREVER”

Death has swallowed:

Generations.

Families.

Kings.

Prophets.

Nations.

But finally:

God swallows death.

Spiritual Principle

The final victory belongs not to the grave but to God.

XXXIII. THE NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLMENT OF ISAIAH 25:8

Paul uses Isaiah’s language in:

1 Corinthians 15.

The context is:

Resurrection.

Mortality becoming:

Immortality.

Corruption becoming:

Incorruption.

Then:

> **Death is swallowed up in victory.**

This means Isaiah 25 ultimately points toward the resurrection victory made certain through:

Jesus Christ.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Christ did not merely teach us how to face death.

Through His resurrection, He guarantees death’s eventual defeat.

XXXIV. EVERY TEAR WIPED AWAY

Some tears come from:

Grief.

Loss.

Pain.

Rejection.

Death.

Disappointment.

Persecution.

God’s final kingdom removes:

The causes of redeemed sorrow.

Spiritual Principle

The hands that rule the universe are also pictured wiping tears.

XXXV. “THIS IS OUR GOD”

There will be no uncertainty.

The redeemed recognize:

The One they trusted.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One day faith will give way to sight, and believers will know that every moment of trusting God was worth it.

XXXVI. “WE TRUSTED IN HIM”

Waiting is part of:

Faith.

Israel waited.

Believers wait.

Creation waits.

Spiritual Principle

Waiting is not wasted time when the object of hope is faithful.

XXXVII. “HE SAVED US”

The testimony centers on:

God.

Not:

We saved ourselves.

We found a strategy.

We were strong enough.

But:

> **“He saved us.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Salvation leaves no room for boasting in ourselves.

XXXVIII. “LET US REJOICE”

Salvation produces:

Joy.

The proper response to grace is not:

Pride.

But:

Rejoicing.

Spiritual Principle

Joy is the song of people who know who rescued them.

XXXIX. THE HAND OF THE LORD RESTS ON THE MOUNTAIN

The image is:

Presence.

Protection.

Authority.

Blessing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The safest place in existence is beneath the hand of God.

XL. MOAB’S PRIDE

Isaiah already described Moab’s arrogance in:

Isaiah 16.

Now the theme returns.

Pride survives warnings only to meet:

Humiliation.

Spiritual Principle

What pride refuses to surrender willingly, judgment eventually brings down forcefully.

XLI. THE SWIMMER WHO CANNOT ESCAPE

Moab spreads its hands.

Struggles.

Attempts escape.

But:

Human effort is insufficient.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot swim out of a judgment that requires repentance.

XLII. THE WALLS COME DOWN

High walls represent:

Self-confidence.

Human security.

Pride.

They end:

In dust.

Spiritual Principle

God can reduce the highest thing humanity builds to the lowest place imaginable.

XLIII. REFUGE AND RUIN

Isaiah 25 presents two responses to God.

For those who trust Him:

Refuge.

Feast.

Salvation.

Joy.

For persistent pride:

Humiliation.

Ruin.

Dust.

Key Truth

Our relationship to God determines whether His sovereign power is experienced as refuge or judgment.

XLIV. FROM ISAIAH 24 TO ISAIAH 25

Isaiah 24 ends with:

The Lord reigning.

Isaiah 25 begins with:

The redeemed praising.

That order matters.

God reigns.

His people worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The more clearly we see God’s sovereignty, the more naturally worship should rise.

XLV. SEVEN GREAT REVERSALS IN ISAIAH 25

1. Proud City → Heap of Ruins

2. Ruthless Storm → God-Given Shelter

3. Dry Heat → Cooling Shade

4. Hunger → Feast

5. Shroud → Removal

6. Death → Victory

7. Tears → Rejoicing

Key Truth

God’s salvation reverses everything sin, oppression, sorrow, and death have done.

XLVI. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

How does Isaiah begin the chapter?

With personal praise:

> **“O Lord, You are my God.”**

Question 2

Why does Isaiah praise God?

Because God has done wonderful things according to plans formed long ago that are faithful and true.

Question 3

What happens to the fortified city?

It becomes ruins.

Question 4

How do strong nations respond to God?

They honor Him, and ruthless cities fear Him.

Question 5

What is God to the poor and needy?

A refuge.

A stronghold.

A shelter.

A shade.

Question 6

What does God prepare on His mountain?

A great feast for all peoples.

Question 7

Who is invited into the picture of the feast?

All peoples.

Question 8

What does God destroy on the mountain?

The shroud or covering spread over the nations.

Question 9

What great enemy will God swallow up forever?

Death.

Question 10

What will God do with tears?

He will wipe them away.

Question 11

What will He remove from His people?

Their disgrace.

Question 12

What do the redeemed say?

> **“This is our God; we trusted in Him, and He saved us.”**

Question 13

What does Paul connect Isaiah 25:8 with?

The resurrection and final victory over death.

Question 14

What happens to Moab?

Its pride and fortified strength are brought down.

Question 15

What is one central contrast in the chapter?

The humble find refuge in God while the proud are brought low.

XLVII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 25 asks several searching questions.

Can I Say, “You Are My God”?

Is my relationship with God:

Personal?

Or merely:

Religious?

Do I Trust God’s Plans?

When I cannot understand:

The timing.

The circumstances.

The delay.

Can I still say:

Your plans are faithful and true?

Where Do I Run During the Storm?

To:

God?

Or merely:

People?

Money?

Distraction?

Do I Believe God Is a Refuge for the Weak?

Can I trust Him when I feel:

Poor?

Needy?

Overwhelmed?

Am I Living Like I Have Been Invited to God’s Feast?

Or spiritually surviving on substitutes?

How Do I Think About Death?

As:

The final victor?

Or:

An enemy Christ has guaranteed will be defeated?

What Tears Am I Carrying?

Can I believe there is a future in which God Himself wipes them away?

Am I Waiting on God?

Can I say:

> **“We trusted in Him”?**

Is Pride Keeping Me from God?

What fortress of self-sufficiency needs to come down?

XLVIII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Death May Swallow Generations, but One Day God Will Swallow Death”

Human beings have watched death take:

Parents.

Children.

Spouses.

Friends.

Kings.

Prophets.

Generations.

Yet Isaiah says:

> **“He will swallow up death forever.”**

Principle:

Death appears powerful because we see what it does now; faith sees what God will ultimately do to death.

XLIX. GOD’S ANCIENT PLAN

Isaiah looks backward and forward simultaneously.

Backward:

Plans formed long ago.

Forward:

Death defeated forever.

Spiritual Principle

God’s plan is older than our trouble and reaches farther than our lifetime.

L. GOD’S REFUGE

Some people seek:

A stronger storm.

God offers:

A shelter.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You do not defeat every storm by becoming stronger than it.

Sometimes victory is knowing where to hide.

LI. GOD’S TABLE

The chapter does not merely say:

You survived judgment.

It says:

Come eat.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation moves beyond survival into fellowship and celebration.

LII. GOD’S VICTORY OVER DEATH

Death is not described as:

Managed.

Negotiated with.

Accepted as ultimate.

It is:

Swallowed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Christian funeral looks at a real enemy but refuses to call that enemy eternal.

LIII. GOD’S HAND AND GOD’S HEART

The chapter reveals both:

Power.

Compassion.

The hand that crushes pride is also the hand that:

Protects the needy.

Provides a feast.

Wipes away tears.

Spiritual Principle

God’s strength and tenderness are perfectly united.

LIV. THE FEAST AND THE GRAVE

Humanity’s story seems dominated by:

The grave.

God’s final picture for His people is:

A feast.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God intends the final fellowship of the redeemed to be defined by life, not death.

LV. THE GOSPEL HOPE IN ISAIAH 25

Isaiah 25 points forward powerfully toward:

Christ.

Through His death and resurrection:

Death’s defeat is secured.

Through Him:

The nations receive salvation.

Through Him:

The redeemed wait for resurrection.

Through Him:

Tears will finally give way to joy.

Spiritual Principle

The victory Isaiah foresaw becomes certain in the risen Christ.

LVI. THE RIGHT RESPONSE TO SALVATION

Isaiah says:

Exalt.

Praise.

Trust.

Rejoice.

Be glad.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Salvation should never produce cold religion.

It should produce grateful worship.

LVII. THE END OF HUMAN PRIDE

The final image of Moab prevents anyone from misunderstanding grace.

God saves:

The trusting.

He humbles:

The proud.

Spiritual Principle

Grace invites humility; pride refuses the posture necessary to receive it.

LVIII. EIGHT GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 25

1. Human Pride → Divine Humbling

2. Ruthless Oppression → Divine Refuge

3. Storm → Shelter

4. Heat → Shade

5. Hunger → Feast

6. Shroud → Revelation

7. Death → Eternal Victory

8. Tears → Everlasting Joy

Key Truth

God’s salvation ultimately reverses every effect of sin and death that oppresses His redeemed people.

LIX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 25 is one of the great songs of hope in Scripture.

Isaiah has seen:

Judgment.

Cities fall.

Nations collapse.

The earth shake.

Yet his response is:

> **“O Lord, You are my God.”**

That teaches us something important.

Faith does not require:

Easy circumstances.

Faith says:

You are still my God.

Isaiah praises God because His plans are:

Faithful.

True.

Formed long ago.

That means your life is not taking place in a universe where God is:

Surprised.

Confused.

Trying to catch up.

God knows:

The beginning.

The middle.

The end.

Then Isaiah speaks to those who feel:

Weak.

Poor.

Needy.

Overwhelmed.

He says:

God is:

Refuge.

Shelter.

Shade.

If you cannot stop the storm:

Run to the shelter.

Then Isaiah lifts our eyes toward:

God’s mountain.

A table is prepared.

The invitation extends to:

All peoples.

God’s salvation is:

Abundant.

Generous.

Joyful.

Then comes the greatest promise:

“He will swallow up death forever.”

Think about that.

Death has swallowed:

Generation after generation.

But death itself has:

An ending.

Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

Because He lives:

The grave does not receive the final word over His people.

One day:

Every redeemed grave will lose.

Every tear will be wiped away.

Every sorrow will end.

Every disgrace will be removed.

And God’s people will say:

“Surely this is our God; we trusted in Him, and He saved us.”

Maybe right now you are in the:

Waiting.

You trusted.

But have not yet seen the answer.

Isaiah says:

Keep trusting.

There is coming a day when faith will become:

Sight.

Waiting will become:

Rejoicing.

Tears will become:

Joy.

Death will become:

Victory.

But the chapter also gives one final warning.

Do not choose:

Moab’s pride.

Pride says:

I can save myself.

I can build walls high enough.

I can use my own cleverness.

Isaiah says:

God brings those walls:

To the dust.

There are only two places to stand:

In pride against God.

Or:

In trust beneath His shelter.

Choose the refuge.

Trust the Savior.

Wait for the feast.

Look beyond the grave.

Because:

Death is not eternal.

God is.

And the God who promises to swallow death forever is:

Faithful.

And:

True.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are our God.

We exalt You.

We praise Your holy name.

Thank You that Your plans are:

Faithful.

True.

Perfect.

Ancient.

Unchanging.

When we cannot understand what You are doing:

Help us trust Your wisdom.

Father, thank You for being a refuge for:

The poor.

The needy.

The distressed.

The overwhelmed.

When storms rise:

Be our shelter.

When the heat becomes unbearable:

Be our shade.

When ruthless people threaten:

Be our stronghold.

Father, thank You for the salvation You have prepared.

Thank You that Your grace reaches:

All peoples.

All nations.

All who come to You in faith.

Thank You for Jesus Christ.

Thank You for His death.

Thank You for His resurrection.

Thank You that because He lives:

Death will not win.

Thank You for the promise:

“He will swallow up death forever.”

Father, comfort those who grieve.

Comfort those who have lost:

Parents.

Children.

Spouses.

Friends.

Loved ones.

Remind them that for those who belong to Christ:

The grave is not the end.

Thank You that one day:

You will wipe every tear away.

No more:

Death.

Mourning.

Crying.

Pain.

Father, teach us to wait.

Let us someday say:

> **“We trusted in Him, and He saved us.”**

Protect us from pride.

Bring down every false fortress in our hearts.

Teach us humility.

Teach us dependence.

Teach us faith.

And until the day when death is swallowed forever:

Help us live.

Hope.

Serve.

Worship.

And trust.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces; He will remove His people’s disgrace from all the earth. The Lord has spoken.” — Isaiah 25:8**

Central Truth

The Lord faithfully accomplishes His eternal purposes, shelters the poor and needy, humbles ruthless pride, prepares salvation for all peoples, defeats death forever through His redemptive plan, wipes away the tears of His people, and brings everyone who trusted in Him into everlasting joy.

Isaiah 25 in One Sentence

Isaiah praises the faithful God who brings proud strongholds down, shelters the weak, prepares a great salvation feast for all peoples, promises to swallow death forever and wipe away every tear, vindicates those who trusted in Him, and brings persistent human pride down to the dust.

Isaiah Chapter 26 — A Song of Trust in the Lord

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 26 is a song of:

Trust.

Peace.

Righteousness.

Waiting.

Resurrection.

Protection.

Judgment.

It continues the great section of Isaiah that looks beyond immediate national crises toward the larger purposes of God.

Isaiah 24 showed:

The earth shaken.

Isaiah 25 showed:

Death swallowed up forever.

Isaiah 26 now shows:

The people of God singing.

They rejoice because salvation itself has become their defense.

The chapter begins:

> **“We have a strong city; God makes salvation its walls and ramparts.”**

This is significant.

The city is secure not merely because of:

Stone.

Weapons.

Military strength.

But because:

God saves.

The song then gives one of the best-known promises in Isaiah:

> **“You will keep in perfect peace the one whose mind is fixed on You, because he trusts in You.”**

Peace is connected to:

A steadfast mind.

A trusting heart.

A fixed focus on God.

The chapter then declares:

> **“Trust in the Lord forever.”**

Why?

Because:

> **“The Lord Himself is the Rock eternal.”**

Human cities rise and fall.

Human rulers come and go.

Human security weakens.

But God remains:

The eternal Rock.

Isaiah then contrasts:

The proud.

And:

The righteous.

The proud city is brought:

Down.

The oppressed eventually walk:

Over its ruins.

The righteous, by contrast, walk a path God makes:

Level.

Smooth.

Secure.

The faithful wait for God.

They desire:

His name.

His remembrance.

His presence.

They seek Him:

At night.

In the morning.

The chapter also makes an important distinction between:

Grace.

And:

Repentance.

Grace can be shown to the wicked, yet they may still refuse:

Righteousness.

God’s kindness does not automatically transform someone who refuses to turn.

Later, Isaiah looks back at Israel’s failures and admits:

Other lords have ruled us.

Yet now:

God alone is honored.

Then comes a painful confession.

Israel labored.

Struggled.

Suffered.

But produced:

Wind.

They could not bring salvation to the earth through their own strength.

Then the chapter suddenly rises to magnificent hope:

“But Your dead will live, Lord; their bodies will rise.”

Those dwelling in the dust are told:

Awake.

Shout for joy.

This is one of the clearest Old Testament expressions of resurrection hope.

Finally, God tells His people:

Enter your rooms.

Shut the doors.

Hide for a little while.

Judgment is coming upon the earth.

But God distinguishes:

His people.

From:

The wicked.

The chapter ends with the Lord coming to punish sin and expose innocent blood that had been hidden.

The central truth of Isaiah 26 is:

Those who trust in the Lord find perfect peace in the eternal Rock, walk the path of righteousness, wait for Him with longing, acknowledge that salvation cannot be produced by human strength, rest in the promise of resurrection, and find refuge in God while His righteous judgment exposes and punishes sin.

I. SALVATION BECOMES THE WALL OF GOD'S CITY

Isaiah 26:1 — A Strong City

> **"In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: 'We have a strong city; God makes salvation its walls and ramparts.'"**

The people sing about:

Security.

But the source of that security is:

God's salvation.

The imagery of:

Walls.

Ramparts.

Defenses.

All points toward one truth:

God Himself protects His people through His saving power.

Cross References

Psalm 46:1

God is our refuge and strength, a dependable and present source of help when trouble comes.

Psalm 48:12

God’s people are encouraged to walk around Zion, observe its defenses, and remember the security associated with God’s presence.

Revelation 21:2

John sees the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God, prepared beautifully like a bride for her husband.

Spiritual Principle

The strongest defense is not what surrounds us.

It is:

Who saves us.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A city is truly secure when salvation, not human strength, is its wall.

II. THE GATES OPEN FOR THE FAITHFUL

Isaiah 26:2 — The Righteous Nation Enters

> **“Open the gates, so that the righteous nation, the one that remains faithful, may enter in.”**

The gates are not opened randomly.

Those entering are described as:

Righteous.

Faithful.

The emphasis is not on sinless perfection but on covenant faithfulness and belonging to God.

Cross References

Psalm 118:19

The worshiper asks for the gates of righteousness to be opened so he may enter and give thanks to the Lord.

Psalm 24:7

The gates are called to lift themselves so the glorious King may enter.

Revelation 21:27

Nothing unclean or false will enter the holy city; only those whose names belong to the Lamb are admitted.

Spiritual Principle

God’s kingdom is characterized by:

Truth.

Faithfulness.

Holiness.

III. GOD KEEPS THE TRUSTING MIND IN PERFECT PEACE

Isaiah 26:3 — Peace Through Trust

> **“You will keep in perfect peace the one whose mind is fixed on You, because he trusts in You.”**

This verse links:

Mind.

Trust.

Peace.

The mind is:

Fixed.

Steady.

Anchored.

On:

God.

And the result is:

Peace.

Cross References

Philippians 4:7

God’s peace surpasses ordinary human understanding and guards the hearts and minds of believers in Christ Jesus.

John 14:27

Jesus gives His followers a peace unlike the peace the world gives and tells them not to let their hearts remain troubled or afraid.

Psalm 112:7

The righteous person does not live in terror of bad news because the heart is steadfast and trusts in the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Peace grows where trust stabilizes the mind.

Key Truth

The mind fixed on circumstances will rise and fall with circumstances.

The mind fixed on God has a deeper anchor.

IV. THE LORD IS THE ETERNAL ROCK

Isaiah 26:4 — Trust Forever

> **“Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord Himself, is the Rock eternal.”**

The command is:

Trust.

The duration is:

Forever.

The reason is:

God’s character.

He is:

The Rock eternal.

Not temporary.

Not unstable.

Not changing.

Cross References

Psalm 62:8

God’s people are told to trust Him at all times, pour out their hearts before Him, and recognize Him as their refuge.

Proverbs 3:5

Trust in the Lord with all your heart rather than depending entirely upon your own understanding.

Isaiah 40:31

Those who wait for the Lord receive renewed strength and endurance beyond their own natural ability.

Spiritual Principle

Eternal trust requires an eternal foundation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You can trust forever only if the One you trust lasts forever.

V. GOD BRINGS DOWN THE LOFTY CITY

Isaiah 26:5 — Pride Reduced to Dust

> **“He brings down those who live on high; the lofty city He lays low. He levels it to the ground and casts it to the dust.”**

The movement is:

High.

Down.

Ground.

Dust.

God confronts:

Pride.

Arrogance.

Self-exaltation.

Cross References

Isaiah 2:12

The day of the Lord comes against everything proud and exalted so that human arrogance is brought low.

Luke 1:52

God brings powerful rulers down from their thrones and lifts up the humble.

Obadiah 1:3

Pride deceives those who live securely in high places and assume no one can bring them down.

Spiritual Principle

Pride builds upward.

God can bring it to dust.

VI. THE OPPRESSED WALK OVER THE RUINS

Isaiah 26:6 — The Poor Are Lifted

> **“The feet of the oppressed will trample it down, the footsteps of the poor.”**

This is reversal.

Those once:

Oppressed.

Ignored.

Weak.

Now walk over the ruins of proud power.

Cross References

Isaiah 66:5

Those rejected and mocked for faithfulness to God are promised that the Lord will appear for their joy while putting their enemies to shame.

Psalm 147:6

The Lord lifts up the humble and brings the wicked down.

Luke 14:11

Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, while the one who humbles himself will be exalted.

Spiritual Principle

God sees the poor whom proud systems overlook.

VII. GOD MAKES THE PATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS LEVEL

Isaiah 26:7 — The Upright One Leads

> **“The path of the righteous is level; You, O Upright One, make the way of the righteous smooth.”**

God is called:

The Upright One.

He makes the path:

Level.

This does not mean:

Easy.

Pain-free.

Obstacle-free.

It means:

Directed.

Made right.

Guided.

Cross References

Proverbs 4:18

The path of the righteous grows brighter and clearer like morning light moving toward full day.

Psalm 37:23

The Lord establishes the steps of a person whose way pleases Him and directs the path.

Proverbs 15:19

The way of the lazy is obstructed like a thorn hedge, while the path of the upright is made clear.

Spiritual Principle

God does not promise a life without difficulty.

He promises direction for the righteous.

VIII. THE RIGHTEOUS WAIT FOR GOD

Isaiah 26:8 — God’s Name Is Their Desire

> **“Yes, Lord, walking in the way of Your judgments, we wait for You; Your name and Your remembrance are the desire of our soul.”**

The righteous do more than:

Obey.

They:

Wait.

Desire.

Remember.

Long for:

God.

Cross References

Psalm 130:5

The psalmist waits for the Lord with deep expectation and places hope in His Word.

Lamentations 3:25

The Lord is good to those who wait for Him and to the person who sincerely seeks Him.

Psalm 27:14

God’s people are told to wait for the Lord, remain strong, take courage, and continue waiting on Him.

Spiritual Principle

True faith does not merely want:

God’s gifts.

It wants:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The mature soul does not only say:

“Give me.”

It also says:

“I wait for You.”

IX. THE SOUL SEEKS GOD DAY AND NIGHT

Isaiah 26:9 — Longing for the Lord

> **“My soul yearns for You in the night; in the morning my spirit seeks You. For when Your judgments come to the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness.”**

Isaiah seeks God:

At night.

In the morning.

The longing is:

Continuous.

Then Isaiah connects God’s judgments with:

Instruction.

The world learns:

Righteousness.

Cross References

Psalm 63:1

The psalmist earnestly seeks God with a thirsty soul and longing heart in a dry and weary land.

Psalm 119:62

At midnight the psalmist rises to thank God because of His righteous judgments.

Psalm 119:71

The psalmist recognizes that affliction became useful because through it he learned God’s statutes.

Spiritual Principle

Some lessons are learned most clearly through discipline.

X. THE WICKED CAN RECEIVE GRACE AND STILL REFUSE RIGHTEOUSNESS

Isaiah 26:10 — Mercy Rejected

> **“Though grace is shown to the wicked, they do not learn righteousness. Even in a land of uprightness, they act wickedly and do not see the majesty of the Lord.”**

This verse is sobering.

Grace is:

Shown.

But:

Not received rightly.

Kindness alone does not force:

Repentance.

Cross References

Ecclesiastes 8:11

When judgment against wrongdoing seems delayed, people may become more determined to continue in evil.

Psalm 106:43

God repeatedly delivered His people, yet they continued in rebellious plans and sank lower through their own sin.

Romans 2:4

God’s kindness, patience, and restraint are intended to lead people toward repentance rather than become excuses for continued sin.

Spiritual Principle

Grace is not permission to remain unchanged.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Mercy becomes spiritually dangerous when it is interpreted as approval of rebellion.

XI. SOME REFUSE TO SEE GOD’S HAND

Isaiah 26:11 — Blindness Before Judgment

> **“O Lord, Your hand is lifted high, yet they do not see it. But they will see and be put to shame—their envy toward Your people consumed; yes, the fire reserved for Your enemies will devour them.”**

God’s hand is:

Visible.

Active.

Yet some:

Refuse to see.

This is not merely lack of information.

It is:

Spiritual resistance.

Cross References

Isaiah 5:12

People feast and celebrate while failing to pay attention to the Lord’s works or recognize what His hands are doing.

Psalm 28:5

Because people refuse to consider the works of the Lord and what His hands have done, judgment comes upon them.

John 12:37

Although Jesus performed many signs before people, many still refused to believe in Him.

Spiritual Principle

Evidence does not automatically overcome a resistant heart.

XII. GOD ESTABLISHES PEACE FOR HIS PEOPLE

Isaiah 26:12 — God Is Behind Every True Accomplishment

> **“Lord, You establish peace for us; all that we have accomplished, You have done for us.”**

This verse combines:

Peace.

Humility.

Gratitude.

Whatever good has been accomplished:

God ultimately enabled it.

Cross References

Numbers 6:26

The priestly blessing asks the Lord to look graciously upon His people and give them peace.

Psalm 29:11

The Lord gives strength to His people and blesses them with peace.

Philippians 2:13

God is at work within believers, producing both the desire and the ability to carry out what pleases Him.

Spiritual Principle

Grace destroys boasting because even our faithful work depends upon God’s enabling.

Key Truth

We work.

But God deserves the glory for what is truly accomplished.

XIII. OTHER LORDS ONCE RULED THEM

Isaiah 26:13 — God Alone Receives Honor

> **“Lord our God, other lords besides You have ruled over us, but Your name alone we honor.”**

Israel had experienced:

Foreign domination.

Idolatrous influence.

Political oppression.

Yet now:

God’s name alone.

Cross References

Judges 10:6

Israel repeatedly abandoned the Lord and served foreign gods, bringing oppression upon themselves.

1 Samuel 12:10

Israel confessed that they had sinned by abandoning the Lord and serving false gods, then cried out for deliverance.

Hosea 13:4

God reminds Israel that He alone is their God and Savior and that they should recognize no other true deliverer.

Spiritual Principle

Deliverance should restore exclusive allegiance to God.

XIV. THE TYRANTS WHO RULED THEM ARE GONE

Isaiah 26:14 — Their Memory Wiped Away

> **“The dead are now dead; they will not live. Their spirits are gone; they will not rise. You punished them and wiped out their memory.”**

In context, this contrasts:

Defeated oppressive rulers.

With:

God’s people.

Verse 19 will speak of:

God’s dead rising.

So verse 14 should not be treated as a denial of all resurrection.

It describes the end of those rulers’ earthly dominion and memorial power.

Cross References

Psalm 88:10

The psalmist asks whether ordinary human death allows the dead to rise in order to continue praising God within present earthly life.

Psalm 115:17

Those who descend into the silence of death no longer participate in ordinary earthly praise as living people do.

Job 7:9

Job compares death to a cloud disappearing and speaks from the perspective of ordinary earthly life, where the dead do not return to their former homes.

Spiritual Principle

Human rulers can appear permanent while living and quickly disappear from history.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Verse 14 describes the removal of oppressive powers; verse 19 reveals that God’s resurrection power has the final word over His own people.

XV. GOD ENLARGES THE NATION

Isaiah 26:15 — God Receives Glory

> **“You have enlarged the nation, O Lord; You have enlarged the nation. You are glorified; You have extended all its borders.”**

The repetition emphasizes:

God’s work.

God enlarges.

God receives:

Glory.

Cross References

Genesis 12:2

God promised Abraham that He would make him into a great nation, bless him, make his name significant, and make him a blessing.

Isaiah 54:2

God’s restored people are told to enlarge their tent, stretch out its curtains, and prepare for expansion.

Deuteronomy 26:5

Israel remembers beginning as a small wandering family before God multiplied them into a large and powerful people.

Spiritual Principle

True growth should increase:

God’s glory.

Not:

Human pride.

XVI. DISTRESS DRIVES THE PEOPLE TO PRAYER

Isaiah 26:16 — Discipline Awakens Prayer

> **“Lord, in distress they sought You; they poured out a prayer when You disciplined them.”**

Trouble accomplishes what ease often does not.

The people:

Seek God.

Pray.

Cry out.

Cross References

Psalm 50:15

God invites His people to call upon Him in the day of trouble, promising deliverance that should result in His glory.

Hosea 5:15

God withdraws until His people acknowledge their guilt and seek Him earnestly in their distress.

Jonah 2:2

Jonah says that in deep distress he called to the Lord and God heard his cry.

Spiritual Principle

Pain can awaken prayer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If trouble drives you toward God, do not waste the trouble.

XVII. ISRAEL SUFFERS LIKE A WOMAN IN LABOR

Isaiah 26:17 — Pain Before Deliverance

> **“As a pregnant woman about to give birth writhes and cries out in pain, so were we in Your presence, O Lord.”**

The nation experienced:

Pressure.

Pain.

Expectation.

They hoped suffering would produce:

Deliverance.

Cross References

John 16:21

Jesus compares sorrow to a woman in labor whose pain gives way to joy when the child is born.

Micah 4:10

Zion is told to writhe in labor because suffering will come before eventual deliverance and restoration.

Romans 8:22

Paul says all creation groans and suffers together like a woman in labor while waiting for redemption.

Spiritual Principle

Pain can be real even when hope remains.

XVIII. HUMAN EFFORT PRODUCED ONLY WIND

Isaiah 26:18 — Israel Could Not Save the World

> **“We were with child, we writhed in pain, but we gave birth only to wind. We have not brought deliverance to the earth, and the people of the world have not fallen.”**

This is a confession of:

Failure.

Helplessness.

Israel could not produce:

World salvation.

Final victory.

Through human effort.

Their labor resulted in:

Wind.

Cross References

Psalm 74:9

In a season of crisis, God’s people lament that visible signs and prophetic guidance seem absent and they do not know how long suffering will continue.

Jeremiah 51:9

Those attempting to heal Babylon finally admit that it cannot be healed and must be abandoned to judgment.

Job 15:35

Job’s friend uses the image of conceiving trouble and giving birth to emptiness or deceit.

Spiritual Principle

Human effort cannot accomplish the salvation only God can provide.

Key Truth

We can labor intensely and still fail when attempting to perform God’s role.

XIX. GOD PROMISES RESURRECTION

Isaiah 26:19 — The Dead Will Rise

> **“But Your dead will live, Lord; their bodies will rise. Let those who dwell in the dust awake and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.”**

This is the great hope of the chapter.

Notice the contrast:

Verse 18:

Human effort produces:

Wind.

Verse 19:

God produces:

Life from death.

Those in:

Dust.

Will:

Awake.

Those silent in death will:

Shout for joy.

Cross References

Daniel 12:2

Daniel says that multitudes sleeping in the dust of the earth will awaken, some to everlasting life and others to judgment.

1 Corinthians 15:52

At the final trumpet, the dead will be raised imperishable and believers will be transformed.

John 5:28

Jesus says a time is coming when all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come out.

Spiritual Principle

Resurrection is not human achievement.

It is:

Divine power.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who made man from dust can call man out of dust.

XX. GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO SHELTER

Isaiah 26:20 — Hide for a Little While

> **“Go, My people, enter your rooms and shut your doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until His wrath has passed by.”**

The language recalls:

Protection during judgment.

God distinguishes:

His people.

He tells them:

Enter.

Shut.

Hide.

Wait.

Notice:

> **“For a little while.”**

Wrath is:

Limited in duration.

Cross References

Exodus 12:22

During the Passover judgment, Israelite families were told to remain inside their houses under the protection God had provided until morning.

Zephaniah 2:3

The humble are called to seek the Lord, righteousness, and humility in the hope of finding shelter in the day of His anger.

Psalm 57:1

The psalmist asks God for mercy and takes refuge beneath the shadow of His wings until destructive danger passes.

Spiritual Principle

God knows how to preserve His people through periods of judgment.

Key Truth

God’s wrath is not uncontrolled chaos.

He knows:

His people.

Their refuge.

The duration.

XXI. THE LORD COMES TO JUDGE THE EARTH

Isaiah 26:21 — Hidden Blood Will Be Revealed

> **“See, the Lord is coming out of His dwelling to punish the people of the earth for their sins. The earth will reveal the blood shed on it; it will no longer cover up its slain.”**

The final verse is about:

Justice.

Bloodshed had been:

Hidden.

Covered.

Ignored.

But not:

Forgotten.

God comes to:

Expose.

Judge.

Vindicate.

Cross References

Micah 1:3

The Lord is pictured coming out from His holy dwelling and descending in judgment upon the earth.

Genesis 4:10

God tells Cain that Abel’s blood cries out from the ground, showing that concealed murder remains fully known to God.

Jude 1:14

Jude recalls the prophecy that the Lord comes with His holy ones to execute judgment upon ungodliness.

Spiritual Principle

Hidden injustice is not hidden from God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The ground may cover blood for a season.

God does not forget whose blood it is.

XXII. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 26

1. Salvation Is the Strongest Wall

Principle:

God’s protection is greater than human fortification.

---

2. Perfect Peace Comes Through Trust

Principle:

A steadfast mind rests because it is anchored in a trustworthy God.

---

3. God Is the Eternal Rock

Principle:

Everything temporary should rest upon the One who is eternal.

---

4. Pride Is Brought Low

Principle:

No lofty city can remain above God forever.

---

5. The Righteous Desire God Himself

Principle:

Mature faith wants more than blessings; it wants the Lord.

---

6. Grace Must Lead to Repentance

Principle:

Mercy rejected does not become righteousness.

---

7. Every Good Accomplishment Ultimately Comes Through God

Principle:

Grace leaves no room for self-glory.

---

8. Human Strength Cannot Produce Final Salvation

Principle:

We cannot give birth to redemption through human effort.

---

9. Resurrection Hope Is Certain

Principle:

God’s people will rise from the dust.

---

10. God Protects His Own During Judgment

Principle:

Divine judgment never means divine confusion about who belongs to Him.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 26 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE

Peace is connected to:

Focus.

Trust.

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Peace does not begin with control of circumstances.

It begins with confidence in God.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 26 TEACHES ABOUT THE MIND

The mind can be:

Scattered.

Fearful.

Obsessed.

Or:

Fixed.

Spiritual Principle

What continually occupies the mind eventually shapes the emotional life.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 26 TEACHES ABOUT TRUST

Trust is not:

A moment.

The command is:

> **“Trust in the Lord forever.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith is not only trusting God for this crisis.

It is choosing Him as the permanent foundation of life.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 26 TEACHES ABOUT GOD AS ROCK

Rock communicates:

Strength.

Stability.

Permanence.

Spiritual Principle

God does not shift beneath those who stand on Him.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 26 TEACHES ABOUT WAITING

The faithful say:

> **“We wait for You.”**

Waiting is active:

Trust.

Expectation.

Longing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Waiting on God is not inactivity.

It is loyalty during delay.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 26 TEACHES ABOUT SPIRITUAL DESIRE

The soul wants:

God’s name.

God’s remembrance.

God’s presence.

Spiritual Principle

Your deepest desire reveals your deepest worship.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 26 TEACHES ABOUT GRACE

Grace is shown to:

The wicked.

Yet some remain:

Wicked.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace offered does not eliminate the responsibility to repent.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 26 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S WORK IN US

Isaiah says:

> **“All that we have accomplished, You have done for us.”**

This is not passivity.

It is:

Humility.

Spiritual Principle

The believer works while acknowledging that God is the ultimate source of strength and fruitfulness.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 26 TEACHES ABOUT OTHER LORDS

Other rulers can:

Dominate.

Oppress.

Control temporarily.

But only God deserves:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Temporary authority must never receive eternal allegiance.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 26 TEACHES ABOUT FAILURE

Israel admits:

We labored.

But produced:

Wind.

This is important.

Faith includes honest confession of:

Failure.

Spiritual Principle

You are not spiritually mature because you never fail.

You are mature when failure drives you back to God.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 26 TEACHES ABOUT RESURRECTION

Verse 19 is unmistakably hopeful.

The dead:

Live.

Bodies:

Rise.

Dust-dwellers:

Awake.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Christian hope is not merely immortality of the soul.

It includes resurrection.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 26 TEACHES ABOUT JUDGMENT

God comes to:

Punish sin.

Expose bloodshed.

Reveal hidden evil.

Spiritual Principle

Justice delayed is not justice forgotten.

XXXV. PERFECT PEACE

The phrase expresses:

Complete.

Deep.

Steady peace.

Not necessarily:

A painless life.

But:

A heart held by God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Perfect peace does not mean perfect circumstances.

It means a perfect object of trust.

XXXVI. FIXED ON YOU

The mind has a target.

Isaiah says:

Fix it on:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Peace weakens when the mind continually circles around fear instead of God.

XXXVII. TRUST FOREVER

Forever means:

Good days.

Bad days.

Youth.

Age.

Health.

Illness.

Life.

Death.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The eternal Rock deserves lifelong trust.

XXXVIII. THE PATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

The path is:

Made smooth.

God directs.

Spiritual Principle

God may not show every mile in advance.

He directs the next faithful step.

XXXIX. NIGHT AND MORNING SEEKING

Isaiah seeks God:

At night.

At dawn.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The soul that seeks God only during convenient hours has not yet learned deep dependence.

XL. GRACE WITHOUT REPENTANCE

God’s grace is not:

Endorsement.

Tolerance of evil forever.

Spiritual Principle

Kindness should soften the heart, not harden it.

XLI. ALL WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED

This statement destroys:

Pride.

Boasting.

Self-sufficiency.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do your best work.

Then give God the glory.

XLII. OTHER LORDS

Israel remembered:

Oppressors.

Foreign rulers.

False gods.

But now:

God alone.

Spiritual Principle

Deliverance should produce purified allegiance.

XLIII. LABOR PAINS WITHOUT BIRTH

This is a tragic picture.

Pain.

Effort.

No result.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Intensity does not guarantee spiritual effectiveness.

XLIV. THE EARTH GIVES BIRTH TO THE DEAD

The image reverses:

Verse 18.

Israel could not give birth to:

Deliverance.

But God causes the earth to give birth to:

The dead.

Spiritual Principle

What humanity cannot produce, God can create by His power.

XLV. RESURRECTION JOY

The dead do not merely:

Rise.

They are told:

Shout for joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Resurrection is not merely survival.

It is victory worth celebrating.

XLVI. ENTER YOUR ROOMS

God’s people are told:

Take shelter.

This does not teach cowardice.

It teaches:

Trusting obedience.

Spiritual Principle

Sometimes faith stands.

Sometimes faith waits behind a closed door.

Both can be obedience.

XLVII. “FOR A LITTLE WHILE”

Judgment has:

A limit.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse a temporary season of wrath with the eternal destiny of God’s redeemed people.

XLVIII. THE BLOOD WILL BE REVEALED

Violence may be:

Hidden.

Denied.

Covered up.

God knows.

Spiritual Principle

There are no permanently cold cases in God’s courtroom.

XLIX. SIX GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 26

1. Strong City → Salvation as Its Wall

2. Lofty City → Dust

3. Wicked Grace-Resisters → Faithful Waiters

4. Other Lords → The Lord Alone

5. Human Labor → Wind

6. Dust → Resurrection

Key Truth

Human pride, power, and effort fail, but trust in the eternal Rock leads to peace, salvation, resurrection, and lasting hope.

L. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What makes the city strong in verse 1?

God’s salvation.

Question 2

Who enters through the gates?

The righteous nation that remains faithful.

Question 3

Who receives perfect peace?

The one whose mind is fixed on God because that person trusts Him.

Question 4

Why should we trust God forever?

Because He is the eternal Rock.

Question 5

What happens to the lofty city?

God brings it down to the dust.

Question 6

Who eventually walks over its ruins?

The oppressed and poor.

Question 7

What do the righteous desire?

God’s name and remembrance.

Question 8

When does Isaiah seek God?

At night and in the morning.

Question 9

Does grace automatically change the wicked?

No.

Some receive grace yet still refuse righteousness.

Question 10

Who establishes peace for God’s people?

The Lord.

Question 11

Who deserves glory for righteous accomplishments?

God, because He works through His people.

Question 12

What does Israel confess about other rulers?

Other lords ruled over them, but God alone deserves honor.

Question 13

What happened to Israel’s human attempts to bring deliverance?

They produced only wind.

Question 14

What hope does verse 19 give?

God’s dead will live and their bodies will rise.

Question 15

What are those in the dust told to do?

Awake and shout for joy.

Question 16

What does God tell His people to do during judgment?

Enter their rooms, shut the doors, and wait until wrath passes.

Question 17

What will happen to hidden bloodshed?

The earth will reveal it.

Question 18

What is the major message of the chapter?

Trust the eternal Rock, wait for Him, depend upon His salvation, and hope in resurrection.

LI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 26 asks several searching questions.

Where Is My Mind Fixed?

On:

Fear?

News?

Money?

Health?

People?

Or:

God?

Do I Have Peace Because I Trust God?

Or do I require circumstances to cooperate before I can rest?

What Am I Treating as My Rock?

Career?

Savings?

Family?

Government?

My own ability?

Do I Wait for God?

Or do I become impatient and force my own solutions?

Is God Himself the Desire of My Soul?

Or do I mainly want:

What He can give me?

Have I Mistaken Grace for Approval?

Is there an area where God’s patience should be leading me to repentance?

Do I Give God Credit for What Has Been Accomplished?

Or do I secretly believe:

I did this?

What Other Lord Has Ruled Me?

Fear?

Money?

Approval?

Addiction?

Ambition?

Am I Trying to Produce Through Human effort What Only God Can Do?

Where am I giving birth to:

Wind?

Do I Really Believe in Resurrection?

Does the grave shape my thinking more than God’s promise?

Can I Wait Behind the Door When God Says:

Hide for a little while?

Do I Believe God Will Expose Hidden Injustice?

Can I leave final justice in His hands?

LII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Perfect Peace Comes from a Fixed Mind Resting on an Eternal Rock”

Peace does not come because:

Nothing is wrong.

It comes because:

God is still God.

Principle:

The more firmly the mind rests upon God’s unchanging character, the less power changing circumstances have to control the heart.

LIII. THE STRONG CITY

Human cities build:

Walls.

God’s city is defended by:

Salvation.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest wall is what God has done to save.

LIV. THE OPEN GATES

Gates once used for:

Defense.

Now open for:

The faithful.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s salvation creates both security and welcome.

LV. THE ETERNAL ROCK

Everything else ages.

God does not.

Spiritual Principle

Build eternity on eternity.

LVI. THE PROUD CITY IN THE DUST

Pride begins:

High.

Ends:

Low.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Humility bows voluntarily.

Pride eventually bows through judgment.

LVII. THE DESIRE OF THE SOUL

What do you want:

Most?

Isaiah says:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual health can often be measured by what the soul longs for when no one is watching.

LVIII. SEEKING GOD IN THE NIGHT

Night can mean:

Literal night.

Fear.

Grief.

Uncertainty.

Isaiah says:

Seek Him there.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If you learn to seek God in the night, darkness loses some of its power.

LIX. JUDGMENT TEACHES RIGHTEOUSNESS

Some lessons are ignored during:

Comfort.

But learned during:

Consequences.

Spiritual Principle

God can use judgment as moral instruction.

LX. THE WICKED WHO WILL NOT LEARN

Grace appears.

They still refuse.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not waste the kindness of God by using it to postpone repentance.

LXI. PEACE ESTABLISHED BY GOD

Peace is not ultimately:

Manufactured.

It is:

Established.

Spiritual Principle

God is the source of the deepest peace He commands us to enjoy.

LXII. THE GOD WHO WORKS THROUGH US

Isaiah gives God credit for:

Accomplishment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace does not make work unnecessary.

It makes boasting unnecessary.

LXIII. THE FAILURE OF HUMAN SALVATION

Israel admits:

We could not deliver the world.

This prepares for:

God’s salvation.

Spiritual Principle

Admitting inability is often the doorway to trusting divine sufficiency.

LXIV. THE RESURRECTION PROMISE

The dust is not:

Final.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God knows every person sleeping in the dust, and death cannot hide them from His voice.

LXV. PROTECTED DURING WRATH

The people are told:

Hide.

For:

A little while.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people are never forgotten inside His judgments.

LXVI. JUSTICE FOR SHED BLOOD

God does not ignore:

Victims.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Blood buried by men remains evidence before God.

LXVII. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 26

1. Salvation

God becomes the wall.

2. Peace

The trusting mind rests.

3. Humbling

The proud city falls.

4. Waiting

The righteous seek God.

5. Confession

Human effort cannot save.

6. Resurrection

The dead rise.

7. Protection and Judgment

God shelters His people and exposes sin.

Key Truth

The eternal Rock gives peace to the trusting, direction to the righteous, resurrection to the dead, refuge to His people, and justice against sin.

LXVIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 26 is a chapter for:

Anxious minds.

Waiting hearts.

Tired believers.

Grieving families.

People wondering whether:

God still sees.

God still acts.

God still saves.

The chapter begins with:

A strong city.

But the strength is not:

Concrete.

Weapons.

Money.

Military power.

The wall is:

Salvation.

Then comes the promise:

> **“You will keep in perfect peace the one whose mind is fixed on You, because he trusts in You.”**

That verse does not say:

God will give perfect circumstances.

It says:

Perfect peace.

There is a difference.

You may have:

Trouble.

And:

Peace.

Questions.

And:

Peace.

Grief.

And:

Peace.

Uncertainty.

And:

Peace.

How?

The mind is fixed on:

God.

Then Isaiah says:

“Trust in the Lord forever.”

Not:

Until the crisis ends.

Not:

Until the diagnosis changes.

Not:

Until the money runs out.

Not:

Until people disappoint you.

Forever.

Why?

Because God is:

The eternal Rock.

Then the chapter becomes deeply personal.

The righteous say:

“We wait for You.”

Waiting is hard.

But waiting becomes bearable when we know:

Who we are waiting for.

Then Isaiah confesses something important.

Israel had:

Worked.

Struggled.

Suffered.

But could not produce:

Salvation.

They gave birth to:

Wind.

That is what happens whenever human beings try to do what only God can do.

But then:

Verse 19.

“Your dead will live.”

That changes everything.

Humanity cannot defeat:

Death.

God can.

The grave says:

Finished.

God says:

Rise.

The dust says:

Gone.

God says:

Awake.

The mourner says:

Death won.

God says:

Not forever.

That is resurrection hope.

Finally, God tells His people:

Hide for a little while.

There are times when faith means:

Advancing.

There are times when faith means:

Waiting.

There are times when faith means:

Closing the door.

Trusting God.

Letting the storm pass.

And the chapter ends with justice.

The earth reveals:

Bloodshed.

No murder is:

Forgotten.

No injustice is:

Permanently buried.

God sees.

God knows.

God judges.

Therefore:

Fix your mind on God.

Trust the Rock.

Wait for Him.

Seek Him at night.

Seek Him in the morning.

Do not waste His grace.

Give Him glory for your accomplishments.

Do not try to save the world through human strength.

Believe His resurrection promise.

And when He says:

Hide for a little while—

Trust Him behind the closed door.

Because:

The Rock remains.

The dead will rise.

Justice will come.

And those who trust the Lord will not have trusted Him in vain.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are our eternal Rock.

Thank You that You are:

Steady.

Faithful.

Unchanging.

Strong.

Father, fix our minds upon You.

When fear rises:

Give us peace.

When circumstances change:

Keep our hearts anchored.

When the future is uncertain:

Teach us to trust.

Help us believe Your promise of:

Perfect peace.

Father, we confess that we often trust:

Our own wisdom.

Money.

People.

Plans.

Strength.

Forgive us.

Teach us to say:

“Trust in the Lord forever.”

Father, make Your name the desire of our souls.

Teach us to seek You:

At night.

In the morning.

In distress.

In peace.

Thank You for every good thing accomplished in our lives.

Keep us humble enough to say:

“You have done it for us.”

Father, forgive us when we attempt to produce through human strength what only You can accomplish.

When our labor produces wind:

Lead us back to dependence upon You.

Thank You for resurrection hope.

Thank You that:

The dead will live.

Bodies will rise.

Those dwelling in dust will awake.

Thank You for Jesus Christ, who rose from the grave and guarantees resurrection life to His people.

Comfort everyone grieving a loved one in Christ.

Remind them:

Dust is not the final destination.

Father, when judgment and trouble come:

Be our refuge.

Teach us when to:

Stand.

Move.

Wait.

Hide.

Obey.

And trust.

Finally, thank You that hidden injustice will not remain hidden forever.

Bring truth to light.

Vindicate the innocent.

Judge evil righteously.

And help us live with confidence that:

You see.

You remember.

You reign.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"You will keep in perfect peace the one whose mind is fixed on You, because he trusts in You." — Isaiah 26:3**

Central Truth

Those who trust in the Lord find perfect peace in the eternal Rock, walk the path of righteousness, wait for Him with longing, acknowledge that human effort cannot produce final salvation, rest in the sure promise of resurrection, and find refuge in God while He exposes and judges sin.

Isaiah 26 in One Sentence

Isaiah celebrates the strong city defended by God's salvation, promises perfect peace to the mind fixed on the eternal Rock, contrasts the humble righteous with the proud and unrepentant, confesses the failure of human effort, proclaims that God's dead will rise from the dust, and calls God's people to trust His protection while He judges hidden sin.

Isaiah Chapter 27 — Israel’s Deliverance and the Defeat of Leviathan

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 27 brings the great prophetic section of Isaiah 24–27 to a powerful conclusion.

The chapter speaks of:

Victory over evil.

The restoration of God’s vineyard.

Peace with God.

The purging of sin.

The fall of the proud city.

The gathering of Israel.

And worship on the holy mountain.

The chapter begins with one of Scripture’s most striking images:

> **“The Lord, with His fierce, great, and strong sword, will punish Leviathan.”**

Leviathan appears as:

A serpent.

A twisted creature.

A dragon of the sea.

In its immediate poetic setting, Leviathan represents forces of:

Chaos.

Hostility.

Rebellion.

Empire.

Evil.

The imagery draws on ancient pictures of sea monsters and chaos powers, yet Isaiah places them firmly under:

God’s authority.

The creature is not God’s equal.

The Lord does not struggle uncertainly against it.

He:

Punishes it.

Slays it.

The New Testament later identifies the great dragon and ancient serpent with:

Satan.

That gives the imagery a broader biblical connection to God’s ultimate defeat of evil.

The chapter then shifts dramatically.

Instead of:

A monster.

We see:

A vineyard.

In Isaiah 5, God’s vineyard produced:

Wild grapes.

Judgment followed.

But in Isaiah 27, the vineyard is pictured differently.

God says:

> **“I, the Lord, watch over it; I water it continually.”**

He guards it:

Night.

Day.

The chapter moves from:

Judgment.

To:

Restoration.

From:

Wild growth.

To:

Fruitfulness.

From:

Anger.

To:

Peace.

Then comes one of the great invitations:

“Let them come to Me for refuge; let them make peace with Me.”

God’s purpose is not simply:

To destroy.

He calls people toward:

Reconciliation.

Then Israel is pictured:

Taking root.

Blossoming.

Sprouting.

Filling the earth with fruit.

The chapter also explains that God’s discipline toward Israel is different in purpose from His judgment upon unrepentant enemies.

He disciplines:

To purge sin.

To destroy idolatry.

To remove false worship.

The proof of true cleansing is not merely:

Suffering.

But:

Idols broken.

Altars crushed.

False worship abandoned.

The final verses return to hope.

God gathers His people:

One by one.

A great trumpet sounds.

Those scattered in:

Assyria.

Egypt.

Return.

And they worship the Lord:

On the holy mountain in Jerusalem.

The central truth of Isaiah 27 is:

The Lord will ultimately defeat every power of chaos and evil, lovingly restore and protect His vineyard, purge His people from idolatry, call sinners to make peace with Him, gather His scattered people one by one, and bring them back to worship Him in Zion.

I. THE LORD DEFEATS LEVIATHAN

Isaiah 27:1 — The Great Serpent Is Slain

> **“In that day the Lord, with His fierce, great, and strong sword, will punish Leviathan the swift serpent, Leviathan the twisted serpent. He will slay the dragon that lives in the sea.”**

The chapter begins with:

Conflict.

But the outcome is never uncertain.

The Lord possesses:

A fierce sword.

A great sword.

A strong sword.

Leviathan is described as:

Swift.

Twisted.

Serpentine.

Dragon-like.

Yet:

It dies.

Cross References

Job 41:1

God challenges Job by asking whether a human being can capture Leviathan with a hook or control the terrifying creature by human power, emphasizing humanity’s weakness before what God Himself can command.

Psalm 74:14

The psalmist praises God for crushing the heads of Leviathan and demonstrating His victory over powerful forces of chaos and opposition.

Revelation 12:9

The great dragon is identified as the ancient serpent called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world, who is cast down under God’s authority.

Spiritual Principle

The forces of evil may be terrifying.

They are never equal to God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What humanity cannot tame, God can destroy.

II. LEVIATHAN AND THE BIBLICAL PICTURE OF EVIL

Leviathan is a real poetic image rooted in ancient descriptions of an overwhelming sea creature.

In Isaiah 27, however, the imagery carries a larger symbolic force.

It represents:

Chaos.

Hostile powers.

Rebellion.

Opposition to God.

The New Testament’s language of the:

Dragon.

Serpent.

Devil.

Provides a legitimate broader biblical echo.

We should not force every detail of Leviathan into a one-to-one description of Satan.

But the larger biblical pattern is clear:

God defeats evil.

Spiritual Principle

Evil may twist.

Move swiftly.

Hide deeply.

But it cannot escape:

God’s sword.

III. THE VINEYARD BECOMES A SONG OF JOY

Isaiah 27:2 — “A Vineyard of Wine”

> **“In that day sing of it: ‘A vineyard of wine, beloved of the Lord!’”**

Isaiah 5 had a vineyard song of:

Disappointment.

Here:

The vineyard becomes a song of:

Restoration.

Fruitfulness.

Divine care.

Cross References

Isaiah 5:1

Earlier Isaiah sang of God’s vineyard that was carefully cultivated but produced wild grapes, leading to judgment.

John 15:1

Jesus identifies Himself as the true vine and His Father as the One who tends and cultivates the vineyard.

Psalm 80:8

Israel is compared to a vine that God brought out of Egypt, planted, and established in the land.

Spiritual Principle

God can restore what once failed to produce good fruit.

Key Truth

The vineyard of judgment can become the vineyard of restoration.

IV. GOD WATCHES OVER HIS VINEYARD

Isaiah 27:3 — Watched and Watered Continually

> **“I, the Lord, watch over it; I water it continually. I guard it night and day, so no one may harm it.”**

Notice how personal the language is.

> **“I, the Lord.”**

He:

Watches.

Waters.

Guards.

And He does so:

Continually.

Night.

Day.

Cross References

John 10:28

Jesus says He gives His sheep eternal life, that they will never perish, and that no one can snatch them from His hand.

Psalm 121:4

The One who watches over Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Philippians 1:6

God, who begins a good work in His people, is faithful to continue His work until its appointed completion.

Spiritual Principle

God’s care is not intermittent.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The vineyard survives because the Keeper never goes off duty.

V. GOD’S ANGER IS NOT HIS FINAL WORD OVER THE VINEYARD

Isaiah 27:4 — Briers and Thorns Will Be Burned

> **“I am not angry. But if only briers and thorns confronted Me, I would march against them in battle; I would burn them all together.”**

This verse communicates:

Changed relationship.

God’s anger against His vineyard is no longer presented as the final condition.

But:

Briers.

Thorns.

Persistent rebellion.

Still face:

Judgment.

Cross References

Isaiah 5:6

The earlier vineyard judgment included the land being left unpruned and overgrown with briers and thorns.

Hebrews 6:8

Land that continually produces thorns and briers is described as worthless and dangerously near judgment and burning.

Micah 7:18

God is praised as the One who forgives sin, passes over transgression, and does not remain angry forever because He delights in mercy.

Spiritual Principle

Mercy does not mean God has ceased opposing sin.

VI. GOD INVITES PEOPLE TO MAKE PEACE WITH HIM

Isaiah 27:5 — “Let Them Make Peace with Me”

> **“Or let them come to Me for refuge; let them make peace with Me—yes, let them make peace with Me.”**

This is one of the strongest invitations in the chapter.

Instead of facing:

God’s judgment.

The sinner can seek:

God Himself.

For:

Refuge.

Peace.

The invitation is repeated:

> **“Let them make peace with Me.”**

Cross References

2 Corinthians 5:20

Paul appeals on behalf of Christ, urging people to be reconciled to God.

Romans 5:1

Those justified by faith have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Job 22:21

The hearer is urged to become reconciled to God, submit to Him, and experience peace.

Spiritual Principle

The God who can destroy rebellion also offers reconciliation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The safest place for God's enemy is no longer against Him but reconciled to Him.

VII. ISRAEL WILL TAKE ROOT AND FILL THE EARTH WITH FRUIT

Isaiah 27:6 — Root, Blossom, Fruit

> **"In days to come Jacob will take root, Israel will blossom and sprout, and will fill the whole earth with fruit."**

This is the opposite of:

Uprooting.

Withering.

Desolation.

Israel will:

Take root.

Blossom.

Sprout.

Bear fruit.

Cross References

Isaiah 37:31

The surviving remnant of Judah will again take root downward and bear fruit upward.

Hosea 14:5

God promises to refresh Israel like dew so that the people will blossom and send down roots.

John 15:5

Jesus teaches that those who remain in Him bear much fruit because apart from Him they can accomplish nothing of lasting spiritual value.

Spiritual Principle

Healthy fruit begins with deep roots.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before God fills the earth with fruit through His people, He first makes sure their roots are in Him.

VIII. GOD’S DISCIPLINE OF ISRAEL IS NOT THE SAME AS TOTAL DESTRUCTION

Isaiah 27:7 — Struck, But Not Abandoned

> **“Has He struck Israel as He struck her enemies? Has she been killed as her slayers were killed?”**

The implied answer is:

No.

God disciplined Israel.

But He did not deal with His covenant people exactly as He dealt with persistent enemies.

His discipline had:

Purpose.

Measure.

Restoration in view.

Cross References

Jeremiah 30:11

God promises to save His people, though He will discipline them justly and will not treat their sin as though it did not matter.

Jeremiah 46:28

Israel is told not to fear because God will preserve His people even while bringing appropriate correction.

Psalm 103:9

God does not continually accuse His people or remain angry forever.

Spiritual Principle

Divine discipline and divine rejection are not the same thing.

Key Truth

God can wound His people for correction without abandoning His purpose for them.

IX. GOD USED EXILE AS DISCIPLINE

Isaiah 27:8 — Driven by the East Wind

> **“By warfare and exile You contended with her; with His fierce blast He drove her out, as on a day when the east wind blows.”**

The discipline was:

Real.

Painful.

Historical.

It included:

War.

Exile.

Displacement.

The east wind commonly symbolized:

Harshness.

Scorching force.

Cross References

Lamentations 3:32

Though God permits grief, He also shows compassion according to the greatness of His faithful mercy.

Jonah 4:8

God appointed a scorching east wind that intensified Jonah’s discomfort and exposed what was happening in his heart.

Psalm 103:10

God has not treated His people according to the full measure their sins deserved or repaid them exactly according to their guilt.

Spiritual Principle

God’s discipline can be severe without being purposeless.

X. THE PURPOSE OF DISCIPLINE IS THE REMOVAL OF SIN

Isaiah 27:9 — Idolatry Crushed

> **“By this, then, will Jacob’s guilt be atoned for, and this will be the full fruit of removing his sin: When he makes all the altar stones like chalk stones crushed to pieces, no Asherah poles or pagan incense altars will be left standing.”**

The fruit of judgment is:

Repentance.

The evidence of cleansing is:

Idols destroyed.

False altars removed.

This verse does not teach that smashing stones earns forgiveness.

Rather:

The removal of idolatry demonstrates the purging effect of God’s discipline.

Cross References

Romans 11:27

Paul quotes prophetic promises concerning God removing Israel’s sins within His covenantal saving purpose.

Micah 5:13

God promises to cut down idols and sacred pillars so His people will no longer bow before the works of their hands.

Hosea 10:2

Because the people’s hearts are divided and guilty, their altars and sacred pillars will be broken down.

Spiritual Principle

Real repentance removes what previously competed with God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The proof that an idol has been judged is that we stop rebuilding it.

XI. ATONEMENT AND THE FRUIT OF REPENTANCE

Isaiah 27:9 must be read carefully.

The verse connects:

Guilt removed.

Idolatry destroyed.

It does not mean:

Human destruction of altars purchases forgiveness.

Within the larger biblical message:

God provides atonement.

Repentance demonstrates its fruit.

For believers, the ultimate basis of forgiveness is:

Christ’s atoning work.

The destruction of idols is the response of a heart being brought back to God.

Spiritual Principle

Forgiveness changes what we worship.

XII. THE FORTIFIED CITY BECOMES DESOLATE

Isaiah 27:10 — Human Security Fails

> **“The fortified city lies desolate, abandoned and forsaken like a wilderness. There the calves graze; they lie down and strip its branches bare.”**

A fortified city should be:

Busy.

Defended.

Populated.

Instead:

Animals graze there.

Human strength has disappeared.

Cross References

Isaiah 32:14

Palaces and populated cities are pictured deserted until animals occupy places once filled with people.

Micah 3:12

Zion and Jerusalem are warned of devastation so severe that their prominent places become overgrown ruins.

Isaiah 6:11

Isaiah was told that cities would eventually stand ruined and uninhabited because of persistent rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

A strong city without spiritual understanding can become an empty field.

XIII. A PEOPLE WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING FACE JUDGMENT

Isaiah 27:11 — The Creator Withholds Favor

> **“When its twigs are dry, they are broken off, and women come and use them for firewood. For this is a people without understanding; so their Maker will show them no compassion, and their Creator will grant them no favor.”**

The deepest problem is:

Lack of understanding.

Not mere intellectual ignorance.

But:

Spiritual blindness.

Covenant rebellion.

Failure to know:

Their Maker.

Cross References

John 15:6

Jesus says that a branch that does not remain in Him withers, is thrown away, and is eventually burned.

Hosea 4:6

God says His people are destroyed for lack of knowledge because they rejected the truth they were given.

Deuteronomy 32:28

Israel is described as a nation lacking wise counsel and spiritual understanding.

Spiritual Principle

The most dangerous ignorance is ignorance that refuses God.

XIV. GOD GATHERS ISRAEL ONE BY ONE

Isaiah 27:12 — The Lord’s Great Harvest

> **“In that day the Lord will thresh from the flowing Euphrates River to the brook of Egypt, and you, O children of Israel, will be gathered one by one.”**

The threshing imagery describes:

Separation.

Gathering.

Careful collection.

The people are not gathered:

As an anonymous mass.

But:

> **“One by one.”**

Cross References

Isaiah 11:12

God raises a banner for the nations and gathers the scattered people of Israel and Judah from distant places.

Ezekiel 37:21

God promises to take the children of Israel from among the nations and gather them back together.

Amos 9:9

Israel is pictured being sifted among the nations like grain, while God preserves what belongs to Him.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration is national in scope and personal in attention.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can gather a nation without losing sight of a single person.

XV. THE GREAT TRUMPET SOUNDS

Isaiah 27:13 — The Scattered Return to Worship

> **“And in that day a great trumpet will sound. Those who were perishing in Assyria and those who were exiles in Egypt will come and worship the Lord on the holy mountain in Jerusalem.”**

The chapter ends with:

A trumpet.

A gathering.

A return.

Worship.

Those once:

Perishing.

Exiled.

Scattered.

Now:

Come.

And the destination is not merely:

Land.

It is:

Worship.

Cross References

Matthew 24:31

Jesus speaks of a great trumpet accompanying the gathering of His chosen people from every direction.

1 Thessalonians 4:16

The return of the Lord is described with a commanding shout, the voice of an archangel, and the trumpet of God as the dead in Christ rise.

Zechariah 14:16

Survivors from the nations are pictured going up to worship the King, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

Spiritual Principle

God gathers people not merely to relocate them.

He gathers them:

To Himself.

Key Truth

The goal of restoration is worship.

XVI. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 27

1. God Defeats Evil

Leviathan falls.

Principle:

No force of chaos, evil, empire, or satanic rebellion can survive God’s final judgment.

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2. God Restores His Vineyard

The vineyard that once failed becomes:

Beloved.

Protected.

Fruitful.

Principle:

Failure does not exhaust God’s ability to restore.

---

3. God Watches Continually

He guards:

Night.

Day.

Principle:

God’s care never takes a shift off.

---

4. Peace with God Is Available

The invitation is:

> **“Make peace with Me.”**

Principle:

Reconciliation is better than resistance.

---

5. God Wants Fruitfulness

Israel takes root and fills the earth with fruit.

Principle:

Restoration has a purpose beyond survival.

---

6. God Disciplines Without Abandoning His People

Principle:

Correction can be evidence of covenant care rather than rejection.

---

7. Discipline Should Destroy Idolatry

Principle:

God’s correction is fruitful when false gods lose their place.

---

8. Human Strongholds Fall

The fortified city becomes:

Desolate.

Principle:

No security system can replace spiritual understanding.

---

9. God Gathers Personally

His people are gathered:

One by one.

Principle:

God’s plan is vast, but His care is personal.

---

10. Restoration Ends in Worship

The exiles come to:

The holy mountain.

Principle:

God does not merely bring His people out; He brings them back to Himself.

XVII. WHAT ISAIAH 27 TEACHES ABOUT EVIL

Evil is pictured as:

Serpentine.

Twisted.

Dragon-like.

Chaotic.

But never:

Sovereign.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Evil may be ancient.

God is eternal.

Evil may be terrifying.

God is Almighty.

XVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 27 TEACHES ABOUT SATAN

Revelation’s identification of:

The ancient serpent.

The dragon.

Satan.

Provides a broader biblical connection with Isaiah’s serpent imagery.

Yet Isaiah’s immediate language is poetic and may encompass more than one historical or spiritual enemy.

Spiritual Principle

Whatever hostile power Leviathan represents in the immediate setting, the Bible’s larger message remains:

God ultimately defeats the serpent.

XIX. WHAT ISAIAH 27 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S PEOPLE

God’s people are compared to:

A vineyard.

That means they are meant for:

Cultivation.

Growth.

Fruit.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not preserve His vineyard merely to keep it alive.

He preserves it so it will bear fruit.

XX. WHAT ISAIAH 27 TEACHES ABOUT DIVINE PROTECTION

God says:

> **“I guard it night and day.”**

Protection belongs to:

The Keeper.

Spiritual Principle

Your security does not depend upon your ability to stay awake all night if God never sleeps.

XXI. WHAT ISAIAH 27 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE WITH GOD

Peace is not achieved by:

Avoiding God.

Outrunning God.

Fighting God.

But by:

Coming to Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God we once feared as Judge becomes refuge when we are reconciled to Him.

XXII. WHAT ISAIAH 27 TEACHES ABOUT ROOTS

Jacob takes:

Root.

Only then:

Blossoms.

Then:

Fruit.

Spiritual Principle

God often works underground before others can see what He is producing above ground.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 27 TEACHES ABOUT FRUIT

The restored people fill:

The earth.

With:

Fruit.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s blessings are never meant to terminate entirely on the person receiving them.

They should become fruit for others.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 27 TEACHES ABOUT DISCIPLINE

Israel was:

Struck.

Exiled.

Driven.

But not:

Annihilated.

Spiritual Principle

God’s discipline has a different purpose from His final judgment of persistent rebellion.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 27 TEACHES ABOUT IDOLATRY

At the heart of restoration is:

Idol destruction.

Asherah poles fall.

False altars disappear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot fully return to God while insisting on keeping rival gods standing.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 27 TEACHES ABOUT UNDERSTANDING

The desolate people are described as:

Without understanding.

This means spiritual understanding matters.

Spiritual Principle

Knowledge of technology, politics, money, or culture cannot replace knowledge of God.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 27 TEACHES ABOUT GATHERING

God gathers:

One by one.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No exile is too far away for God to find.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 27 TEACHES ABOUT WORSHIP

The chapter does not end merely with:

National restoration.

But:

Worship.

Spiritual Principle

The highest purpose of deliverance is restored fellowship with God.

XXIX. THE FIERCE, GREAT, AND STRONG SWORD

Three descriptions emphasize:

Absolute adequacy.

God’s sword is:

Enough.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God never arrives at battle under-equipped.

XXX. THE SWIFT SERPENT

Evil can move:

Quickly.

Unexpectedly.

Strategically.

But:

God is not surprised.

Spiritual Principle

Speed does not create sovereignty.

XXXI. THE TWISTED SERPENT

The word:

Twisted.

Fits the nature of evil.

Sin:

Distorts.

Bends.

Corrupts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s truth is straight.

Sin is always twisting something God made good.

XXXII. THE DRAGON IN THE SEA

The sea often symbolizes:

Chaos.

Danger.

Uncontrolled power.

Yet:

The dragon in the sea is still within God’s reach.

Spiritual Principle

There is no depth where evil can hide from God.

XXXIII. THE VINEYARD OF WINE

The vineyard is no longer defined mainly by:

Failure.

It becomes:

Beloved.

Fruitful.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can write a new chapter over an old failure.

XXXIV. “I WATER IT CONTINUALLY”

Growth depends upon:

God’s provision.

Spiritual Principle

Fruitfulness requires continual grace.

XXXV. “I GUARD IT NIGHT AND DAY”

The vineyard is:

Never unattended.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s people are never between shifts of divine care.

XXXVI. BRIERS AND THORNS

God opposes what destroys:

The vineyard.

Spiritual Principle

God’s love for His vineyard includes opposition to what would choke it.

XXXVII. “MAKE PEACE WITH ME”

The repetition adds urgency.

God genuinely offers:

Reconciliation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The repeated invitation of grace should not be treated casually.

XXXVIII. JACOB TAKES ROOT

Roots suggest:

Stability.

Nourishment.

Identity.

Spiritual Principle

Shallow faith produces fragile fruit.

Deep roots sustain lasting growth.

XXXIX. ISRAEL BLOSSOMS

Blossoming signals:

Life returning.

Hope returning.

Fruit approaching.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God often gives blossoms before fruit to remind us that restoration is underway.

XL. FRUIT FILLS THE EARTH

The blessing expands beyond:

Israel.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restored people are meant to become instruments of blessing.

XLI. STRUCK, BUT NOT DESTROYED

God’s discipline should never be confused with:

Meaningless cruelty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The hand that disciplines His people is still the hand that keeps covenant.

XLII. THE EAST WIND

The east wind is:

Harsh.

Drying.

Painful.

Yet:

Temporary.

Spiritual Principle

A difficult wind can carry God’s corrective purpose.

XLIII. THE CRUSHED ALTARS

True restoration is visible.

False altars:

Come down.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Repentance is not merely saying:

“I am sorry.”

It changes what remains standing.

XLIV. THE DESOLATE CITY

The human stronghold loses:

Population.

Purpose.

Security.

Spiritual Principle

A city can be fortified against armies and still be defenseless against divine judgment.

XLV. THE DRY TWIGS

Dryness eventually becomes:

Breakage.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual deadness left unaddressed eventually produces visible collapse.

XLVI. “ONE BY ONE”

This is one of the most beautiful phrases in the chapter.

God’s gathering is:

Precise.

Personal.

Individual.

Spiritual Principle

The Shepherd does not merely count the flock.

He knows the sheep.

XLVII. THE GREAT TRUMPET

The trumpet announces:

Gathering.

Return.

Restoration.

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God knows how to call His scattered people home.

XLVIII. FROM ASSYRIA AND EGYPT

These represented major places of:

Oppression.

Exile.

Scattering.

Yet God gathers people from both.

Spiritual Principle

No place of exile lies beyond the reach of restoration.

XLIX. THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

The destination is:

Jerusalem.

But the purpose is:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Restoration is incomplete until the restored heart returns to worship.

L. ISAIAH 27 AND CHRIST

Several themes in Isaiah 27 find their fullest biblical expression in Christ.

Through Christ:

Peace with God is possible.

The true Vine gives life to His branches.

The serpent’s defeat is guaranteed.

God gathers a people to Himself.

Fruitfulness comes through abiding in Christ.

The New Testament therefore allows us to see Isaiah 27 within the larger redemptive story without erasing its original focus on:

Israel.

Restoration.

The nations.

Zion.

Spiritual Principle

Christ does not cancel Isaiah’s hope.

He brings its redemptive themes into their fullest biblical horizon.

LI. ISAIAH 27 AND ISRAEL

The chapter explicitly speaks of:

Jacob.

Israel.

The children of Israel.

Assyria.

Egypt.

Jerusalem.

Therefore the chapter should not be stripped of its historical and national dimension.

God promises:

Purging.

Fruitfulness.

Gathering.

Worship.

At the same time, the New Testament shows that themes of:

Reconciliation.

Fruitfulness.

Defeat of the serpent.

Final gathering.

Have broader fulfillment in God’s work through Christ.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Respect the original promise to Israel while also recognizing the larger redemptive pattern Scripture itself develops.

LII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who is defeated in Isaiah 27:1?

Leviathan, pictured as a swift and twisted serpent and a dragon of the sea.

Question 2

What does Leviathan represent?

At minimum, the imagery represents hostile powers of chaos and rebellion; in the larger biblical pattern it echoes God’s ultimate victory over satanic evil.

Question 3

How does God defeat Leviathan?

With His fierce, great, and strong sword.

Question 4

What image describes Israel in verses 2–6?

A vineyard.

Question 5

How does God care for the vineyard?

He watches over it, continually waters it, and guards it night and day.

Question 6

What does God offer those who might otherwise face judgment?

Refuge and peace with Him.

Question 7

What happens to Jacob in the future?

Jacob takes root, Israel blossoms and sprouts, and fruit spreads widely.

Question 8

Does God discipline Israel exactly as He judges her enemies?

No.

His discipline of Israel is corrective and purifying rather than simple annihilation.

Question 9

What is one major purpose of Israel’s discipline?

The removal of sin and idolatry.

Question 10

What evidence shows that idolatry has been purged?

False altars, Asherah poles, and pagan worship structures are torn down.

Question 11

What happens to the fortified city?

It becomes abandoned and desolate.

Question 12

Why is the people judged?

They are described as lacking spiritual understanding.

Question 13

How will God gather Israel?

One by one.

Question 14

From what regions are the scattered people described as returning?

Assyria and Egypt.

Question 15

What announces the gathering?

A great trumpet.

Question 16

What is the ultimate purpose of the return?

To worship the Lord on the holy mountain in Jerusalem.

LIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 27 asks several searching questions.

What Leviathan Am I Afraid Of?

Do I think some evil is:

Too large?

Too entrenched?

Too powerful?

For God?

Do I Believe God Watches Over His Vineyard?

Can I trust His care:

At night?

During uncertainty?

During danger?

Am I Bearing Fruit?

Or merely surviving?

Have I Made Peace with God?

Am I still resisting:

His authority?

His truth?

His grace?

What Briers and Thorns Need to Be Removed?

What is choking:

Faith?

Prayer?

Obedience?

Fruitfulness?

Is God Using Discipline to Purge Something from My Life?

What idol is He trying to bring down?

Am I Rebuilding an Altar God told me to destroy?

Is there something I keep returning to that competes with Him?

Do I Have Deep Roots?

Would my faith survive:

Heat?

Wind?

Pressure?

Do I Believe God Can Gather the Scattered?

A child?

Family member?

Church?

Nation?

Is Worship the Goal of My Restoration?

Or do I merely want circumstances fixed?

LIV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The God Who Slays the Serpent Is the Same God Who Waters the Vineyard”

Isaiah 27 reveals two sides of God’s sovereign action.

Against evil:

A sword.

Toward His vineyard:

Water.

Principle:

God is fierce against what destroys His people and tender toward the people He is restoring.

LV. THE SWORD AND THE WATERING CAN

The chapter moves immediately from:

Sword.

To:

Vineyard care.

This is important.

God is:

Warrior.

Gardener.

Judge.

Keeper.

Spiritual Principle

Divine power and divine tenderness are not contradictions.

LVI. THE GOD WHO NEVER SLEEPS

God guards:

Night.

Day.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Your greatest security is not how alert you are.

It is how faithful your Keeper is.

LVII. REFUGE INSTEAD OF RESISTANCE

Verse 5 offers a choice.

Fight God.

Or:

Take refuge in Him.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance means discovering that the One we resisted is the only One who can truly shelter us.

LVIII. ROOT BEFORE FRUIT

The order is:

Root.

Blossom.

Fruit.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God develops inward stability before lasting outward usefulness.

LIX. DISCIPLINE WITH PURPOSE

Israel’s exile was:

Painful.

But God’s purpose extended beyond:

Pain.

Toward:

Purification.

Spiritual Principle

Ask not only:

“Why does this hurt?”

Also ask:

“What does God want this to remove?”

LX. THE IDOLS MUST FALL

An idol is anything given:

Trust.

Love.

Fear.

Allegiance.

That belongs to God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not renovate idols.

He removes them.

LXI. THE CITY AND THE VINEYARD

The fortified city falls.

The vineyard flourishes.

Human security:

Fails.

God-cultivated life:

Bears fruit.

Spiritual Principle

Better to be a vine in God’s care than a fortress outside His will.

LXII. GATHERED ONE BY ONE

God’s restoration has:

Scale.

And:

Personal attention.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God never becomes so occupied with the multitude that He loses sight of the individual.

LXIII. THE TRUMPET AND THE RETURN

The trumpet means:

The scattered season is ending.

Spiritual Principle

God knows when exile has lasted long enough.

LXIV. THE FINAL DESTINATION IS WORSHIP

The people return to:

Jerusalem.

But the central action is:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not save us merely from something.

He saves us:

For Himself.

LXV. SEVEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 27

1. Leviathan → The Lord’s Sword

2. Wild Vineyard → Guarded Vineyard

3. Anger → Peace

4. Exile → Rooted Fruitfulness

5. Idolatry → Purity

6. Desolation → Gathering

7. Scattering → Worship

Key Truth

God’s final purpose is not chaos, exile, idolatry, or defeat, but victory over evil, purification of His people, fruitful restoration, and gathered worship.

LXVI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 27 begins with:

A dragon.

And ends with:

Worship.

That tells the story of redemption beautifully.

At the beginning:

Evil looks terrifying.

Leviathan is:

Swift.

Twisted.

Powerful.

Hidden in the sea.

Yet God does not tremble.

He draws:

His sword.

And the dragon falls.

That should remind us:

Never measure evil only by how terrifying it appears.

Measure it by:

The God who judges it.

Then the picture changes.

God is no longer holding a sword.

He is tending:

A vineyard.

He waters it.

Guards it.

Watches it.

Night.

Day.

This is the God of Scripture.

Against evil:

Fierce.

Toward His people:

Faithful.

Then comes the invitation:

“Let them make peace with Me.”

Perhaps that is the most important invitation in the chapter.

You do not have to remain:

At war with God.

Afraid of God.

Running from God.

Peace is possible.

The New Testament shows that peace with God comes through:

Jesus Christ.

Then Israel begins:

Taking root.

Blossoming.

Bearing fruit.

That is what God wants from restored lives.

Not merely:

Survival.

Fruit.

Then comes discipline.

God’s people had idols.

False altars.

Competing loyalties.

So God’s discipline works toward:

Purification.

That gives us a difficult but necessary question.

When God corrects us:

What is He trying to remove?

Sometimes we want:

Relief.

God wants:

Holiness.

We want:

The pressure gone.

God wants:

The idol gone.

Isaiah says the evidence of purification is that:

The false altars are crushed.

Do not rebuild what God has torn down.

Then the chapter ends with:

Gathering.

God threshes.

Searches.

Collects.

And remarkably:

“You will be gathered one by one.”

One by one.

God sees:

The nation.

And:

The individual.

He knows:

Where the scattered are.

Where the exiles are.

Where the discouraged are.

Where the wandering are.

Then:

The trumpet sounds.

The scattered return.

And what do they do?

They worship.

That is where the chapter was always headed.

From:

Serpent.

To vineyard.

From:

Judgment.

To peace.

From:

Exile.

To gathering.

From:

Scattering.

To worship.

Therefore:

Do not fear Leviathan more than you trust God.

Make peace with the Lord.

Put down deep roots.

Bear fruit.

Let God tear down every idol.

Trust His discipline.

Believe He can gather what has been scattered.

And remember:

The God who defeats the dragon is also the God who waters the vineyard.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are greater than every power of:

Chaos.

Evil.

Darkness.

Satan.

Rebellion.

Thank You that no enemy is equal to You.

When evil looks powerful:

Remind us of Your great and strong sword.

When fear rises:

Remind us that You reign.

Father, thank You for watching over Your vineyard.

Thank You that You:

Water.

Guard.

Keep.

Protect.

Night and day.

Help us rest in Your faithful care.

Father, thank You for inviting sinners to:

Make peace with You.

Thank You for Jesus Christ.

Thank You that through Him we can be:

Reconciled.

Forgiven.

Restored.

Help us take:

Deep roots.

Make our lives:

Blossom.

Produce fruit.

Use us to bless:

Others.

Father, when You discipline us:

Give us humility to listen.

Show us the idols that must come down.

Help us destroy every false altar in our hearts.

Keep us from rebuilding what You have called us to abandon.

Father, thank You that You gather Your people:

One by one.

Bring home:

The wandering.

The scattered.

The discouraged.

The distant.

Call them back to Yourself.

And when the great trumpet sounds:

May we be among those gathered to worship You.

Let every restoration in our lives end where Isaiah 27 ends:

In worship.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"I, the Lord, watch over it; I water it continually. I guard it night and day, so no one may harm it." — Isaiah 27:3**

Central Truth

The Lord will ultimately defeat every force of evil, lovingly guard and restore His vineyard, call sinners to make peace with Him, purge His people from idolatry, cause Israel to take root and bear fruit, gather the scattered one by one, and bring them back to worship Him in Zion.

Isaiah 27 in One Sentence

Isaiah declares that the Lord will slay the serpent-like power of evil, restore and continually guard His vineyard, invite people to make peace with Him, purge Israel's idolatry through discipline, bring proud strongholds to desolation, gather His scattered people one by one, and call them home by the great trumpet to worship Him in Jerusalem.

Isaiah Chapter 28 — The Woe Against Ephraim’s Pride and the Cornerstone in Zion

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 28 begins a new series of prophetic warnings marked by the word:

> **“Woe.”**

The chapter first addresses:

Ephraim.

The northern kingdom of Israel.

Its leaders had become characterized by:

Pride.

Drunkenness.

Self-confidence.

Spiritual blindness.

Their beautiful and fertile land had become like:

A fading flower.

Their glory looked impressive.

But it was already dying.

Isaiah then contrasts two crowns.

The first is:

The proud crown of Ephraim.

It fades.

It falls.

It is trampled.

The second is:

The Lord Himself.

Isaiah says:

> **“The Lord Almighty will be a crown of glory.”**

Human glory fades.

God does not.

The chapter then turns toward:

Priests.

Prophets.

Religious leaders.

Those who should have provided:

Spiritual clarity.

Moral leadership.

Sound judgment.

Instead, they stagger because of:

Wine.

Strong drink.

Their judgment is corrupted.

Their tables are defiled.

Their minds are clouded.

Then Isaiah records the mocking response of those who reject God’s message.

They complain that the prophet’s teaching sounds like:

“Rule on rule, rule on rule, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little.”

The language may reflect their sarcastic ridicule of Isaiah’s repeated warnings.

They treat God’s instruction as:

Childish.

Repetitive.

Annoying.

Because they refuse clear revelation, God says they will hear:

Foreign lips.

Strange tongues.

The language they mocked will be replaced by the language of:

Conquerors.

God offered:

Rest.

Repose.

But:

> **“They would not listen.”**

The chapter then shifts to Judah’s rulers.

They have created what Isaiah calls:

A covenant with death.

An agreement with the grave.

This probably represents their confidence in political arrangements, deceptive alliances, and human strategies they believed would protect them from invading judgment.

Their security is built upon:

Lies.

Falsehood.

God answers their false foundation with:

A true foundation.

> **“See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation.”**

The New Testament directly applies this cornerstone to:

Jesus Christ.

There are therefore two foundations in the chapter:

A refuge of lies.

And:

God’s Cornerstone.

One collapses.

The other stands.

Finally Isaiah uses the wisdom of farming to explain:

God’s discipline.

A farmer does not:

Plow forever.

Thresh every crop the same way.

Crush grain endlessly.

He knows:

What tool to use.

How much pressure to apply.

When to stop.

Isaiah says this agricultural wisdom ultimately comes from:

God.

The message is powerful:

God’s discipline is neither:

Random.

Thoughtless.

Cruel.

Endless.

It is:

Measured.

Wise.

Purposeful.

The central truth of Isaiah 28 is:

Pride, drunkenness, corrupted leadership, mockery of God’s Word, and false security will collapse under divine judgment, but God has laid a sure and precious Cornerstone in Zion, and those who trust in Him will stand secure under the wise, measured, and purposeful discipline of the Lord.

I. WOE TO EPHRAIM’S PROUD CROWN

Isaiah 28:1 — Fading Glory

> **“Woe to the proud crown of Ephraim’s drunkards, to its fading flower of glorious beauty, set on the head of a fertile valley—to those overcome with wine!”**

Ephraim represented:

The northern kingdom.

Its capital region was:

Beautiful.

Fertile.

Prosperous.

But Isaiah calls its glory:

A fading flower.

Why?

Because:

Pride.

Drunkenness.

Spiritual decay.

Had corrupted it.

Cross References

Hosea 4:11

Sexual sin and intoxication rob people of sound judgment and take away spiritual understanding.

Proverbs 23:29

Those who linger over alcohol bring sorrow, conflict, complaints, wounds, and impaired judgment upon themselves.

James 1:11

Like a flower scorched by the sun, human prosperity and outward beauty can quickly fade away.

Spiritual Principle

A beautiful society can be spiritually dying beneath the surface.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not mistake outward prosperity for inward health.

II. GOD HAS A STRONG AND MIGHTY INSTRUMENT

Isaiah 28:2 — Judgment Like a Storm

> **“See, the Lord has one who is strong and mighty. Like a hailstorm and a destructive wind, like a flood of mighty waters overflowing, he will throw it violently to the ground with his hand.”**

The image is overwhelming.

Judgment comes like:

Hail.

Wind.

Flood.

Historically, Assyria stands behind this imagery as the great imperial instrument threatening the northern kingdom.

But the greater emphasis is:

The Lord controls the event.

Cross References

Isaiah 30:30

The Lord’s judgment is pictured with thunder, storm, fire, cloudburst, hail, and overwhelming force.

Ezekiel 13:11

God warns that a falsely built wall will collapse under flooding rain, destructive hail, and violent winds.

Revelation 16:21

Final judgment imagery includes enormous hail falling upon humanity under divine wrath.

Spiritual Principle

What pride builds slowly can be swept away quickly.

III. EPHRAIM’S CROWN WILL BE TRAMPLED

Isaiah 28:3 — Pride Underfoot

> **“The proud crown of Ephraim’s drunkards will be trampled underfoot.”**

The crown symbolizes:

Honor.

Pride.

Status.

Prestige.

Soon:

It is under someone’s feet.

Cross References

Proverbs 16:18

Pride leads toward destruction, and arrogance prepares the way for collapse.

Daniel 4:37

Nebuchadnezzar finally acknowledges that God is able to humble everyone who walks in pride.

Obadiah 1:3

Pride deceives those who feel secure and convinces them that no one can bring them down.

Spiritual Principle

Pride always believes:

“I will remain above.”

God can put it:

Underfoot.

IV. EPHRAIM WILL FALL LIKE AN EARLY FIG

Isaiah 28:4 — Quickly Devoured

> **“That fading flower of glorious beauty, set on the head of a fertile valley, will be like a ripe fig before summer. As soon as someone sees it and takes it in his hand, he swallows it down.”**

An early ripe fig is:

Desired.

Immediately eaten.

The image communicates:

Speed.

Ease.

Sudden conquest.

Cross References

James 1:10

The rich should remember that earthly glory passes away like a flower.

Nahum 3:12

Fortresses are compared to fig trees with ripe fruit that fall immediately when shaken.

Psalm 103:15

Human life and glory are compared to grass and flowers that flourish briefly and then disappear.

Spiritual Principle

What looks attractive and secure can disappear quickly when judgment arrives.

V. THE LORD BECOMES THE TRUE CROWN

Isaiah 28:5 — A Crown That Does Not Fade

> **“In that day the Lord Almighty will be a crown of glory, a beautiful wreath for the remnant of His people.”**

What a contrast.

Ephraim’s crown:

Fades.

God:

Becomes the crown.

Human glory is replaced by:

Divine glory.

Cross References

Isaiah 62:3

God’s restored people are pictured as a beautiful crown and royal diadem held securely in the Lord’s hand.

Zechariah 9:16

God’s people are pictured like precious stones shining in His land when He saves them.

Revelation 2:10

Christ promises the crown of life to those who remain faithful even through suffering.

Spiritual Principle

The safest glory is:

God Himself.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God becomes your crown, you no longer need fading human glory to tell you who you are.

VI. GOD GIVES JUSTICE AND STRENGTH

Isaiah 28:6 — Wisdom in Court and Strength at the Gate

> **“He will be a spirit of justice to the one who sits in judgment, a source of strength to those who turn back the battle at the gate.”**

God provides:

Wisdom.

Justice.

Strength.

For:

Judges.

Defenders.

Leadership functions correctly only when:

God supplies what is needed.

Cross References

Isaiah 11:2

The Spirit of the Lord rests upon the Messiah with wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge, and reverence for God.

1 Kings 3:9

Solomon asks God for a discerning heart so he can judge the people rightly and distinguish good from evil.

Psalm 18:39

God equips His servant with strength for battle and enables him to stand against opposition.

Spiritual Principle

Good leadership requires more than office.

It requires:

God-given wisdom and strength.

VII. PRIESTS AND PROPHETS ARE DRUNK

Isaiah 28:7 — Spiritual Leaders Lose Judgment

> **“But these also reel from wine and stagger from strong drink; priests and prophets stagger with drink, they are befuddled with wine, they stumble in judgment.”**

This is especially serious because:

Priests.

Prophets.

Should guide:

Others.

Instead:

They cannot guide themselves.

Alcohol has clouded:

Discernment.

Judgment.

Spiritual responsibility.

Cross References

Isaiah 5:11

Isaiah condemns those who chase strong drink from early morning and continue drinking late into the night.

Micah 2:11

Micah says a people committed to falsehood would gladly accept a prophet who promised them wine and strong drink.

1 Timothy 3:3

Christian overseers are instructed not to be addicted to wine or controlled by violent, undisciplined habits.

Spiritual Principle

A leader who cannot govern himself is dangerous when asked to guide others.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual leadership and impaired judgment should never be treated as compatible.

VIII. THEIR TABLES ARE DEFILED

Isaiah 28:8 — No Clean Place

> **“Their tables are covered with vomit; there is not a clean spot.”**

Isaiah does not soften the image.

This is:

Disgusting.

Humiliating.

Deliberate.

The leaders who should represent:

Holiness.

Are surrounded by:

Defilement.

Cross References

Proverbs 23:21

Drunkenness and gluttony lead to poverty, laziness, and degradation.

2 Peter 2:22

Persistent return to corruption is compared to a dog returning to its vomit and a washed animal returning to filth.

Habakkuk 2:16

Those who sought honor through indulgence will instead be filled with shame and humiliation.

Spiritual Principle

Sin eventually reveals its ugliness.

IX. THE PEOPLE MOCK GOD’S TEACHING

Isaiah 28:9 — “Who Is He Trying to Teach?”

> **“‘Who is He trying to teach knowledge to? To whom is He explaining His message? To children just weaned from milk, to those just taken from the breast?’”**

Many interpreters understand verses 9–10 as mocking speech.

The leaders resent Isaiah’s repetitive preaching.

They are essentially saying:

Does he think we are:

Babies?

Children?

People needing elementary lessons?

The problem is not:

God’s message.

The problem is:

Their pride.

Cross References

Hebrews 5:13

Someone still living only on milk is compared to an infant who lacks maturity in understanding righteousness.

1 Corinthians 3:2

Paul tells spiritually immature believers that he had to feed them with milk rather than solid food because they were not ready for deeper instruction.

1 Peter 2:2

Believers are encouraged to desire pure spiritual nourishment like newborn infants long for milk so they may grow.

Spiritual Principle

Pride can make simple truth feel insulting.

X. “LINE UPON LINE”

Isaiah 28:10 — Repeated Instruction Mocked

> **“For it is rule on rule, rule on rule, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little.’”**

This line has often been used positively to describe:

Careful Bible teaching.

And the principle of learning truth progressively certainly has value.

But in this immediate context, Isaiah appears to be quoting or echoing the people’s sarcastic complaint.

They mock the repetitive sound of:

Instruction.

Command.

Warning.

They resent hearing:

The same truth.

Again.

And again.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 6:7

God commanded His people to teach His words repeatedly to their children during daily life—at home, on the road, at bedtime, and in the morning.

2 Timothy 2:15

God’s servant is instructed to handle the Word of truth accurately and responsibly.

Hebrews 5:12

Some believers should have matured enough to teach others, yet still needed instruction in the basic truths of God.

Spiritual Principle

Truth may need repetition because hearts are often slow to learn.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not despise repeated truth simply because you have heard it before.

XI. GOD WILL SPEAK THROUGH FOREIGN LIPS

Isaiah 28:11 — Judgment Through Another Language

> **“Very well then, with foreign lips and strange tongues God will speak to this people,”**

They mocked:

God’s clear Word.

So eventually they will hear:

Foreign speech.

The language of invading forces.

Paul later cites this passage in:

1 Corinthians 14.

There it becomes part of his argument about tongues functioning as a sign.

Cross References

1 Corinthians 14:21

Paul quotes Isaiah to explain that God once spoke to unbelieving people through foreign languages, yet even then they would not listen.

Deuteronomy 28:49

Israel was warned that covenant rebellion could bring a distant nation against them whose language they could not understand.

Jeremiah 5:15

God warns Judah that He will bring an ancient and powerful nation whose language the people do not understand.

Spiritual Principle

Those who reject understandable truth may eventually learn through painful consequences.

XII. GOD OFFERED REST

Isaiah 28:12 — “But They Would Not Listen”

> **“To whom He said, ‘This is the resting place, let the weary rest; and this is the place of repose’—but they would not listen.”**

God offered:

Rest.

Relief.

Repose.

They refused:

To listen.

The tragedy is not merely that judgment came.

It is that:

Rest was offered first.

Cross References

Matthew 11:28

Jesus invites the weary and burdened to come to Him and receive rest.

Jeremiah 6:16

God called His people to seek the ancient good path and walk in it so they would find rest for their souls, but they refused.

Hebrews 4:9

A Sabbath-like rest remains available for the people of God.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment is especially tragic when rest was offered and rejected.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s invitation should be received before His warning becomes consequence.

XIII. THE MOCKED WORD BECOMES JUDGMENT

Isaiah 28:13 — Fall, Injury, Snare, Captivity

> **“So then, the word of the Lord to them will become: rule on rule, rule on rule, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little—so that as they go they will fall backward, be injured, snared, and captured.”**

What they mocked becomes:

Judgment.

They treated God’s message as:

Meaningless repetition.

But the result of rejecting it is:

Fall.

Injury.

Snare.

Capture.

Cross References

2 Corinthians 2:16

The gospel message has different effects: to some it is associated with life, while to others it becomes connected with judgment and death because of rejection.

John 18:6

When Jesus identifies Himself to those coming to arrest Him, they draw back and fall to the ground.

Isaiah 8:15

Many will stumble, fall, be broken, snared, and captured because they reject the Lord’s appointed foundation.

Spiritual Principle

The Word we reject does not become powerless because we reject it.

XIV. GOD ADDRESSES JERUSALEM’S SCOFFING RULERS

Isaiah 28:14 — Hear the Word of the Lord

> **“Therefore hear the word of the Lord, you scoffers who rule this people in Jerusalem.”**

The audience shifts toward:

Jerusalem.

Its rulers are called:

Scoffers.

That is dangerous because mockery has reached:

Leadership.

Cross References

Proverbs 1:22

Wisdom asks how long mockers will delight in mocking and fools continue hating knowledge.

Proverbs 9:12

Those who gain wisdom benefit themselves, but mockers ultimately bear the consequences of their own scorn.

Amos 7:16

A resistant religious leader tells Amos not to prophesy against Israel, showing hostility toward God’s warning.

Spiritual Principle

A mocking population is dangerous.

Mocking leadership is even more dangerous.

XV. A COVENANT WITH DEATH

Isaiah 28:15 — Lies as Refuge

> **“You boast, ‘We have made a covenant with death, and with the grave we have made an agreement. When the overwhelming scourge sweeps by, it cannot touch us, for we have made lies our refuge and falsehood our hiding place.’”**

This is probably Isaiah’s biting description of Judah’s false political confidence.

They believe their:

Agreements.

Strategies.

Diplomacy.

Deception.

Will protect them.

Isaiah exposes the spiritual reality:

They are trusting:

Death.

Lies.

Falsehood.

Cross References

Amos 9:2

Even if people attempt to hide in the depths or climb to the heavens, they cannot escape the Lord’s judgment.

Jeremiah 13:25

Judgment comes because God’s people forgot Him and placed confidence in falsehood.

Psalm 55:23

God brings violent and deceitful people down because deception cannot provide permanent security.

Spiritual Principle

A lie can feel safe before it is tested.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

False security is still insecurity, no matter how convincing it feels.

XVI. GOD LAYS A PRECIOUS CORNERSTONE IN ZION

Isaiah 28:16 — The Sure Foundation

> **“So this is what the Sovereign Lord says: ‘See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be shaken.’”**

Here stands the answer to:

False refuge.

Lies.

Political security.

Human foundations.

God Himself provides:

A stone.

Tested.

Precious.

Foundational.

The New Testament identifies this cornerstone with:

Jesus Christ.

Cross References

Romans 9:33

Paul combines prophetic cornerstone imagery and applies it to Christ, declaring that those who trust in Him will not be put to shame.

1 Peter 2:6

Peter directly applies Isaiah’s promise to Jesus Christ, the chosen and precious cornerstone, and says the believer in Him will never be ultimately disgraced.

Ephesians 2:20

The church is pictured as God’s household built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone.

Spiritual Principle

God does not merely expose false foundations.

He provides:

The true one.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A refuge of lies collapses.

Christ the Cornerstone stands.

XVII. CHRIST THE CORNERSTONE

Isaiah 28:16 has a clear New Testament fulfillment.

Jesus is:

The tested Stone.

The precious Stone.

The chosen Stone.

The Cornerstone.

A cornerstone established:

Alignment.

Stability.

Direction.

A building out of alignment with the cornerstone was:

Wrong.

So it is with:

Christ.

He is not an addition to the foundation.

He is:

The Foundation Stone by which everything else is measured.

Spiritual Principle

The question is not merely:

“What am I building?”

But:

“What am I building on?”

XVIII. JUSTICE BECOMES THE MEASURING LINE

Isaiah 28:17 — Lies Swept Away

> **“I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plumb line; hail will sweep away your refuge of lies, and water will flood your hiding place.”**

God measures:

Accurately.

Justice is:

The line.

Righteousness:

The plumb line.

Everything crooked is exposed.

Cross References

Amos 7:8

God uses the image of a plumb line to show that He is measuring His people according to His righteous standard.

2 Kings 21:13

God says He will measure Jerusalem with the same strict standard used against previously judged cities.

Matthew 7:27

Jesus describes the house built on a poor foundation collapsing when rain, floods, and winds test it.

Spiritual Principle

God does not measure righteousness by public opinion.

He uses:

His standard.

XIX. THE COVENANT WITH DEATH IS CANCELLED

Isaiah 28:18 — False Agreements Fail

> **“Your covenant with death will be annulled; your agreement with the grave will not stand. When the overwhelming scourge sweeps by, you will be beaten down by it.”**

The people thought:

We have arranged protection.

God says:

No.

Their agreement cannot:

Override God.

Cross References

Isaiah 8:8

The Assyrian flood is pictured sweeping through Judah until the waters rise nearly to the neck.

Nahum 1:8

God overwhelms His enemies like a rushing flood and pursues darkness and rebellion.

Daniel 9:26

Daniel describes devastating conflict, destruction, and desolation coming according to the determined course of events.

Spiritual Principle

No human agreement can nullify divine accountability.

XX. JUDGMENT COMES AGAIN AND AGAIN

Isaiah 28:19 — Sheer Terror

> **“As often as it comes it will carry you away; morning after morning, by day and by night, it will sweep through.’ The understanding of this message will bring sheer terror.”**

Judgment becomes:

Repeated.

Relentless.

Morning.

Day.

Night.

Once they finally understand Isaiah’s warning:

Terror.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:67

Under judgment people experience continual dread, wishing for morning at night and night in the morning because of fear.

Jeremiah 15:8

Disaster comes unexpectedly and repeatedly upon a rebellious nation.

Lamentations 3:23

In contrast to repeated judgment, God’s mercies are also described as new every morning, demonstrating His continuing faithfulness to His people.

Spiritual Principle

The time to understand warning is:

Before.

Not:

After consequences arrive.

XXI. THE BED IS TOO SHORT

Isaiah 28:20 — False Security Cannot Provide Rest

> **“The bed is too short to stretch out on, the blanket too narrow to wrap around in.”**

This is vivid.

A short bed gives:

No rest.

A narrow blanket gives:

No covering.

So Judah’s false strategies provide:

No real security.

Cross References

Isaiah 30:7

Egypt’s promised help is described as useless and ineffective when Judah relies upon it instead of God.

Job 15:31

Those who trust in what is worthless deceive themselves, because emptiness becomes their reward.

Matthew 7:26

Jesus compares the one who hears His words but does not obey them to a foolish builder who constructs a house on sand.

Spiritual Principle

A false refuge may appear comfortable until you actually need it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not wait for the storm to discover that your blanket is too small.

XXII. THE LORD PERFORMS HIS STRANGE WORK

Isaiah 28:21 — Judgment Is His Unusual Task

> **“The Lord will rise up as He did at Mount Perazim, He will rouse Himself as in the Valley of Gibeon—to do His work, His strange work, and perform His task, His unusual task.”**

At Perazim and Gibeon:

God fought for His people.

Now:

The shocking thing is that He rises in judgment against His own rebellious people.

That is why it is described as:

Strange.

Unusual.

Judgment is real.

Yet Scripture consistently reveals that God delights in:

Mercy.

Not rebellion.

Cross References

2 Samuel 5:20

God gave David victory over the Philistines at Baal-perazim and broke through the enemy before him.

Joshua 10:10

The Lord threw Israel’s enemies into confusion at Gibeon and gave His people victory.

Habakkuk 1:5

God warns that He is doing a work so astonishing that people would scarcely believe it even if it were explained to them.

Spiritual Principle

The God who once fought for them can discipline them when they rebel against Him.

XXIII. STOP MOCKING

Isaiah 28:22 — Chains Can Become Heavier

> **“Now stop your mocking, or your chains will become heavier; for the Lord, the Lord Almighty, has told me of destruction decreed against the whole land.”**

This is both:

Warning.

Invitation.

Stop now.

Mockery can still be:

Abandoned.

But continued rebellion increases:

Consequences.

Cross References

Isaiah 10:23

God announces a determined and decisive judgment that will be carried out throughout the land.

Daniel 9:27

Daniel speaks of desolation and judgment continuing until what has been decreed is completed.

2 Peter 3:3

Peter warns that scoffers will arise, following their own desires and mocking God’s promised intervention.

Spiritual Principle

Mockery may feel powerful.

It does not cancel truth.

XXIV. GOD CALLS PEOPLE TO LISTEN

Isaiah 28:23 — Hear and Pay Attention

> **“Listen and hear my voice; pay attention and hear what I say.”**

The tone changes.

Isaiah now introduces:

A farming illustration.

But first:

Listen.

Cross References

Psalm 78:1

God’s people are called to listen carefully to instruction and turn their ears toward the teaching being given.

Proverbs 4:20

A child is urged to pay attention to wise words and listen closely to sound instruction.

Matthew 13:9

Jesus repeatedly calls anyone with ears to hear to listen carefully to His teaching.

Spiritual Principle

Wisdom often begins with:

Listening.

XXV. THE FARMER DOES NOT PLOW FOREVER

Isaiah 28:24 — Plowing Has a Purpose

> **“When a farmer plows for planting, does he plow continually? Does he keep on breaking up and working the soil?”**

The answer is:

No.

Plowing is:

Necessary.

But temporary.

The farmer does not destroy the field by:

Endless plowing.

He prepares it for:

Seed.

Cross References

1 Corinthians 9:10

Paul explains that the plowman and thresher work in hope of eventually sharing in the harvest.

Hosea 10:11

God uses agricultural imagery of plowing and cultivation to describe the work required in preparing His people.

Luke 17:7

Jesus refers to a servant returning from plowing or tending fields, illustrating ordinary agricultural labor and duty.

Spiritual Principle

Preparation is not the destination.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may break up hard ground because He intends to plant something there.

XXVI. DIFFERENT SEEDS ARE PLANTED DIFFERENTLY

Isaiah 28:25 — Wisdom in Sowing

> **“When he has leveled the surface, does he not sow caraway and scatter cumin? Does he not plant wheat in its place, barley in its plot, and spelt in its field?”**

The farmer understands:

Order.

Placement.

Timing.

Different seeds receive:

Different treatment.

Cross References

Matthew 13:3

Jesus tells of a farmer going out to sow seed, using ordinary agricultural practice as a picture of spiritual truth.

Mark 4:3

Jesus again commands His hearers to listen as He describes a sower scattering seed.

Luke 8:5

A farmer goes out to sow seed, and the results vary according to where the seed falls.

Spiritual Principle

Wisdom recognizes that not everything should be handled identically.

XXVII. GOD TEACHES THE FARMER

Isaiah 28:26 — Wisdom Comes from God

> **“His God instructs him and teaches him the right way.”**

Agricultural wisdom itself:

Comes from God.

Human skill ultimately reflects:

Divine wisdom.

Cross References

James 1:5

Anyone lacking wisdom is encouraged to ask God, who gives generously to those who seek Him.

Proverbs 2:6

The Lord gives wisdom, and true knowledge and understanding come from Him.

Job 35:11

God is the One who teaches humanity and gives greater understanding than instinct alone can provide.

Spiritual Principle

Practical wisdom is also a gift from God.

XXVIII. SMALL SEEDS ARE THRESHED GENTLY

Isaiah 28:27 — Measured Pressure

> **“Caraway is not threshed with a sledge, nor is a cartwheel rolled over cumin; caraway is beaten out with a rod, and cumin with a stick.”**

Different crops require:

Different treatment.

Too much force would:

Destroy.

Rather than:

Separate.

Cross References

1 Corinthians 9:9

Paul quotes the law protecting the ox while it works in threshing, showing God’s concern even within agricultural labor.

Ruth 2:17

Ruth beat out what she had gleaned, using a suitable process to separate usable grain from the stalk.

Judges 6:11

Gideon threshed wheat in hiding during Midianite oppression, illustrating the ordinary practice of separating grain.

Spiritual Principle

God knows how much pressure each situation requires.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The divine Farmer never confuses threshing with destroying.

XXIX. GRAIN IS NOT THRESHED FOREVER

Isaiah 28:28 — Discipline Has a Limit

> **“Grain must be ground to make bread; but one does not go on threshing it forever. The wheels of a cart may crush it, but he does not grind it to dust.”**

This is the heart of the farming analogy.

The farmer applies:

Pressure.

But:

Not forever.

Why?

Because his objective is:

Bread.

Not:

Destruction.

Cross References

Amos 1:3

God condemns Damascus for extreme cruelty pictured as threshing people with iron instruments, showing destructive oppression rather than measured discipline.

2 Samuel 12:31

David’s conquest imagery includes severe treatment associated with implements and forced labor, illustrating how destructive human power can become.

Matthew 3:12

The Messiah is pictured separating wheat from chaff, gathering the wheat and judging what is worthless.

Spiritual Principle

God’s correction has:

Purpose.

Measure.

An end.

Key Truth

The Farmer knows when to stop threshing.

XXX. GOD’S PLAN IS WONDERFUL AND HIS WISDOM MAGNIFICENT

Isaiah 28:29 — The Final Explanation

> **“All this also comes from the Lord Almighty, whose plan is wonderful, whose wisdom is magnificent.”**

The chapter ends with:

Wisdom.

God knows:

How to judge.

How to discipline.

How to correct.

How to preserve.

How to restore.

Cross References

Isaiah 9:6

The coming Messiah is associated with wonderful counsel, divine strength, enduring care, and royal peace.

Job 12:13

Wisdom and power belong to God, and counsel and understanding are His.

Romans 11:33

Paul marvels at the immeasurable depth of God’s wisdom and knowledge and the unsearchable character of His judgments and ways.

Spiritual Principle

When God’s methods confuse us, His wisdom has not failed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God always knows whether the field needs:

Plowing.

Planting.

Threshing.

Or:

Rest.

XXXI. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 28

1. Pride Produces Collapse

Ephraim’s crown:

Fades.

Principle:

Human glory is temporary when separated from God.

---

2. Drunkenness Corrupts Judgment

Leaders stagger.

Principle:

Anything that controls the mind can impair spiritual responsibility.

---

3. God Is the True Crown

Principle:

Human honor fades; God’s glory endures.

---

4. Mocking God’s Word Is Dangerous

Principle:

Ridicule does not make truth less true.

---

5. God Offers Rest Before Judgment

Principle:

Grace often speaks before consequences arrive.

---

6. Lies Cannot Become a Safe Refuge

Principle:

False security fails precisely when security is most needed.

---

7. Christ Is the Sure Cornerstone

Principle:

Everything built upon Christ has the only foundation that cannot ultimately fail.

---

8. God Measures by Justice and Righteousness

Principle:

Human standards do not replace God’s plumb line.

---

9. God’s Discipline Is Measured

Principle:

The Farmer knows how much pressure to use and when to stop.

---

10. God’s Wisdom Surpasses Human Strategy

Principle:

His counsel is wonderful and His wisdom magnificent.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 28 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

Ephraim has:

A crown.

Beauty.

Fertility.

But pride turns:

Glory.

Into:

A fading flower.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride makes temporary blessings feel permanent.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 28 TEACHES ABOUT INTOXICATION

Drunkenness affects:

Personal judgment.

National leadership.

Spiritual discernment.

Spiritual Principle

What dulls discernment should never be allowed to govern spiritual responsibility.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 28 TEACHES ABOUT LEADERSHIP

Priests and prophets are not exempt from:

Discipline.

Accountability.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The more influence a leader possesses, the more dangerous impaired judgment becomes.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 28 TEACHES ABOUT MOCKERY

The leaders mock:

God’s teaching.

Isaiah warns:

Their chains can become heavier.

Spiritual Principle

Mockery may delay repentance until repentance becomes harder.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 28 TEACHES ABOUT THE WORD OF GOD

God’s Word can become:

Rest.

Instruction.

Life.

But when rejected:

It becomes testimony against the rebel.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

How you respond to truth helps determine what truth becomes in your life.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 28 TEACHES ABOUT REST

God said:

> **“Let the weary rest.”**

They refused.

Spiritual Principle

God’s rest must be received.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 28 TEACHES ABOUT FALSE SECURITY

Judah trusts:

Agreements.

Strategies.

Lies.

God says:

They will fail.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse a plan with a foundation.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 28 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

The Cornerstone is directly applied to:

Jesus.

He is:

Tested.

Precious.

Sure.

Spiritual Principle

Christ is not one option among many foundations.

He is God’s appointed foundation.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 28 TEACHES ABOUT JUSTICE

God uses:

A measuring line.

A plumb line.

His standard is:

Straight.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God never adjusts the plumb line merely because society prefers a crooked wall.

XLI. WHAT ISAIAH 28 TEACHES ABOUT DISCIPLINE

The farmer analogy teaches:

Purpose.

Variation.

Restraint.

Wisdom.

Spiritual Principle

God does not handle every person or circumstance identically.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 28 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S WISDOM

The chapter ends with:

Wonder.

Not:

Confusion.

The farmer’s wisdom reflects:

God’s wisdom.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If the farmer knows what the seed needs, how much more does God know what His people need?

XLIII. THE FADING FLOWER

Ephraim looks:

Beautiful.

But is:

Fading.

Spiritual Principle

Do not judge permanence by appearance.

XLIV. THE TRUE CROWN

The best crown is:

The Lord Himself.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God is your glory, you are less controlled by human applause.

XLV. DRUNKEN PROPHETS

A prophet requires:

Clarity.

Intoxication creates:

Confusion.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual responsibility demands sobriety of mind.

XLVI. CHILDREN JUST WEANED

Their insult reveals:

Pride.

They think they are too advanced for:

Basic truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The person who thinks he has outgrown foundational truth has usually not mastered it.

XLVII. LINE UPON LINE

Even though the phrase occurs within mockery, God often teaches:

Progressively.

Repeatedly.

Patiently.

Spiritual Principle

Repetition can be mercy.

XLVIII. STRANGE TONGUES

The language of foreigners becomes:

Judgment.

What they refused to hear:

Clearly.

They now hear:

Painfully.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not wait for consequences to translate a warning you already understood.

XLIX. “THEY WOULD NOT LISTEN”

This sentence explains much of the chapter.

The problem was not:

Lack of revelation.

It was:

Refusal.

Spiritual Principle

Hearing without listening produces no safety.

L. THE COVENANT WITH DEATH

The rulers believe they have:

Outsmarted danger.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Any plan that requires lies as shelter is already collapsing.

LI. THE PRECIOUS CORNERSTONE

Christ is:

Precious.

Not because people made Him precious.

Because:

God appointed Him.

Spiritual Principle

The value of Christ is not determined by human acceptance.

LII. “THE ONE WHO TRUSTS”

The security belongs to:

The believer.

Not because trust is powerful in itself.

But because:

The object of trust is secure.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith stands because the Cornerstone stands.

LIII. JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

These are God’s:

Measurement tools.

Spiritual Principle

A building cannot argue with a plumb line.

A life cannot redefine God’s righteousness.

LIV. THE SHORT BED AND NARROW BLANKET

What an unforgettable image.

You cannot:

Stretch out.

Cover yourself.

Rest.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

False religion and false security always promise more rest than they can provide.

LV. GOD’S STRANGE WORK

Judgment against His own covenant people is called:

Strange.

Unusual.

Spiritual Principle

God takes sin seriously even among those who possess spiritual privilege.

LVI. THE FARMER PLOWS

Hard soil must be:

Broken.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some seasons feel disruptive because God is preparing ground.

LVII. THE FARMER SOWS

After:

Breaking.

Comes:

Planting.

Spiritual Principle

God does not break ground merely to leave it empty.

LVIII. DIFFERENT CROPS, DIFFERENT METHODS

Caraway.

Cumin.

Wheat.

Barley.

Spelt.

Different treatment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not assume God must work in someone else’s life exactly as He works in yours.

LIX. THE FARMER THRESHES

Threshing separates:

Useful grain.

From:

What must be removed.

Spiritual Principle

Pressure can reveal what should remain and what should go.

LX. THE FARMER STOPS

This may be the most comforting part of the illustration.

He does not:

Thresh forever.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God knows when enough pressure has accomplished its purpose.

LXI. THE BREAD IS THE GOAL

The process includes:

Plowing.

Sowing.

Threshing.

Grinding.

Why?

Bread.

Purpose.

Usefulness.

Nourishment.

Spiritual Principle

Do not judge God’s whole purpose by one painful stage of the process.

LXII. EIGHT GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 28

1. Fading Crown → The Lord as Crown

2. Drunken Judgment → Divine Justice

3. Mocked Instruction → Foreign Judgment

4. Offered Rest → Refused Rest

5. Refuge of Lies → Precious Cornerstone

6. Crooked Security → Righteous Plumb Line

7. Endless Fear → Sure Foundation

8. Crushing Judgment → Measured Discipline

Key Truth

Every false foundation eventually fails, but God's Cornerstone stands secure and His discipline operates according to perfect wisdom.

LXIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What is Ephraim's major problem at the beginning of Isaiah 28?

Pride, drunkenness, and spiritual decline.

Question 2

What does the fading flower symbolize?

Ephraim's temporary beauty and glory.

Question 3

Who becomes the true crown of the remnant?

The Lord Almighty.

Question 4

What happens to the priests and prophets?

They become impaired by wine and stumble in judgment.

Question 5

What do verses 9–10 likely describe?

The mocking response of proud people who resent Isaiah’s repeated teaching.

Question 6

What happens because they reject understandable revelation?

God speaks through foreign lips and strange tongues associated with invasion and judgment.

Question 7

What had God offered them?

Rest and repose.

Question 8

Why did they not receive it?

They refused to listen.

Question 9

What false confidence did Jerusalem’s rulers possess?

They believed deceptive arrangements and political strategies would protect them from judgment.

Question 10

What does Isaiah call this confidence?

A covenant with death and an agreement with the grave.

Question 11

What does God place in Zion instead?

A tested, precious Cornerstone and sure foundation.

Question 12

Who does the New Testament identify with the Cornerstone?

Jesus Christ.

Question 13

What happens to the refuge of lies?

It is swept away.

Question 14

What does the short bed and narrow blanket picture?

False security that cannot provide genuine rest or protection.

Question 15

Why is God’s judgment called His strange work?

Because He is acting in judgment against His own covenant people rather than against their enemies.

Question 16

What does the farmer illustration teach?

God’s discipline is wise, measured, varied, purposeful, and not endless.

Question 17

Does the farmer plow forever?

No.

Question 18

Does every crop receive identical treatment?

No.

Question 19

Does the farmer thresh grain forever?

No.

Question 20

Where does the farmer’s wisdom ultimately come from?

The Lord Almighty.

LXIV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 28 asks several searching questions.

What Crown Am I Wearing?

Reputation?

Money?

Position?

Success?

Or:

Is the Lord my glory?

Is Pride Making Me Spiritually Blind?

Do I think:

I already know enough?

I do not need correction?

Is Anything Impairing My Judgment?

Alcohol?

Anger?

Fear?

Addiction?

Pride?

Do I Mock Truth Because It Is Repetitive?

Am I tired of hearing:

Repent?

Trust God?

Obey?

Pray?

Have I Refused God's Rest?

Has Christ invited me toward:

Peace?

But I continue choosing:

Self-reliance?

What Is My Refuge?

A plan?

Political power?

Money?

Relationships?

Or:

Christ?

What Am I Building On?

Is Jesus actually:

The Cornerstone?

Or merely:

Part of the building?

Would My Foundation Survive the Storm?

Am I Resisting God's Measuring Line?

Is there something crooked I am trying to call straight?

Am I Mistaking Discipline for Destruction?

Could God be:

Plowing?

Sowing?

Threshing?

Preparing?

Can I Trust God to Know When to Stop?

LXV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“When Every False Refuge Collapses, Christ the Cornerstone Still Stands”

Ephraim’s crown:

Fades.

The leaders’ judgment:

Fails.

The covenant with death:

Is annulled.

The refuge of lies:

Floods.

But:

The Cornerstone remains.

Principle:

Build your life on Christ before the storm reveals what everything else was made of.

LXVI. PRIDE AND INTOXICATION

These two belong together in the chapter.

Both can create:

False confidence.

Impaired judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Anything that makes you feel strong while making you less discerning is dangerous.

LXVII. THE LORD AS CROWN

Ephraim wanted:

Human glory.

The remnant receives:

God Himself.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely give His people better ornaments.

He becomes their glory.

LXVIII. LEADERS WHO CANNOT SEE STRAIGHT

Priests.

Prophets.

Judges.

All require:

Clarity.

Spiritual Principle

When leaders lose discernment, those following them are endangered.

LXIX. THE DANGER OF MOCKING BASIC TRUTH

Sometimes people call truth:

Too simple.

Too repetitive.

Too old-fashioned.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Truth does not become shallow merely because it is foundational.

LXX. FOREIGN LANGUAGE AS JUDGMENT

The foreign speech becomes evidence that:

The invader has arrived.

Spiritual Principle

Rejecting God’s gentle voice can lead to hearing harsher voices.

LXXI. THE REST THEY REFUSED

God offered:

Rest.

They chose:

Resistance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some people are exhausted not because God offered no rest, but because they refused the place where rest was found.

LXXII. A HIDING PLACE MADE OF LIES

A lie may temporarily hide:

Guilt.

Fear.

Weakness.

It cannot hide anyone from:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Truth can be painful initially.

Lies become painful eventually.

LXXIII. THE CORNERSTONE IN ZION

The chapter reaches its center here.

God provides:

One sure foundation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You do not need many foundations.

You need the right one.

LXXIV. THE PLUMB LINE

A plumb line reveals:

Crookedness.

It does not create it.

Spiritual Principle

God’s Word does not make sin wrong.

It reveals what was already crooked.

LXXV. THE TOO-SHORT BED

A person may lie down.

But cannot:

Rest.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every false security eventually becomes uncomfortable.

LXXVI. THE STRANGE WORK

God’s discipline may feel:

Unexpected.

But it remains:

Righteous.

Spiritual Principle

Never use covenant privilege as an excuse for covenant rebellion.

LXXVII. THE FARMER’S PATIENCE

A farmer knows:

Timing.

Sequence.

Process.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is never confused about which season you are in.

LXXVIII. GOD DOES NOT PLOW FOREVER

Some believers fear:

This painful season will never end.

The farmer says:

Plowing is not forever.

Spiritual Principle

Preparation has a purpose and a limit.

LXXIX. GOD DOES NOT THRESH EVERYTHING THE SAME WAY

The farmer knows:

Caraway.

Cumin.

Grain.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Stop comparing your discipline with someone else’s treatment.

God knows the crop.

LXXX. GOD DOES NOT CRUSH WITHOUT PURPOSE

The goal is not:

Dust.

The goal is:

Bread.

Spiritual Principle

God’s wise discipline aims at usefulness, not meaningless destruction.

LXXXI. GOD’S COUNSEL IS WONDERFUL

The last verse should shape how we read the entire chapter.

What looks:

Harsh.

Repetitive.

Strange.

Is governed by:

Wonderful counsel.

Magnificent wisdom.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Trust the wisdom of the Farmer when you do not understand the tool in His hand.

LXXXII. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 28

1. Ephraim’s Crown Fades

Pride collapses.

2. The Lord Becomes the True Crown

The remnant finds glory in Him.

3. Corrupt Leaders Stagger

Spiritual judgment deteriorates.

4. God’s Word Is Mocked

Clear instruction is rejected.

5. False Security Is Exposed

The covenant with death fails.

6. The Cornerstone Is Revealed

God provides a sure foundation.

7. The Farmer Explains Discipline

God’s methods are measured by perfect wisdom.

Key Truth

The chapter moves from fading human glory and false foundations toward the eternal stability of God’s Cornerstone and the magnificent wisdom of His discipline.

LXXXIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 28 asks one of the most important questions anyone can answer:

What are you building your life on?

Ephraim built on:

Pride.

Prosperity.

Drunken confidence.

Its crown:

Faded.

Jerusalem’s rulers built on:

Political agreements.

Strategy.

Lies.

False promises.

God called it:

A covenant with death.

Then God said:

> **“See, I lay a stone in Zion.”**

There is the difference.

Human beings create:

False foundations.

God provides:

The Cornerstone.

The New Testament tells us plainly:

That Cornerstone is:

Jesus Christ.

He is:

Tested.

Precious.

Sure.

The person who trusts Him:

Will not ultimately be put to shame.

That means:

Do not build your life on something that cannot carry its weight.

Money cannot.

Government cannot.

Career cannot.

Popularity cannot.

Alcohol cannot.

Pleasure cannot.

Human intelligence cannot.

Religious leadership cannot.

Political alliances cannot.

But:

Christ can.

Isaiah also warns us about:

Mocking truth.

The leaders had heard:

God’s message.

Repeatedly.

Eventually they became irritated by:

Repetition.

They ridiculed the prophet.

Be careful when familiar truth begins to sound:

Boring.

Simple.

Annoying.

Sometimes we need to hear the same truth again because we still have not:

Obeyed it.

Then Isaiah gives us the image:

The bed is too short.

The blanket too narrow.

That is every false refuge.

It works:

Until you actually need rest.

Then finally Isaiah takes us into:

A field.

A farmer:

Plows.

But not forever.

Sows.

At the right time.

Threshes.

But according to the crop.

Applies pressure.

But stops before destruction.

That is a beautiful picture of:

God’s wisdom.

Maybe you are in:

A plowing season.

Everything feels:

Disturbed.

Broken up.

Unsettled.

Do not assume:

God has abandoned the field.

Maybe He is preparing it.

Perhaps you are being:

Threshed.

Pressure is separating:

Faith.

From pride.

Truth.

From false security.

God knows:

How much.

How long.

What tool.

When to stop.

The Farmer does not want:

Dust.

He wants:

Fruit.

Bread.

Usefulness.

Therefore:

Lay down pride.

Stay sober in mind and spirit.

Listen when God teaches.

Stop hiding behind lies.

Build on Christ.

Submit to God’s measuring line.

And trust the Farmer.

Because the chapter ends exactly where our confidence should rest:

> **“The Lord Almighty, whose plan is wonderful, whose wisdom is magnificent.”**

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You alone are worthy to be:

Our crown.

Our glory.

Our foundation.

Forgive us for pride.

Forgive us when prosperity makes us:

Self-sufficient.

Careless.

Spiritually dull.

Keep our minds:

Clear.

Sober.

Discerning.

Father, protect spiritual leaders from anything that corrupts:

Judgment.

Truth.

Character.

Help those who teach Your Word to do so:

Faithfully.

Clearly.

Humbly.

Father, forgive us when we mock or ignore truth because we have:

Heard it before.

Give us teachable hearts.

Help us listen when You say:

Rest.

Repent.

Trust.

Obey.

Father, expose every covenant with death in our lives.

Sweep away every refuge of lies.

Reveal every false hiding place.

And build our lives upon:

Jesus Christ.

Thank You for the precious Cornerstone.

Thank You that He is:

Tested.

Sure.

Unshakable.

Teach us to trust Him completely.

Father, measure our lives by:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Truth.

Straighten what is crooked.

Correct what is wrong.

And when discipline comes:

Help us trust Your wisdom.

When You plow:

Give us patience.

When You plant:

Give us faith.

When You thresh:

Give us endurance.

When pressure comes:

Remind us that You know exactly how much is needed.

Thank You that You do not thresh forever.

Thank You that Your purpose is not meaningless destruction.

Your counsel is:

Wonderful.

Your wisdom is:

Magnificent.

Teach us to trust the Farmer.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be shaken." — Isaiah 28:16**

Central Truth

Pride, drunkenness, corrupt leadership, mockery of God's Word, and every refuge built upon lies will eventually collapse, but God has laid Jesus Christ as the tested and precious Cornerstone in Zion, and those who trust in Him rest upon a sure foundation while God wisely and purposefully disciplines His people like a skilled farmer tending his field.

Isaiah 28 in One Sentence

Isaiah warns that Ephraim's proud and drunken glory will fade, condemns spiritually impaired leaders and those who mock God's repeated instruction, exposes Jerusalem's false covenant with death, reveals Christ as the precious Cornerstone in Zion, and closes by showing through the wisdom of the farmer that God's discipline is measured, purposeful, and governed by magnificent wisdom.

Isaiah Chapter 29 — Woe to Ariel and the Marvelous Work of God

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 29 turns directly toward:

Jerusalem.

The city is called:

“Ariel.”

The name likely carries the idea of:

A lion of God.

Or:

An altar hearth.

Both ideas fit the chapter.

Jerusalem was:

The city of David.

The place of sacrifice.

The center of worship.

The city associated with God’s covenant presence.

Yet Isaiah announces:

“Woe to Ariel.”

That is sobering.

Religious privilege did not make Jerusalem immune to:

Correction.

Discipline.

Judgment.

The people continued:

Festivals.

Sacrifices.

Religious cycles.

But their hearts were:

Far from God.

They knew how to:

Worship outwardly.

Speak religiously.

Maintain ritual.

Yet God saw:

Spiritual blindness.

Empty religion.

Pride.

Secret rebellion.

The chapter begins with Jerusalem being:

Pressed.

Besieged.

Brought low.

But then something remarkable happens.

The enemies surrounding Zion appear overwhelming.

Yet God says they will become like:

Dust.

Chaff.

A dream that disappears when a person wakes.

Jerusalem is humbled.

Then her enemies are humbled.

The chapter then turns from:

Physical siege.

To:

Spiritual blindness.

The people have revelation.

But it is like:

A sealed scroll.

The educated person says:

“I cannot read it because it is sealed.”

The uneducated person says:

“I cannot read.”

The problem is not merely:

Literacy.

The deeper problem is:

A heart closed to God.

Then the Lord exposes the religious condition of the people:

> **“These people come near to Me with their mouth and honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me.”**

Jesus later quotes this passage when confronting:

Religious hypocrisy.

Human tradition.

Outward worship without inward devotion.

Then God promises:

> **“I will again do a wonderful thing among this people—a marvelous work!”**

Human wisdom will fail.

Human intelligence will be humbled.

God will demonstrate that His ways exceed:

Human cleverness.

The chapter then exposes those who attempt to hide their plans from God.

They think:

> **“Who sees us? Who will know?”**

Isaiah answers with the image of:

Potter.

Clay.

Creation cannot deny:

The Creator.

The chapter ends with:

Restoration.

The deaf hear.

The blind see.

The humble rejoice.

The needy find joy in:

The Holy One of Israel.

The ruthless disappear.

The mockers are removed.

Justice is restored.

Jacob’s shame ends.

Children honor God.

The wayward gain understanding.

Those who once complained:

Receive instruction.

The central truth of Isaiah 29 is:

Religious privilege without heartfelt devotion produces spiritual blindness and judgment, but the Lord will humble both His rebellious people and their enemies, expose empty worship and secret pride, perform a marvelous work beyond human wisdom, and ultimately restore sight, understanding, justice, humility, and true worship among His people.

I. WOE TO ARIEL

Isaiah 29:1 — Religious Routine Without Spiritual Life

> **“Woe to Ariel, Ariel, the city where David once camped! Add year to year, let the cycle of sacrifices continue.”**

Jerusalem had:

History.

Heritage.

Sacrifices.

Festivals.

The city where:

David ruled.

The temple stood.

Worship continued.

Yet God says:

> **“Woe.”**

The problem is:

Ritual without heart.

Cross References

2 Samuel 5:7

David captured the stronghold of Zion, which became known as the City of David and formed the heart of Jerusalem’s royal identity.

2 Samuel 5:9

After taking the stronghold, David established his residence there and expanded the city around it.

Luke 19:43

Jesus warned Jerusalem that a time would come when enemies would surround the city, build siege works against it, and close it in from every side.

Spiritual Principle

Religious history cannot replace present faithfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A place can have a glorious spiritual past and still need repentance today.

II. GOD BRINGS DISTRESS UPON ARIEL

Isaiah 29:2 — Sorrow and Mourning

> **“Yet I will press Ariel with distress; there will be sorrow and mourning, and it will be to Me like an altar hearth.”**

Jerusalem’s sacrifices continued.

But now:

The city itself becomes like an altar hearth.

What had been associated with:

Sacrifice.

Becomes associated with:

Judgment.

Cross References

Lamentations 1:1

Jerusalem, once crowded and honored, is pictured sitting lonely and grieving after devastation.

Jeremiah 52:4

Babylonian forces came against Jerusalem, surrounded it, and built siege works around the city.

Luke 19:44

Jesus foretold Jerusalem's destruction because the city failed to recognize the time of God's visitation.

Spiritual Principle

Privilege increases responsibility.

III. GOD ENCAMPs AGAINST JERUSALEM

Isaiah 29:3 — Siege Around the City

> **"I will encamp all around you, I will lay siege against you with towers, and raise siege works against you."**

The shocking truth is:

God Himself says:

> **"I will."**

The enemy may carry out the siege.

But:

God is sovereign over it.

Cross References

2 Kings 25:1

Nebuchadnezzar’s army surrounded Jerusalem, built siege works, and placed the city under prolonged military pressure.

Ezekiel 4:2

Ezekiel was instructed to portray Jerusalem under siege with ramps, camps, and battering forces around it.

Jeremiah 6:6

God calls for siege works to be raised against Jerusalem because oppression and corruption had filled the city.

Spiritual Principle

God can use external pressure to confront internal rebellion.

IV. JERUSALEM IS BROUGHT LOW

Isaiah 29:4 — A Voice from the Dust

> **“You will be brought low; from the ground your speech will whisper, your voice will come ghostlike from the dust, like a faint whisper from the earth.”**

The proud city is:

Humbled.

Its voice becomes:

Weak.

Faint.

Dust-level.

Cross References

Isaiah 8:19

Mediums and spiritists are described as whispering and muttering, though God’s people are commanded to seek Him instead.

1 Samuel 28:8

Saul secretly sought a medium at night, disguising himself and requesting forbidden spiritual guidance.

Psalm 44:25

God’s afflicted people describe themselves as brought down into the dust, with their bodies pressed to the ground.

Spiritual Principle

Pride speaks loudly.

Humbling brings the voice down to dust.

V. JERUSALEM’S ENEMIES BECOME LIKE DUST

Isaiah 29:5 — Sudden Reversal

> **“But your many enemies will become like fine dust, the ruthless hordes like blowing chaff. Suddenly, in an instant,”**

The chapter changes direction.

Jerusalem is humbled.

Then:

Her enemies.

They seem:

Numerous.

Ruthless.

Overwhelming.

God says:

Dust.

Chaff.

Cross References

Psalm 1:4

The wicked are compared to chaff that the wind drives away because they lack lasting stability.

Psalm 35:5

The enemies of God’s servant are pictured becoming like chaff blown before the wind under divine judgment.

Zephaniah 2:2

Judgment is described as coming before people are swept away like chaff driven by the wind.

Spiritual Principle

Numbers do not create permanence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A multitude against God can become dust in an instant.

VI. THE LORD VISITS WITH POWER

Isaiah 29:6 — Thunder, Earthquake, Storm, and Fire

> **“You will be visited by the Lord Almighty—with thunder, earthquake, and great noise, with whirlwind and storm, and with flames of consuming fire.”**

The Lord’s visitation is:

Powerful.

Overwhelming.

Unmistakable.

Cross References

Exodus 19:18

Mount Sinai shook violently while smoke rose because the Lord descended in fire and revealed His holy presence.

Revelation 8:5

Heavenly judgment is accompanied by thunder, voices, lightning, and an earthquake.

Psalm 18:7

The earth trembles and foundations shake when God rises in anger and acts in power.

Spiritual Principle

The God people ignore quietly can reveal Himself unmistakably.

VII. THE ATTACKING NATIONS VANISH LIKE A DREAM

Isaiah 29:7 — Enemies Become Unsubstantial

> **“The hordes of all the nations that fight against Ariel, that attack her and her stronghold, will be like a dream, a vision in the night.”**

The nations appear:

Real.

Dangerous.

Immediate.

Yet God says:

Like a dream.

Cross References

Psalm 73:20

The prosperity of the wicked is compared to a dream that disappears when a person awakens, because God brings their seeming security to an end.

Zechariah 12:9

God promises to destroy the nations that come against Jerusalem according to His purpose.

Job 20:8

The wicked are pictured passing away like a dream and disappearing like a vision of the night.

Spiritual Principle

What terrifies us today may disappear quickly when God acts.

VIII. THE NATIONS AWAKEN EMPTY

Isaiah 29:8 — Hungry and Thirsty After the Dream

> **“Like a hungry man who dreams he is eating, but awakens hungry still; like a thirsty man who dreams he is drinking, but wakes faint and still thirsty—so it will be with the multitudes of nations that fight against Mount Zion.”**

The enemies imagine:

Victory.

Conquest.

Satisfaction.

But awaken with:

Nothing.

Cross References

Zechariah 12:3

Jerusalem becomes like a heavy stone that injures those who attempt to lift or move it in hostility.

Job 20:5

The triumph of the wicked is temporary and their joy lasts only a short time.

Micah 4:11

Many nations gather against Zion expecting victory, but they do not understand God’s larger purpose.

Spiritual Principle

Plans against God may promise satisfaction and produce emptiness.

IX. SPIRITUAL DRUNKENNESS WITHOUT WINE

Isaiah 29:9 — Stunned and Blind

> **“Be stunned and amazed, blind yourselves and be blind! They are drunk, but not from wine; they stagger, but not from beer.”**

The blindness is:

Spiritual.

They stagger:

Without alcohol.

Their thinking has become:

Confused.

Dull.

Insensitive.

Cross References

Isaiah 28:7

Priests and prophets are described as staggering under intoxication and stumbling in judgment.

Habakkuk 1:5

God warns that He is about to perform a work so astonishing that people would struggle to believe it even if they were told.

Isaiah 51:21

Jerusalem is described as afflicted and staggering, not merely from literal wine but from the cup of divine judgment.

Spiritual Principle

A person can be physically sober and spiritually disoriented.

X. A SPIRIT OF DEEP SLEEP

Isaiah 29:10 — Prophets and Seers Blinded

> **“For the Lord has poured out on you a spirit of deep sleep. He has shut your eyes—the prophets; He has covered your heads—the seers.”**

Persistent rejection of revelation produces:

Judicial blindness.

This echoes Isaiah 6.

God’s revelation had been:

Repeatedly resisted.

Now the people experience:

Hardening.

Cross References

Romans 11:8

Paul cites prophetic language saying God gave hardened people a spirit of stupor, eyes that did not see, and ears that did not hear.

Isaiah 6:10

Isaiah’s ministry includes the sobering reality that persistent resistance to God’s Word results in increasing hardness and inability to respond.

Deuteronomy 29:4

Moses tells Israel that despite seeing God’s acts, they had not yet been given hearts fully understanding what those acts meant.

Spiritual Principle

Repeatedly rejecting truth can reduce our ability to recognize truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not keep saying no to light and assume you will always be able to see clearly later.

XI. THE VISION BECOMES LIKE A SEALED SCROLL

Isaiah 29:11 — Revelation Present but Unread

> **“For you this whole vision is nothing but words in a sealed scroll. When you give it to someone who can read and say, ‘Read this, please,’ they answer, ‘I cannot; it is sealed.’”**

They possess:

The scroll.

Yet do not receive:

Its meaning.

The issue is not merely availability.

It is:

Spiritual access.

Cross References

Revelation 5:1

John sees a scroll sealed securely, and the question arises concerning who has authority to open and reveal what it contains.

Daniel 12:4

Daniel is told that certain prophetic words are to be sealed until the appointed time.

Revelation 22:10

In contrast to Daniel’s instruction, John is told not to seal the prophetic words because the time is near.

Spiritual Principle

Having Scripture nearby does not guarantee understanding if the heart remains closed.

XII. THE UNREAD PERSON ALSO CANNOT READ

Isaiah 29:12 — Ignorance Without Understanding

> **“Or when you give the scroll to someone who cannot read and say, ‘Read this, please,’ they answer, ‘I don’t know how to read.’”**

The educated person says:

Sealed.

The uneducated person says:

Unable.

Both remain without:

Understanding.

Cross References

Acts 8:31

The Ethiopian official admits that he needs someone to guide him in understanding the Scripture he is reading.

Matthew 11:25

Jesus thanks the Father for revealing spiritual truth to the humble rather than making it dependent upon worldly intellectual status.

1 Corinthians 1:27

God chooses what the world considers foolish and weak to humble those who trust in human wisdom and strength.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual understanding is not guaranteed by education or prevented by lack of education.

XIII. THE PEOPLE HONOR GOD WITH THEIR LIPS BUT NOT THEIR HEARTS

Isaiah 29:13 — Empty Worship

> **“The Lord says: ‘These people come near to Me with their mouth and honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. Their worship of Me is made up only of human rules taught by men.’”**

This is one of the chapter’s central indictments.

They:

Say the right things.

Attend worship.

Use religious language.

Yet:

Their hearts are distant.

The worship has become:

Mechanical.

Traditional.

Humanly regulated.

Spiritually empty.

Cross References

Matthew 15:8

Jesus quotes Isaiah and applies the warning to people who honor God verbally while allowing their hearts to remain far from Him.

Mark 7:6

Jesus again applies Isaiah’s words to religious hypocrisy in which outward honor hides inward distance from God.

Ezekiel 33:31

People come to hear God’s messenger and speak as though they are interested, but their hearts remain controlled by selfish desire and they do not obey what they hear.

Spiritual Principle

God listens to:

The mouth.

And examines:

The heart.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Worship is empty when the lips arrive before God but the heart stays home.

XIV. GOD WILL DO A MARVELOUS WORK

Isaiah 29:14 — Human Wisdom Brought to Nothing

> **“Therefore I will again do a wonderful thing among this people—a marvelous work!**
> **The wisdom of the wise will perish, the intelligence of the intelligent will vanish.”**

God will act in a way that exposes:

Human wisdom.

Religious cleverness.

Intellectual pride.

Cross References

1 Corinthians 1:19

Paul quotes Isaiah to show that God overturns the wisdom of those who consider themselves wise apart from Him.

Jeremiah 8:9

Those who reject the Lord’s Word may still claim wisdom, but their supposed wisdom becomes foolishness.

Obadiah 1:8

God announces that He will destroy worldly wisdom and understanding from those who pride themselves upon it.

Spiritual Principle

God’s wisdom does not need human approval.

Key Truth

When God performs His marvelous work, human brilliance can be revealed as blindness.

XV. PEOPLE TRY TO HIDE THEIR PLANS FROM GOD

Isaiah 29:15 — “Who Sees Us?”

> **“Woe to those who go to great depths to hide their plans from the Lord, who do their work in darkness and think, ‘Who sees us? Who will know?’”**

The issue is:

Secret rebellion.

They believe darkness provides:

Privacy.

Protection.

Cover.

From:

God.

Cross References

Psalm 94:7

The wicked convince themselves that the Lord does not see their actions and that God will not notice what they are doing.

Job 34:22

There is no darkness deep enough for evildoers to hide themselves from God’s sight.

Ezekiel 8:12

Israel’s leaders practice idolatry secretly and tell themselves that the Lord does not see what is happening.

Spiritual Principle

Darkness hides things from people.

Never from God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Secret sin is secret only from human beings.

XVI. THE CLAY CANNOT DENY THE POTTER

Isaiah 29:16 — Creation Cannot Overrule the Creator

> **“You turn things upside down! Shall the potter be regarded as the clay? Shall the thing formed say to the one who formed it, ‘You did not make me’? Shall the creation say to its Creator, ‘You have no understanding’?”**

This is the height of human arrogance.

The created object tells:

The Creator.

You did not make me.

You do not understand.

Isaiah says:

Everything is upside down.

Cross References

Romans 9:20

Paul asks who a human being is to argue defiantly against God, comparing humanity to pottery challenging the potter.

Jeremiah 18:6

God tells Israel that as clay is in the potter’s hand, so His people are under His sovereign authority.

Isaiah 45:9

Isaiah warns against arguing with the Creator, comparing it to clay questioning the potter who shaped it.

Spiritual Principle

Human autonomy does not erase:

Divine ownership.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The clay gains nothing by pretending there is no Potter.

XVII. GOD WILL TRANSFORM THE LAND

Isaiah 29:17 — Lebanon Becomes Fertile

> **“In a very short time, Lebanon will become a fertile field, and the fertile field will seem like a forest.”**

The chapter turns toward:

Restoration.

Change.

Fruitfulness.

What was:

Unfruitful.

Becomes:

Productive.

Cross References

Isaiah 32:15

When God pours out His Spirit, wilderness becomes fruitful and productive land becomes abundant like a forest.

Isaiah 35:1

The desert and wilderness are pictured rejoicing, blooming, and becoming fruitful under God’s restoring power.

Hosea 14:5

God promises to refresh Israel like dew so that the people blossom and grow with renewed life.

Spiritual Principle

God can transform barren conditions quickly.

XVIII. THE DEAF HEAR AND THE BLIND SEE

Isaiah 29:18 — Spiritual Perception Restored

> **“In that day the deaf will hear the words of the scroll, and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind will see.”**

Earlier:

The scroll was sealed.

People could not understand.

Now:

The deaf hear.

The blind see.

God reverses:

Spiritual blindness.

Cross References

Matthew 11:5

Jesus points to the blind receiving sight, the lame walking, the deaf hearing, and good news being proclaimed as signs of messianic fulfillment.

Isaiah 35:5

Isaiah promises that the eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

Luke 4:18

Jesus announces His mission to proclaim good news, freedom, recovery of sight, and liberation under God’s saving work.

Spiritual Principle

The God who judges blindness can also restore sight.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A sealed book can become an open message when God opens the heart.

XIX. THE HUMBLE REJOICE

Isaiah 29:19 — Joy in the Holy One of Israel

> **“The humble will rejoice in the Lord; the needy will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.”**

The people who rejoice are:

Humble.

Needy.

They are not trusting:

Themselves.

They rejoice in:

The Lord.

Cross References

Matthew 5:5

Jesus declares the meek blessed and promises that they will inherit the earth.

Psalm 22:26

The poor will eat and be satisfied, and those who seek the Lord will praise Him.

Zephaniah 3:12

God promises to preserve a humble and lowly people who take refuge in the Lord’s name.

Spiritual Principle

Humility creates room for joy in God.

XX. THE RUTHLESS AND MOCKERS DISAPPEAR

Isaiah 29:20 — Evil Loses Its Voice

> **“The ruthless will vanish, the mockers will disappear, and all who look for evil will be cut off—”**

Three groups disappear:

Ruthless people.

Mockers.

Those looking for opportunities to do evil.

Cross References

Psalm 1:6

The Lord watches over the path of the righteous, but the path of the wicked leads to destruction.

Proverbs 1:22

Wisdom challenges mockers who delight in scorn and fools who reject knowledge.

Job 15:20

The wicked person lives under inner distress and instability because wrongdoing carries consequences.

Spiritual Principle

Mockery is temporary.

God’s truth is permanent.

XXI. GOD EXPOSES CORRUPT JUSTICE

Isaiah 29:21 — The Innocent Trapped

> **“Those who make a man guilty with a word, who trap the defender in court, and with false testimony deny justice to the innocent.”**

God condemns:

False accusation.

Courtroom manipulation.

Legal traps.

Denial of justice.

Cross References

Amos 5:10

Corrupt people hate those who speak honestly in court and despise the person who tells the truth.

Amos 5:12

God knows the people’s many sins, including oppressing the innocent, accepting bribes, and denying justice to the poor.

Matthew 22:15

Religious leaders deliberately plotted how they might trap Jesus through His words.

Spiritual Principle

God cares about:

Courtrooms.

Evidence.

Truth.

Justice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Using words to make an innocent person guilty is an offense before the God of truth.

XXII. JACOB’S SHAME WILL END

Isaiah 29:22 — The Redeemer Speaks

> **“Therefore this is what the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, says to the house of Jacob:**
> **‘No longer will Jacob be ashamed; no longer will their faces grow pale.’”**

The Lord identifies Himself as:

Redeemer.

Judgment is not:

The final chapter.

Shame will:

End.

Cross References

Genesis 15:7

God reminds Abraham that He was the One who brought him out and established His covenant purpose with him.

Nehemiah 9:7

God is praised for choosing Abram, bringing him out, and giving him the name Abraham according to His covenant plan.

Psalm 34:5

Those who look to the Lord are radiant, and their faces are not ultimately covered with shame.

Spiritual Principle

The God who disciplines Jacob is still:

Jacob’s Redeemer.

XXIII. THE CHILDREN BECOME A WORK OF GOD’S HANDS

Isaiah 29:23 — God’s Name Kept Holy

> **“When they see among them their children, the work of My hands, they will keep My name holy; they will acknowledge the holiness of the Holy One of Jacob, and will stand in awe of the God of Israel.”**

Restoration becomes visible in:

The next generation.

The children are called:

> **“The work of My hands.”**

The response is:

Holiness.

Reverence.

Awe.

Cross References

Ezekiel 36:23

God promises to vindicate His great and holy name among the nations so people will recognize His holiness.

Matthew 6:9

Jesus teaches His disciples to pray that the Father’s name be honored as holy.

1 Peter 3:15

Believers are instructed to set apart Christ as Lord in their hearts and respond with reverent readiness.

Spiritual Principle

True restoration causes people to treat God’s name differently.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God renews a people, reverence returns to worship.

XXIV. THE WAYWARD GAIN UNDERSTANDING

Isaiah 29:24 — Complainers Receive Instruction

> **“Those who are wayward in spirit will gain understanding; those who complain will accept instruction.”**

What an ending.

Earlier:

Blindness.

Mockery.

A sealed scroll.

Empty worship.

Now:

Understanding.

Instruction.

Teachability.

Cross References

Isaiah 32:4

Those once hasty and confused in understanding will gain knowledge, and unclear speech will become plain.

John 6:45

Jesus says that those who truly hear and learn from the Father come to Him.

1 Corinthians 14:20

Believers are told not to remain childish in understanding but to grow into mature thinking.

Spiritual Principle

God can transform:

Resistance.

Into:

Teachability.

Key Truth

The chapter begins with religious people who cannot see and ends with wayward people learning truth.

XXV. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 29

1. Religious Privilege Does Not Cancel Accountability

Jerusalem was:

David’s city.

The place of sacrifice.

Yet:

Judgment came.

Principle:

A spiritual heritage cannot substitute for present obedience.

---

2. God Can Humble His Own People

Ariel is brought:

Low.

Principle:

God loves His people too much to leave pride unchallenged.

---

3. God Can Destroy Overwhelming Enemies Suddenly

The nations become:

Dust.

Chaff.

Dreams.

Principle:

What surrounds you does not surround God.

---

4. Spiritual Blindness Is Dangerous

The scroll is present.

Yet:

Unread.

Principle:

Possessing revelation is not the same as receiving revelation.

---

5. Empty Worship Does Not Please God

Lips near.

Hearts far.

Principle:

God wants truthful worship from the whole person.

---

6. Human Wisdom Cannot Outsmart God

Principle:

The Creator never becomes confused by the plans of the creature.

---

7. Secret Sin Is Not Secret from God

Principle:

Darkness conceals from people, never from the Lord.

---

8. God Can Restore Spiritual Sight

The deaf hear.

The blind see.

Principle:

Spiritual blindness need not be the final condition.

---

9. God Defends Justice

False accusers are judged.

Principle:

Truth matters to God in worship and in court.

---

10. God Can Make the Wayward Teachable

Principle:

Grace can turn stubborn resistance into understanding.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 29 TEACHES ABOUT WORSHIP

Worship can be:

External.

Verbal.

Traditional.

And still:

Empty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely ask:

“What did you say?”

He also asks:

“Where was your heart?”

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 29 TEACHES ABOUT THE HEART

Their mouths are:

Near.

Their hearts:

Far.

Spiritual Principle

Physical proximity to religious things does not equal spiritual intimacy with God.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 29 TEACHES ABOUT SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS

Blindness can develop through:

Resistance.

Pride.

Unbelief.

Habitual rejection.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never assume yesterday’s light guarantees tomorrow’s clarity if today’s truth is continually rejected.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 29 TEACHES ABOUT SCRIPTURE

The people possess:

A scroll.

Yet cannot benefit from it.

Spiritual Principle

Scripture should be approached with:

Humility.

Teachability.

Dependence upon God.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 29 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN TRADITION

The problem is not every tradition.

The problem is when:

Human rules.

Replace:

Living obedience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Tradition becomes dangerous when we obey the form while ignoring the God the form was meant to honor.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 29 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN WISDOM

The wise become:

Foolish.

The intelligent lose:

Their advantage.

Spiritual Principle

Human brilliance does not place anyone above revelation.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 29 TEACHES ABOUT SECRET PLANS

People think:

No one knows.

God knows.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before you ask whether people can discover it, ask whether God approves it.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 29 TEACHES ABOUT CREATOR AND CREATION

God is:

Potter.

Humanity:

Clay.

Spiritual Principle

The creature is dependent upon:

The Creator.

For:

Existence.

Identity.

Purpose.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 29 TEACHES ABOUT RESTORATION

The chapter’s final movement is:

Hopeful.

Deaf:

Hear.

Blind:

See.

Humble:

Rejoice.

Wayward:

Understand.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can reverse spiritual conditions that once looked permanent.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 29 TEACHES ABOUT JUSTICE

God opposes those who:

Frame the innocent.

Manipulate testimony.

Corrupt courts.

Spiritual Principle

God’s holiness includes concern for public justice.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 29 TEACHES ABOUT THE NEXT GENERATION

Children are called:

The work of God’s hands.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One mark of restoration is seeing another generation learn to honor the Lord.

XXXVII. ARIEL — THE CITY OF DAVID

Jerusalem carried:

Memory.

History.

Identity.

But those privileges brought:

Responsibility.

Spiritual Principle

A great past is a gift.

It is not permission for present unfaithfulness.

XXXVIII. THE ALTAR HEARTH

Ariel may carry the sense of:

Altar hearth.

The city associated with:

Sacrifice.

Would itself experience:

Judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Religious activity does not shield unrepentant hearts from God’s holiness.

XXXIX. THE CITY BROUGHT TO THE DUST

The voice that once sounded:

Strong.

Becomes:

A whisper.

Spiritual Principle

God knows how to lower what pride has elevated.

XL. THE ENEMY LIKE DUST

The same God who humbles:

Jerusalem.

Can humble:

Jerusalem’s enemies.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s discipline of His people does not mean He has surrendered them to evil.

XLI. THE ENEMY LIKE A DREAM

Imagine waking from a nightmare.

The fear felt:

Real.

Then:

Gone.

Spiritual Principle

God can make overwhelming opposition disappear faster than we imagined possible.

XLII. DRUNK WITHOUT WINE

This is:

Spiritual confusion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A person can walk straight physically while staggering spiritually.

XLIII. THE SEALED SCROLL

A closed heart can make:

An open Bible.

Function like:

A sealed book.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest barrier to understanding may not be lack of information but unwillingness to receive truth.

XLIV. LIPS NEAR, HEART FAR

This is the great danger of:

Religious performance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never let your mouth travel farther toward God than your heart.

XLV. THE MARVELOUS WORK

God says:

He will act.

Human wisdom:

Will fail.

Spiritual Principle

Sometimes God allows human explanations to collapse so His wisdom becomes unmistakable.

XLVI. “WHO SEES US?”

God does.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The question is never:

“Can I hide this?”

The question is:

“Can I do this before God?”

XLVII. POTTER AND CLAY

The clay may resist.

It cannot:

Become the Potter.

Spiritual Principle

Human rebellion cannot reverse the Creator-creature distinction.

XLVIII. LEBANON TRANSFORMED

God can change:

Barren.

To:

Fruitful.

Fruitful.

To:

Abundant.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not judge God’s future by today’s landscape.

XLIX. THE DEAF HEAR

The words they could not receive:

Become understandable.

Spiritual Principle

God can open ears that resistance once closed.

L. THE BLIND SEE

Darkness is:

Temporary.

Where God grants:

Sight.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual sight is one of God’s greatest gifts.

LI. THE HUMBLE REJOICE

The humble do not need:

Self-exaltation.

Their joy is:

The Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Humility frees the soul to rejoice in God instead of constantly defending itself.

LII. THE MOCKERS DISAPPEAR

Those who mocked truth:

Do not outlast:

Truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not envy the temporary confidence of those who scorn God.

LIII. COURTROOM CORRUPTION

Isaiah identifies:

False accusation.

Legal manipulation.

Perverted justice.

Spiritual Principle

The same God who cares about worship cares about verdicts.

LIV. JACOB WITHOUT SHAME

The chapter moves from:

Humiliation.

To:

Restored honor.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can remove shame without denying the discipline that preceded restoration.

LV. CHILDREN AS THE WORK OF GOD’S HANDS

The future generation becomes evidence of:

Grace.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration is often visible in what happens after us, not merely to us.

LVI. WAYWARD PEOPLE BECOME TEACHABLE

This is one of the most hopeful statements in the chapter.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never assume a stubborn heart must remain stubborn forever.

LVII. EIGHT GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 29

1. Religious Activity → Heart Distance

2. Proud Ariel → Humbled Ariel

3. Surrounding Nations → Blowing Chaff

4. Open Revelation → Sealed Understanding

5. Human Wisdom → Marvelous Divine Work

6. Hidden Plans → God’s Full Knowledge

7. Blindness → Sight

8. Waywardness → Understanding

Key Truth

God exposes the emptiness of outward religion and human pride, but He is also able to restore sight, humility, understanding, justice, and true worship.

LVIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What city is called Ariel?

Jerusalem.

Question 2

Why is Jerusalem under judgment despite continuing sacrifices?

Because religious routine had continued while genuine heart devotion had declined.

Question 3

What does God allow against Ariel?

Siege, distress, mourning, and humiliation.

Question 4

What happens to the nations attacking Jerusalem?

They become like fine dust, chaff, and a dream that disappears.

Question 5

What kind of drunkenness is described in verse 9?

Spiritual staggering and blindness rather than merely literal intoxication.

Question 6

What happens to the prophets and seers?

They become spiritually unable to perceive clearly.

Question 7

What is the vision compared to?

A sealed scroll.

Question 8

What does God say about the people’s worship?

Their mouths and lips honor Him, but their hearts are far away.

Question 9

What did Jesus later do with Isaiah 29:13?

He quoted it when confronting religious hypocrisy and human tradition.

Question 10

What marvelous work will God perform?

He will overturn human wisdom and expose the limits of human intelligence.

Question 11

What do secret sinners think?

That no one sees or knows what they are doing.

Question 12

What image exposes their foolishness?

The clay denying or correcting the Potter.

Question 13

What future transformation is promised?

Barren conditions become fruitful.

Question 14

What happens to the deaf and blind?

The deaf hear and the blind see.

Question 15

Who rejoices in the Lord?

The humble and needy.

Question 16

What happens to the ruthless and mockers?

They disappear under judgment.

Question 17

What injustice does God condemn?

False accusations, legal traps, corrupt testimony, and denial of justice to the innocent.

Question 18

What happens to Jacob’s shame?

It is removed.

Question 19

How will restored people treat God’s name?

They will keep it holy and stand in awe of Him.

Question 20

What happens to the wayward?

They gain understanding and accept instruction.

LIX. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 29 asks several searching questions.

Is My Worship Coming from My Heart?

Do I:

Sing?

Pray?

Speak?

Attend?

While my heart remains:

Far away?

Am I Living on Spiritual History?

Am I depending on:

What my family believed?

What my church once was?

What I once experienced?

Have I Become Spiritually Blind Through Repeated Resistance?

What truth have I heard but refused to obey?

Is the Bible Open but My Heart Closed?

Do I read merely to:

Finish?

Argue?

Defend?

Or:

Hear God?

Have Human Traditions Replaced Living Obedience?

Am I more loyal to:

The way we have always done it.

Than:

What God has actually said?

Am I Trying to Hide Something from God?

What do I do:

In darkness?

In private?

When no one is watching?

Am I Treating the Potter Like Clay?

Do I tell God:

How He should think?

What He should approve?

How He should govern?

Do I Believe God Can Restore Spiritual Sight?

For:

Me?

My family?

My church?

Am I Humble Enough to Receive Instruction?

Or do I:

Complain?

Resist?

Mock?

Do I Care About Justice?

Would I ever use:

Words.

Influence.

Testimony.

To hurt someone falsely?

LX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Is Not Impressed by Lips That Worship Him While Hearts Live Far Away”

Jerusalem had:

Sacrifices.

Cycles.

Tradition.

History.

Yet:

God wanted the heart.

Principle:

True worship begins when the heart joins what the lips are saying.

LXI. RELIGIOUS ROUTINE WITHOUT REPENTANCE

The sacrifices continued:

Year after year.

But ritual cannot replace:

Relationship.

Spiritual Principle

Repetition of worship does not guarantee reality of worship.

LXII. GOD’S DISCIPLINE OF JERUSALEM

God brings:

Pressure.

Siege.

Humbling.

Why?

Because:

He is confronting rebellion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine discipline is not proof that God has forgotten His people.

It may be proof that He refuses to ignore what is destroying them.

LXIII. GOD’S DEFEAT OF JERUSALEM’S ENEMIES

Those who attack Zion:

Appear powerful.

Then:

Vanish.

Spiritual Principle

God can discipline His people without giving their enemies ultimate victory.

LXIV. THE DANGER OF SPIRITUAL SLEEP

Deep sleep means:

Insensitivity.

Lack of discernment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The most dangerous spiritual sleep is sleeping while believing you are awake.

LXV. THE BOOK YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND

The sealed scroll illustrates:

Closed perception.

Spiritual Principle

Understanding Scripture requires more than eyesight.

It requires:

Humility.

Faith.

Teachability.

LXVI. EMPTY RELIGION AND JESUS

Jesus directly used Isaiah 29:13.

This makes the warning especially important.

It applies whenever:

Human tradition.

Religious performance.

External conformity.

Replace:

Heart obedience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus still rejects worship that looks right outwardly while remaining distant inwardly.

LXVII. THE WISDOM GOD DESTROYS

God does not condemn:

Thinking.

Learning.

Intelligence.

He condemns:

Proud wisdom set against revelation.

Spiritual Principle

The problem is not having a mind.

It is using the mind to resist the One who gave it.

LXVIII. THE SECRET ROOM

No room is:

Dark enough.

Private enough.

Hidden enough.

To escape:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Live privately in a way that can stand openly before God.

LXIX. THE POTTER’S RIGHTS

The Potter has authority over:

The clay.

Not because He is arbitrary.

But because:

He made it.

Spiritual Principle

Creation implies:

Ownership.

Purpose.

Accountability.

LXX. THE GOD WHO RESTORES PERCEPTION

The deaf:

Hear.

The blind:

See.

The wayward:

Understand.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who exposes blindness is also the God who gives sight.

LXXI. HUMILITY AND JOY

The humble rejoice:

In God.

Spiritual Principle

Pride must constantly protect itself.

Humility is free to rejoice.

LXXII. JUSTICE FOR THE INNOCENT

God is not indifferent to:

False accusations.

Court corruption.

Manipulation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A false word against the innocent is heard in heaven even when it succeeds on earth.

LXXIII. JACOB REDEEMED

The Lord is called:

The One who redeemed Abraham.

Now He speaks restoration over:

Jacob.

Spiritual Principle

God’s redemptive faithfulness stretches across generations.

LXXIV. HOLY AWE RETURNS

Restoration produces:

Awe.

Reverence.

Holiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One sign of genuine revival is that people stop treating God casually.

LXXV. FROM COMPLAINING TO LEARNING

Those who once complained:

Accept instruction.

Spiritual Principle

A transformed heart becomes teachable.

LXXVI. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 29

1. Ariel Is Warned

Religious privilege does not excuse rebellion.

2. Ariel Is Humbled

God allows siege and distress.

3. Ariel’s Enemies Are Humbled

The nations disappear like a dream.

4. Spiritual Blindness Is Exposed

The scroll seems sealed.

5. Empty Worship Is Condemned

The lips speak while the heart remains far away.

6. Human Pride Is Reversed

The clay is reminded of the Potter.

7. Restoration Comes

The deaf hear, the blind see, the humble rejoice, and the wayward understand.

Key Truth

God’s purpose moves from exposing false religion and pride toward restoring true sight, humility, justice, and worship.

LXXVII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 29 is a warning to religious people.

That is what makes it so serious.

Jerusalem was not:

A pagan city without knowledge of God.

It was:

David’s city.

The place of sacrifice.

The center of worship.

Yet God said:

> **“Woe to Ariel.”**

Why?

Because religion had become:

Routine.

The sacrifices continued.

The calendar continued.

The worship continued.

But the heart:

Did not.

That should make every believer ask:

Is my heart where my mouth is?

It is possible to:

Sing.

Pray.

Preach.

Teach.

Attend church.

Read Scripture.

And still allow the heart to drift:

Far from God.

Isaiah also warns us about:

Spiritual blindness.

The people had:

Revelation.

Yet it functioned like:

A sealed book.

That can still happen.

A Bible can be:

Open on the table.

While the heart remains:

Closed.

Then comes the question of:

Secret sin.

People say:

“Who sees us? Who will know?”

God’s answer is:

I do.

No:

Browser history.

Closed door.

Dark room.

Private conversation.

Hidden plan.

Is hidden from:

The Lord.

Then Isaiah asks:

Can clay tell the Potter:

You did not make me?

You do not understand?

Humanity still does this whenever we tell the Creator:

His standards are wrong.

His wisdom is outdated.

His authority is unnecessary.

The creature does not become wiser than:

The Creator.

But the chapter does not end with:

Blindness.

It ends with:

Sight.

The deaf:

Hear.

The blind:

See.

The humble:

Rejoice.

The needy:

Find joy.

Mockers:

Disappear.

Justice:

Returns.

Jacob’s:

Shame is removed.

The wayward:

Understand.

Those who once complained:

Become teachable.

That is hope.

God can transform:

Religious routine.

Into real worship.

Spiritual blindness.

Into sight.

Complaint.

Into instruction.

Shame.

Into holiness.

Therefore:

Bring your heart back to your worship.

Open yourself to God’s Word.

Do not hide what God already sees.

Let the Potter be:

The Potter.

Reject empty religion.

Seek true understanding.

Protect justice.

Walk humbly.

And remember:

God is still able to perform:

“A marvelous work.”

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Search our hearts.

Do not let our worship become:

Empty.

Mechanical.

Traditional only.

Forgive us when we honor You with:

Our lips.

While our hearts wander far away.

Bring our hearts:

Back.

Father, give us:

Eyes to see.

Ears to hear.

Hearts to understand.

Do not let Your Word become like:

A sealed book.

Open our minds to:

Truth.

Open our hearts to:

Obedience.

Father, forgive us for secret sins.

Nothing is hidden from You.

Give us courage to bring everything into:

Your light.

Forgive us when we act like:

Clay correcting the Potter.

Teach us humility before:

Our Creator.

Father, perform Your marvelous work among us.

Bring human pride:

Low.

Restore spiritual sight.

Make barren places:

Fruitful.

Let the humble:

Rejoice.

Let the needy:

Find hope.

Defend those falsely accused.

Expose corrupt testimony.

Protect the innocent.

Father, remove shame from Your redeemed people.

Help the next generation see:

The work of Your hands.

Teach them to honor Your name.

Make those who are:

Wayward.

Understand.

Make those who complain:

Teachable.

And may our worship no longer be:

Only words.

But:

Heart.

Truth.

Obedience.

Reverence.

Love.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"These people come near to Me with their mouth and honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. Their worship of Me is made up only of human rules taught by men." — Isaiah 29:13**

Central Truth

God exposes religious ritual without heartfelt devotion, humbles Jerusalem and the nations that oppose her, judges spiritual blindness, secret rebellion, human pride, and corrupt justice, yet He also performs a marvelous work that restores hearing, sight, humility, understanding, reverence, justice, and true worship among His redeemed people.

Isaiah 29 in One Sentence

Isaiah warns Jerusalem that religious routine without heart devotion will bring humbling and spiritual blindness, declares that God will suddenly defeat Zion's enemies, condemns empty worship and hidden rebellion, reminds the clay that it cannot overrule the Potter, and promises a marvelous restoration in which the deaf hear, the blind see, the humble rejoice, Jacob's shame disappears, and the wayward learn truth.

Isaiah Chapter 30 — Woe to Rebellious Children Who Trust Egypt Instead of God

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 30 exposes one of Judah's deepest spiritual problems:

They wanted:

Protection.

Security.

Deliverance.

But instead of seeking:

The Lord.

They sought:

Egypt.

Their problem was not merely:

Diplomacy.

Foreign policy.

Military planning.

The deeper issue was:

Trust.

God says they were making:

Plans that were not His.

Alliances that were not by His Spirit.

They went down to Egypt:

“Without seeking My counsel.”

That sentence explains the chapter.

Judah had:

A crisis.

A dangerous enemy.

Political uncertainty.

Fear.

But rather than turning first to:

God.

They turned toward:

Pharaoh.

Egypt’s army.

Egyptian horses.

Egyptian protection.

God says this confidence will produce:

Shame.

Disgrace.

Disappointment.

Their great journey through dangerous territory carrying:

Riches.

Treasure.

Gifts.

Will end with help from a nation God calls:

“Rahab Who Sits Still.”

Egypt appears impressive.

But when Judah needs help:

Egypt does nothing.

The chapter then moves from:

False trust.

To:

Rejected truth.

The people do not merely ignore God’s message.

They actively tell:

Prophets.

Seers.

Do not tell us:

Truth.

Tell us:

Pleasant things.

Give us:

Illusions.

They even say:

“Stop confronting us with the Holy One of Israel!”

That is the heart of rebellion.

Not ignorance.

Resistance.

God therefore compares their sin to:

A cracked wall.

Bulging.

Ready to collapse.

Then comes one of the greatest invitations in Isaiah:

“In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength.”

The tragedy is the final phrase:

“But you would have none of it.”

They would rather trust:

Fast horses.

Human strength.

Military escape.

Yet God’s response is astonishing.

Even after rebellion:

“The Lord longs to be gracious to you.”

Judgment does not cancel:

His compassion.

Discipline does not erase:

His mercy.

God promises:

Guidance.

Healing.

Abundant provision.

Spiritual instruction.

He says His people will hear:

“This is the way; walk in it.”

Then they will finally throw away:

Silver idols.

Gold images.

Calling them:

Unclean.

The chapter ends by turning toward:

Assyria.

Judah feared Assyria so much that they ran to Egypt.

But Isaiah says:

God Himself will defeat Assyria.

That means Judah was seeking from:

Egypt.

What God alone could provide.

The central truth of Isaiah 30 is:

Judah's rebellion was revealed by trusting Egypt instead of God and demanding pleasant lies instead of truth, yet the Lord still called them to repentance, quiet trust, and rest, promised gracious guidance and healing, commanded them to cast away their idols, and showed that He alone—not Egypt—could defeat the Assyrian power they feared.

I. WOE TO REBELLIOUS CHILDREN

Isaiah 30:1 — Plans God Did Not Author

> **"Woe to the rebellious children, declares the Lord, who carry out plans that are not Mine, who make alliances but not by My Spirit, adding sin to sin."**

God calls them:

Children.

But:

Rebellious children.

Their problem is not:

Lack of planning.

They plan.

Their problem is:

Planning without God.

They form alliances.

But:

Not by His Spirit.

Cross References

Isaiah 1:2

God calls heaven and earth to witness that He raised and cared for His children, yet they rebelled against Him.

Isaiah 1:23

Judah’s leaders are described as rebellious companions of thieves who love bribes and neglect justice for the vulnerable.

Hosea 8:4

Israel established rulers and political arrangements without seeking God’s approval, showing a pattern of self-directed leadership.

Spiritual Principle

A plan can be:

Strategic.

Intelligent.

Popular.

And still not be:

God’s plan.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The question is not merely:

“Do I have a plan?”

But:

“Did I seek God before I made it?”

II. JUDAH GOES TO EGYPT WITHOUT SEEKING GOD

Isaiah 30:2 — Trusting Pharaoh’s Shadow

> **“They go down to Egypt without seeking My counsel, to take refuge in Pharaoh’s strength, to trust in Egypt’s shadow.”**

This is the central accusation.

> **“Without seeking My counsel.”**

They wanted:

Refuge.

Protection.

Security.

But looked toward:

Pharaoh.

Cross References

Jeremiah 42:14

God’s people later considered going to Egypt because they believed they could escape war and hunger there instead of remaining where God directed them.

Ezekiel 17:15

A rebellious king sought military horses and support from Egypt, breaking covenant and trusting political strength.

Isaiah 31:1

Isaiah pronounces woe upon those who go down to Egypt for help, trusting horses and chariots while failing to look to the Holy One of Israel.

Spiritual Principle

Seeking help is not automatically wrong.

Seeking help while refusing God is.

III. PHARAOH’S PROTECTION BECOMES SHAME

Isaiah 30:3 — False Refuge Exposed

> **“But Pharaoh’s protection will bring you shame, and reliance on Egypt will end in disgrace.”**

What they expect to produce:

Security.

Produces:

Shame.

What they trust for:

Honor.

Brings:

Disgrace.

Cross References

Isaiah 20:5

Those who trusted in Cush and boasted in Egypt were warned that they would become dismayed and ashamed.

Jeremiah 2:36

Judah is rebuked for continually changing political directions, and Egypt is warned to become another source of disappointment.

Isaiah 36:6

Egypt is compared to a broken reed that pierces the hand of anyone who leans upon it.

Spiritual Principle

A false refuge is most dangerous when it looks strong.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Whatever replaces God as your ultimate security will eventually reveal its weakness.

IV. JUDAH’S ENVOYS REACH EGYPT

Isaiah 30:4 — Diplomacy in Motion

> **“Their officials are in Zoan, and their envoys have reached Hanes,”**

Judah had moved beyond:

Thinking.

They were acting.

Officials had traveled.

Envoys were negotiating.

The alliance was becoming:

Real.

Cross References

Numbers 13:22

Zoan was an ancient Egyptian city associated with the history of Egypt and the region Israel knew from earlier generations.

Psalm 78:12

God performed wonders before Israel’s ancestors in the region of Zoan in Egypt.

Psalm 78:43

God’s signs and wonders in Egypt, including Zoan, demonstrated that His power had already been proven there.

Spiritual Principle

Judah was returning for protection to the very land where God had once demonstrated that He alone could save.

V. EGYPT BRINGS NO BENEFIT

Isaiah 30:5 — Useless Help

> **“But they will all be put to shame because of a people useless to them, who bring neither help nor benefit, but only shame and reproach.”**

Egypt cannot provide:

Help.

Benefit.

Deliverance.

All the expense.

Travel.

Diplomacy.

Results in:

Shame.

Cross References

Jeremiah 2:37

God warns that Judah will leave Egypt disappointed, because the Lord has rejected the alliances in which they trusted.

Ezekiel 29:6

Egypt is compared to an unreliable support that failed Israel when they leaned upon it.

Isaiah 36:9

Judah's dependence on Egypt for military strength is mocked because Egypt cannot provide the security Judah expects.

Spiritual Principle

Not every impressive resource is actually useful in the moment of greatest need.

VI. TREASURE IS CARRIED THROUGH DANGER FOR NOTHING

Isaiah 30:6 — A Costly Journey Toward Useless Help

> **"This is the prophecy about the animals of the Negev: Through a land of hardship and distress, of lions and vipers, where fiery flying serpents dwell, they carry their riches on donkeys' backs, their treasures on camels' humps, to a nation that cannot help them."**

The picture is almost tragic.

Judah risks:

Danger.

Distance.

Wild animals.

Desert hardship.

They load:

Riches.

Treasure.

Gifts.

And transport them toward:

A nation unable to save them.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:21

Egypt is described as an unreliable reed that wounds those who depend upon it.

Hosea 12:1

Israel is rebuked for chasing empty political arrangements and multiplying agreements with foreign nations.

Jeremiah 46:25

God announces judgment upon Egypt and its gods, showing that Egypt itself stands under divine authority.

Spiritual Principle

People will often sacrifice greatly for a false refuge.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Be careful what you are willing to carry through the wilderness to keep an idol alive.

VII. “RAHAB WHO SITS STILL”

Isaiah 30:7 — Impressive but Ineffective

> **“Egypt’s help is worthless and empty; therefore I call her ‘Rahab Who Sits Still.’”**

“Rahab” here is a poetic name associated with:

Pride.

Great strength.

Boastful power.

But Egypt:

Sits still.

Great reputation.

No useful rescue.

Cross References

Isaiah 31:3

Egyptians are human and not God; their horses are flesh and not spirit, so both helper and helped can fall.

Jeremiah 37:7

Egypt’s army came out as though to help Judah, but God warned that it would withdraw rather than provide lasting deliverance.

Lamentations 4:17

Judah exhausted itself watching for help from a nation that ultimately could not save.

Spiritual Principle

Appearance and ability are not the same thing.

VIII. GOD ORDERS THE WARNING WRITTEN DOWN

Isaiah 30:8 — A Permanent Witness

> **“Go now, write it on a tablet for them, inscribe it in a book, that it may be a witness forever.”**

The message is not:

Temporary.

God wants it:

Written.

Preserved.

Remembered.

Cross References

Habakkuk 2:2

God tells Habakkuk to write the vision clearly so the message can be preserved and understood.

Deuteronomy 31:19

Moses was instructed to write down a song that would stand as a witness concerning Israel’s covenant responsibility.

Isaiah 8:1

Isaiah had previously been commanded to write a prophetic message publicly as a permanent sign.

Spiritual Principle

Written revelation becomes a lasting witness when people later try to deny what God said.

IX. THE PEOPLE REFUSE GOD’S INSTRUCTION

Isaiah 30:9 — Rebellious and Deceitful

> **“For these are a rebellious people, deceitful children, children unwilling to listen to the Lord’s instruction.”**

The core problem is:

Unwillingness.

Not inability.

They could hear.

They would not:

Listen.

Cross References

Jeremiah 5:23

God describes His people as possessing stubborn and rebellious hearts that turn away from Him.

Deuteronomy 32:20

God speaks of a crooked generation whose children are characterized by unfaithfulness.

Isaiah 1:4

The nation is described as sinful, burdened with guilt, corrupted, and estranged from the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

The most dangerous hearing problem is:

Refusal.

X. THEY DEMAND PLEASANT PROPHECIES

Isaiah 30:10 — “Do Not Tell Us the Truth”

> **“They say to the seers, ‘See no more visions!’ and to the prophets, ‘Prophesy not the truth to us! Tell us pleasant things, prophesy illusions.’”**

This is astonishing.

They do not say:

We cannot understand the truth.

They say:

We do not want it.

Give us:

Pleasant things.

Comfortable messages.

Illusions.

Cross References

Micah 2:11

Micah says such people would gladly accept a false prophet who promised them messages of wine and pleasure.

Jeremiah 6:14

False spiritual leaders treated serious spiritual wounds as though they were minor, announcing peace where there was no true peace.

2 Timothy 4:3

Paul warns that people will eventually reject sound teaching and gather teachers who tell them what their desires want to hear.

Spiritual Principle

A congregation that demands pleasant lies will eventually find someone willing to preach them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The purpose of preaching is not to make truth pleasant.

It is to make truth clear.

XI. “STOP CONFRONTING US WITH THE HOLY ONE”

Isaiah 30:11 — Rebellion Against God’s Character

> **“Get out of the way! Turn aside from the path! Stop confronting us with the Holy One of Israel!”**

They do not merely reject:

A sermon.

They reject:

The Holy One.

Holiness confronts:

Sin.

That is exactly what they do not want.

Cross References

Amos 2:12

Israel tried to silence prophets and prevent God’s messengers from delivering His warnings.

Amos 7:13

Amos was told to stop prophesying in the royal sanctuary because his message was unwelcome.

Jeremiah 11:21

Jeremiah’s enemies threatened him because they wanted him to stop speaking in the Lord’s name.

Spiritual Principle

People who want sin undisturbed often want holiness silenced.

XII. REJECTED TRUTH BECOMES A CRACKED WALL

Isaiah 30:12 — The Bulging Wall

> **“Therefore this is what the Holy One of Israel says: ‘Because you have rejected this message, and relied on oppression and deceit, this sin will become for you like a high wall, cracked and bulging, that collapses suddenly, in an instant.’”**

Sin may stand:

High.

For a while.

But:

Cracks appear.

Pressure grows.

Then:

Sudden collapse.

Cross References

Proverbs 1:25

Those who ignore wise counsel and reject correction eventually face the consequences of refusing wisdom.

Jeremiah 7:8

God rebukes His people for trusting deceptive words that cannot truly profit them.

Amos 2:6

God condemns oppression, injustice, and the mistreatment of vulnerable people.

Spiritual Principle

A delayed collapse is still a collapse.

XIII. SIN SHATTERS LIKE POTTERY

Isaiah 30:13 — Nothing Useful Remains

> **“It will break in pieces like pottery, shattered so ruthlessly that among its fragments not a shard will be found to scoop coals from a hearth or to draw water from a cistern.”**

The breaking is:

Complete.

The pieces are so small that none can be used for even:

Minor tasks.

Cross References

Psalm 62:3

A vulnerable wall and tottering fence picture the instability of something already leaning toward collapse.

Ezekiel 13:14

God promises to tear down falsely built structures until their foundation is exposed.

Proverbs 6:15

Sudden destruction comes upon persistent rebellion, bringing ruin without easy recovery.

Spiritual Principle

God can expose something as so broken that no illusion of usefulness remains.

XIV. SALVATION IS FOUND IN REPENTANCE AND REST

Isaiah 30:15 — Quietness and Trust

> **“For this is what the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One of Israel, says: ‘In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength—but you would have none of it.’”**

This is one of the great verses of Isaiah.

God offered:

Repentance.

Rest.

Quietness.

Trust.

The people preferred:

Activity.

Military action.

Human strategy.

The tragedy is:

> **“You would have none of it.”**

Cross References

Psalm 46:10

God calls His people to become still and recognize that He alone is God over the nations and earth.

Jeremiah 6:16

God invited His people to return to the good path and find rest for their souls, but they refused to walk in it.

Lamentations 3:26

It is good to wait quietly and hopefully for the salvation of the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Strength does not always look like:

Movement.

Sometimes strength looks like:

Trust.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God says:

“Rest.”

Running faster is not faith.

XV. JUDAH CHOOSES HORSES INSTEAD

Isaiah 30:16 — False Speed

> **“You said, ‘No, we will flee on horses’—therefore you will flee! You said, ‘We will ride swift horses’—therefore your pursuers will be swift!”**

Their confidence is:

Speed.

Horses.

Escape.

God says:

Your enemies can be:

Swift too.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 17:16

Israel’s king was warned not to multiply horses or depend upon Egypt as the source of military strength.

Psalm 33:17

A warhorse is a false hope for salvation and cannot provide deliverance by its great strength.

Amos 2:15

The swift runner, archer, horseman, and mighty warrior cannot escape when divine judgment arrives.

Spiritual Principle

Human speed cannot outrun divine accountability.

XVI. FEAR WILL SCATTER THE PEOPLE

Isaiah 30:17 — A Banner Left on the Hill

> **“A thousand will flee at the threat of one; at the threat of five you will all flee away, until you are left like a flagstaff on a mountaintop, like a banner on a hill.”**

Their confidence collapses into:

Fear.

The nation becomes:

Sparse.

Exposed.

Lonely.

Cross References

Leviticus 26:36

Those under covenant judgment may become so fearful that even a small sound causes them to flee.

Deuteronomy 28:25

Covenant rebellion is warned to result in defeat and scattering before enemies.

Leviticus 26:8

By contrast, when God grants victory, a few of His people can drive away many enemies.

Spiritual Principle

Without God, numbers mean less than people think.

XVII. THE LORD LONGS TO BE GRACIOUS

Isaiah 30:18 — Grace After Rebellion

> **“Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; therefore He will rise up to show you compassion. For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for Him!”**

Notice the word:

> **“Yet.”**

After all their:

Rebellion.

False alliances.

Refusal.

Demand for lies.

God:

Longs to be gracious.

This does not deny:

Justice.

The verse explicitly says:

> **“The Lord is a God of justice.”**

Grace and justice are not enemies.

Cross References

Lamentations 3:25

The Lord is good to those who wait for Him and sincerely seek Him.

Psalm 27:14

God’s people are commanded to wait for the Lord with courage and steadfast hearts.

2 Peter 3:9

God’s apparent delay should not be mistaken for failure; His patience gives opportunity for repentance.

Spiritual Principle

God’s discipline does not cancel His desire to show mercy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Justice explains why sin matters.

Grace explains why sinners can still return.

XVIII. GOD HEARS THE CRY OF HIS PEOPLE

Isaiah 30:19 — Weeping Will End

> **“People of Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will weep no more. How gracious He will be when you cry for help! As soon as He hears, He will answer you.”**

The same people who refused God:

Can cry to Him.

And He responds with:

Grace.

Cross References

Psalm 30:5

Weeping may remain for a night, but joy comes with the morning because God’s favor is greater than temporary sorrow.

Revelation 21:4

God ultimately wipes away every tear, bringing an end to death, grief, crying, and pain.

Psalm 34:15

The Lord watches over the righteous and listens attentively to their cries.

Spiritual Principle

Repentant cries do not fall on deaf ears.

XIX. ADVERSITY CAN BECOME A CLASSROOM

Isaiah 30:20 — Teachers Seen Again

> **“Though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them.”**

Adversity is pictured as:

Bread.

Affliction as:

Water.

They consume:

Difficulty.

Yet spiritual instruction returns.

Cross References

1 Kings 22:27

A prophet of God was threatened with imprisonment, bread of affliction, and water of hardship for faithfully speaking truth.

Amos 8:11

God warns of a famine worse than lack of food—a famine of hearing the Word of the Lord.

John 16:13

Jesus promises that the Spirit of truth will guide His people into truth.

Spiritual Principle

Affliction can become a school in which God teaches what comfort could not.

XX. “THIS IS THE WAY; WALK IN IT”

Isaiah 30:21 — Divine Guidance

> **“Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, ‘This is the way; walk in it.’”**

The people once said:

> **“Turn aside from the path!”**

Now God says:

> **“This is the way.”**

The reversal is beautiful.

Rebellion becomes:

Guidance.

Confusion becomes:

Direction.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 5:32

God’s people are instructed to walk carefully in the way He commanded, without turning aside to the right or left.

Proverbs 4:27

Wisdom warns against turning away from the right path toward either side and calls for deliberate rejection of evil.

John 10:27

Jesus says His sheep hear His voice, He knows them, and they follow Him.

Spiritual Principle

God’s guidance is intended to produce:

Obedience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Guidance is wasted when we want direction without walking.

XXI. THE IDOLS ARE THROWN AWAY

Isaiah 30:22 — “Be Gone!”

> **“Then you will desecrate your silver idols and your gold images; you will throw them away as unclean things and say to them, ‘Be gone!’”**

This is evidence of:

Repentance.

They no longer:

Protect.

Treasure.

Decorate.

Their idols.

They throw them away.

Cross References

2 Kings 23:6

Josiah removed and destroyed idolatrous objects that had polluted worship in Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 6:9

God’s restored people will remember how idolatry grieved Him and will turn against the idols that once captured their hearts.

Hosea 14:8

Restored Israel asks what further relationship it should have with idols now that the Lord has become its source of life and fruitfulness.

Spiritual Principle

Real repentance changes how we view former idols.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When repentance is real, yesterday’s treasure can become today’s trash.

XXII. GOD RESTORES THE LAND

Isaiah 30:23 — Rain and Abundance

> **“He will send rain for the seed you sow in the ground, and the food that comes from the land will be rich and plentiful. On that day your cattle will graze in broad pastures.”**

After:

Rebellion.

Discipline.

Repentance.

Comes:

Provision.

Rain.

Food.

Pasture.

Cross References

Joel 2:23

God promises restoring rain and agricultural renewal after seasons of devastation.

Psalm 65:9

God waters the earth abundantly, enriches it, and prepares grain through His provision.

Malachi 3:10

God challenges His people to trust Him and promises overflowing provision under covenant faithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

The God who disciplines can also restore abundance.

XXIII. EVEN THE WORK ANIMALS ARE PROVIDED FOR

Isaiah 30:24 — Seasoned Fodder

> **“The oxen and donkeys that work the soil will eat seasoned fodder, winnowed with shovel and fork.”**

The restoration is so abundant that even:

Working animals.

Receive:

High-quality food.

Cross References

Job 6:5

Animals naturally respond to the quality and availability of the food provided for them.

Joel 1:18

During devastation, livestock suffer because pasture and food disappear.

1 Timothy 5:18

Scripture teaches that working animals should not be deprived while they labor, reflecting God’s concern for provision.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration reaches ordinary details.

XXIV. STREAMS FLOW ON THE HIGH PLACES

Isaiah 30:25 — Water Where It Was Unexpected

> **“On every high mountain and lofty hill there will be streams of running water on the day of great slaughter, when the towers fall.”**

Water appears where it is least expected:

High places.

Yet the verse still includes:

Judgment.

Towers fall.

Restoration and judgment appear together.

Cross References

Isaiah 41:18

God promises to open rivers on barren heights and springs in valleys, bringing water to dry places.

Revelation 6:15

Powerful rulers and influential people hide among rocks and mountains when judgment arrives.

Ezekiel 38:20

God’s intervention shakes mountains, walls, and structures under the force of His judgment.

Spiritual Principle

God can bring streams out of places that look incapable of holding water.

XXV. THE LORD HEALS THE WOUNDS OF HIS PEOPLE

Isaiah 30:26 — Greater Light and Healing

> **“The moon will shine like the sun, and the sunlight will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven full days, when the Lord binds up the wounds of His people and heals the bruises He has inflicted.”**

The imagery communicates:

Extraordinary restoration.

Abundant light.

Healing.

Notice:

God heals the bruises associated with His own discipline.

Cross References

Revelation 21:23

The holy city ultimately needs no sun or moon as its primary light because the glory of God illuminates it.

Isaiah 60:19

God Himself becomes the everlasting light of His restored people.

Malachi 4:2

Those who reverence God’s name are promised the rising of the sun of righteousness with healing.

Spiritual Principle

The hand that disciplines can become:

The hand that binds up.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God never loses the ability to heal what His discipline exposed.

XXVI. THE NAME OF THE LORD COMES IN JUDGMENT

Isaiah 30:27 — Consuming Fire

> **“See, the Name of the Lord comes from afar, burning with anger, dense with smoke;**
> **His lips are full of fury, His tongue a consuming fire.”**

The imagery is:

Majestic.

Terrifying.

Judgment is directed toward:

God’s enemies.

Cross References

Exodus 24:17

The Lord’s glory appeared like consuming fire before Israel.

Hebrews 12:29

God is described as a consuming fire, emphasizing His holiness and judgment.

Revelation 19:15

Christ is pictured judging rebellious nations with absolute authority.

Spiritual Principle

The God of grace remains:

Holy.

XXVII. GOD SIFTS THE NATIONS

Isaiah 30:28 — Torrent, Sieve, and Bit

> **“His breath is like a rushing torrent, rising up to the neck. He shakes the nations in the sieve of destruction; He places in their jaws a bit that leads them astray.”**

Three images describe God’s control:

Torrent.

Sieve.

Bit.

Nations are not:

Independent.

Uncontrollable.

Cross References

Isaiah 8:8

Assyria had previously been pictured like floodwaters rising nearly to Judah’s neck.

Amos 9:9

God describes Israel being sifted among the nations like grain through a sieve.

2 Kings 19:28

God tells the proud Assyrian king that He can place a hook in his nose and a bit in his mouth and turn him back.

Spiritual Principle

The empire that looked uncontrollable remains under God’s control.

XXVIII. GOD’S PEOPLE SING WHILE GOD DELIVERS THEM

Isaiah 30:29 — Joy at the Rock of Israel

> **“And you will sing as on the night you celebrate a holy festival; your hearts will rejoice as when people go up with flutes to the mountain of the Lord, to the Rock of Israel.”**

Judah began the chapter:

Afraid.

Running toward Egypt.

Now:

Singing.

Rejoicing.

Going toward:

The Lord.

Cross References

Exodus 12:42

The night of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt became a night remembered because the Lord brought His people out.

Psalm 42:4

The psalmist remembers going with worshipers toward God’s house with joyful celebration and thanksgiving.

Psalm 118:24

God’s people rejoice in the day the Lord has made and celebrate His saving work.

Spiritual Principle

God can turn panic into praise.

XXIX. THE MAJESTIC VOICE OF GOD IS HEARD

Isaiah 30:30 — The Descending Blow of His Arm

> **“The Lord will cause men to hear His majestic voice and will show them the descending blow of His arm—with raging anger and consuming fire, with cloudburst, thunderstorm, and hail.”**

God does not need:

Egypt’s army.

His:

Voice.

Arm.

Power.

Are enough.

Cross References

Exodus 19:16

At Sinai, thunder, lightning, cloud, and trumpet sound accompanied the terrifying manifestation of God’s presence.

Psalm 29:3

The voice of the Lord sounds over the waters with power and majesty.

Revelation 8:7

Apocalyptic judgment includes hail, fire, and devastating signs of divine intervention.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people feared Assyria’s voice.

Isaiah tells them to remember:

God has a greater voice.

XXX. THE LORD SHATTERS ASSYRIA

Isaiah 30:31 — The Rod Is Struck by the One Who Used It

> **“The voice of the Lord will shatter Assyria; with His rod He will strike them down.”**

Earlier Isaiah called Assyria:

The rod of God’s anger.

Now:

The rod is judged.

The instrument never became:

The Master.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:35

The Assyrian army suffered catastrophic defeat when the Lord intervened against it.

Isaiah 37:36

Isaiah records the Lord’s intervention against Assyria, leaving its military force devastated.

Isaiah 10:5

Assyria had earlier been called the rod of God’s anger, an instrument used temporarily under divine sovereignty.

Spiritual Principle

God can use a nation without granting that nation unlimited permission.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The tool in God’s hand never becomes greater than the hand using it.

XXXI. GOD’S VICTORY BECOMES A SONG

Isaiah 30:32 — Tambourines and Harps

> **“Every stroke the Lord lays on them with His punishing club will be to the music of tambourines and harps, as He fights them in battle with blows of His arm.”**

This unusual imagery connects:

Judgment of the oppressor.

With:

Celebration of deliverance.

Cross References

Exodus 15:20

After God defeated Egypt’s army, Miriam and the women of Israel celebrated with tambourines and joyful worship.

2 Chronicles 20:21

Judah sent singers praising the Lord ahead of the army, and God intervened against their enemies.

Psalm 68:25

Worshipers, singers, musicians, and tambourine players participate in joyful procession before God.

Spiritual Principle

What terrifies the oppressor can become the occasion of praise for the delivered.

XXXII. TOPHETH IS PREPARED

Isaiah 30:33 — Judgment Prepared for the King

> **“For Topheth has long been prepared; it has been made ready for the king. Its fire pit has been made deep and wide, with an abundance of fire and wood. The breath of the Lord, like a stream of burning sulfur, sets it ablaze.”**

Topheth was associated with:

The Valley of Hinnom.

Idolatrous practices.

Fire.

Judgment.

Isaiah uses it as a terrifying picture of:

Prepared destruction.

Cross References

Jeremiah 7:32

God warns that Topheth will become associated with slaughter and judgment rather than false religious sacrifice.

2 Kings 23:10

Josiah defiled Topheth to stop the horrific practice of offering children there through fire.

Revelation 20:10

Final judgment imagery includes the lake of fire where the devil and forces of rebellion face ultimate punishment.

Spiritual Principle

The enemy Judah feared does not escape God’s judgment.

XXXIII. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 30

1. Plans Without God Can Become Rebellion

Principle:

Wisdom begins by seeking God before deciding what must be done.

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2. Human Power Is a Poor Substitute for Divine Protection

Egypt appears strong.

But:

Cannot help.

Principle:

Do not ask a human resource to perform God’s role.

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3. Rebellion Resists Truth

The people demand:

Pleasant things.

Principle:

A heart that prefers comfort over truth is already in danger.

---

4. Salvation Comes Through Repentance and Trust

Principle:

Quiet trust can accomplish what frantic self-reliance never can.

---

5. God Still Longs to Show Grace

Principle:

Failure does not remove the possibility of repentance and mercy.

---

6. God Guides His People

> **“This is the way; walk in it.”**

Principle:

God does not merely rescue His people; He directs them afterward.

---

7. Genuine Repentance Throws Idols Away

Principle:

What once received worship must lose its place.

---

8. God Can Heal After Discipline

Principle:

His corrective hand does not eliminate His healing hand.

---

9. God Alone Can Defeat the Enemy

Principle:

Judah sought Egypt to defeat Assyria, but God Himself would shatter Assyria.

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10. God’s Justice Produces Praise Among the Delivered

Principle:

Deliverance should end in worship.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 30 TEACHES ABOUT REBELLION

Rebellion is not merely:

Breaking a rule.

It is:

Planning without God.

Refusing His counsel.

Rejecting His Word.

Demanding comfortable lies.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Rebellion often looks sophisticated before it looks sinful.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 30 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN ALLIANCES

Alliances may have legitimate practical value.

But Judah’s alliance became:

Idolatrous trust.

Spiritual Principle

The problem is not cooperation.

The problem is replacing:

God.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 30 TEACHES ABOUT FALSE SECURITY

Egypt had:

Horses.

Military prestige.

Political strength.

Yet God calls its help:

Worthless.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The size of a resource does not determine whether God has appointed it to save you.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 30 TEACHES ABOUT PREACHING

The people say:

Do not preach:

Truth.

Preach:

Pleasant things.

Spiritual Principle

Faithful preaching must answer to God, not merely to the preferences of hearers.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 30 TEACHES ABOUT REPENTANCE

Repentance is linked with:

Rest.

Salvation.

Quietness.

Trust.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Repentance is not merely feeling bad.

It is turning from false confidence back toward God.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 30 TEACHES ABOUT WAITING

Verse 18 says:

> **“Blessed are all who wait for Him!”**

Waiting is not:

Spiritual weakness.

It can be:

Faith.

Spiritual Principle

God’s timetable does not need our panic.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 30 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S GRACE

The Lord:

Longs to be gracious.

This is after:

Rebellion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not confuse discipline with God losing His capacity for compassion.

XLI. WHAT ISAIAH 30 TEACHES ABOUT GUIDANCE

God says:

> **“This is the way.”**

Spiritual Principle

Guidance requires:

Hearing.

Then:

Walking.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 30 TEACHES ABOUT IDOLS

Repentance changes:

Affection.

Silver and gold images once valued become:

Unclean.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Whatever competes with God must eventually hear:

“Be gone.”

XLIII. WHAT ISAIAH 30 TEACHES ABOUT AFFLICTION

God allows:

Bread of adversity.

Water of affliction.

Yet:

Teachers return.

Guidance returns.

Healing follows.

Spiritual Principle

Affliction is not always evidence of abandonment.

XLIV. WHAT ISAIAH 30 TEACHES ABOUT HEALING

God binds:

Wounds.

Heals:

Bruises.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Lord never disciplines without knowing where the wound is.

XLV. WHAT ISAIAH 30 TEACHES ABOUT ASSYRIA

Assyria appears:

Powerful.

Terrifying.

Military.

Yet:

God shatters it.

Spiritual Principle

Never run to Egypt because Assyria looks larger than your faith.

God is larger than both.

XLVI. “WITHOUT SEEKING MY COUNSEL”

These words expose the entire problem.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A decision can be logical and still be spiritually wrong if God was intentionally excluded from it.

XLVII. THE TREASURE ON THE CAMELS

They spend:

Money.

Energy.

Time.

Risk.

To secure:

False help.

Spiritual Principle

Misplaced trust is often expensive.

XLVIII. “RAHAB WHO SITS STILL”

Egypt has:

A great name.

Little action.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse reputation with reliability.

XLIX. “TELL US PLEASANT THINGS”

This is the temptation of every generation.

Truth can:

Confront.

Comforting lies can:

Soften.

Spiritual Principle

A lie does not become loving because it makes people feel better.

L. THE BULGING WALL

Sin does not always collapse:

Immediately.

Sometimes:

It cracks first.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not mistake delayed consequences for structural strength.

LI. REPENTANCE AND REST

Judah wants:

Action.

God says:

Return.

Rest.

Spiritual Principle

Sometimes the first act of faith is stopping.

LII. QUIETNESS AND TRUST

This does not mean:

Do nothing in every circumstance.

It means:

Do not replace God with frantic human activity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Quietness is powerful when it grows from confidence in God.

LIII. “YOU WOULD HAVE NONE OF IT”

The greatest tragedy was not:

Lack of salvation.

It was:

Refusal of offered salvation.

Spiritual Principle

God’s invitation must be received.

LIV. THE SWIFT HORSES

Judah says:

We will escape.

God says:

Your pursuers will also be swift.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human strength cannot become an escape route from a spiritual problem.

LV. “YET THE LORD”

These may be among the most hopeful words in the chapter.

Rebellion.

Judgment.

Fear.

> **“Yet the Lord longs to be gracious.”**

Spiritual Principle

Grace can speak after failure.

LVI. “AS SOON AS HE HEARS”

God’s response to repentant cries is:

Compassionate.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God whose warnings we ignored may still hear when we finally cry honestly.

LVII. THE BREAD OF ADVERSITY

Adversity becomes:

Food.

Something consumed.

Something lived through.

Spiritual Principle

God can nourish spiritual maturity through difficult experiences.

LVIII. “THIS IS THE WAY”

The people once demanded:

> **“Get out of the way!”**

God later restores them by saying:

> **“This is the way.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace does not leave the wanderer without direction.

LIX. THROWING THE IDOLS AWAY

Real restoration produces:

Separation.

Spiritual Principle

You cannot cling to the idol and claim to have fully returned to God.

LX. THE LORD SENDS RAIN

Restoration becomes visible in:

Daily life.

Fields.

Animals.

Food.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s care includes both spiritual and ordinary needs.

LXI. GREATER LIGHT

Isaiah uses extraordinary light imagery to describe:

Restoration.

Healing.

Glory.

Spiritual Principle

God can make the season after discipline brighter than the season before it.

LXII. THE LORD SHATTERS ASSYRIA

Judah thought:

Egypt must save us from Assyria.

God says:

I will deal with Assyria.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not hire a false savior to perform work God has reserved for Himself.

LXIII. THE VOICE OF THE LORD

Assyria has:

Armies.

God has:

A voice.

And the voice is enough.

Spiritual Principle

Divine authority does not depend upon human equipment.

LXIV. MUSIC DURING DELIVERANCE

The defeat of oppression becomes:

Praise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God brings you out, do not forget to sing.

LXV. TOPHETH AND FINAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The chapter closes with:

Serious judgment.

Grace does not eliminate:

Justice.

Spiritual Principle

The God who longs to be gracious is also the God who judges persistent evil.

LXVI. EIGHT GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 30

1. God’s Counsel → Human Plans

2. Divine Refuge → Pharaoh’s Shadow

3. Truth → Pleasant Illusions

4. Repentance and Rest → Frantic Flight

5. Waiting → Panic

6. Idols → “Be Gone!”

7. Wounds → Healing

8. Fear of Assyria → God’s Victory Over Assyria

Key Truth

The chapter moves from rebellious self-reliance toward quiet trust, from idols toward obedience, from wounds toward healing, and from fear of human power toward confidence in the Lord alone.

LXVII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Why does God call Judah rebellious children?

Because they make plans and alliances without seeking Him.

Question 2

Where does Judah go for protection?

Egypt.

Question 3

What specifically did they fail to do before going?

Seek God’s counsel.

Question 4

What would Pharaoh’s protection produce?

Shame and disgrace.

Question 5

How does God describe Egypt’s help?

Worthless and empty.

Question 6

What name does God give Egypt?

> **“Rahab Who Sits Still.”**

Question 7

Why is the prophecy written down?

To stand as a lasting witness.

Question 8

What kind of people are described in verse 9?

Rebellious people unwilling to listen to God’s instruction.

Question 9

What do they demand from the prophets?

Pleasant messages and illusions instead of truth.

Question 10

What do they want removed from their hearing?

Confrontation with the Holy One of Israel.

Question 11

What image describes their sin?

A high wall that is cracked, bulging, and ready to collapse.

Question 12

Where does God say salvation is found?

In repentance and rest.

Question 13

Where does strength come from?

Quietness and trust.

Question 14

How do the people respond?

They refuse and choose horses instead.

Question 15

What does the Lord still long to do?

Show grace and compassion.

Question 16

Who is blessed?

Those who wait for Him.

Question 17

What will God’s people hear?

> **“This is the way; walk in it.”**

Question 18

What will they do with their idols?

Throw them away as unclean.

Question 19

What happens after restoration?

God gives rain, abundance, pasture, guidance, and healing.

Question 20

Who finally defeats Assyria?

The Lord.

Question 21

What does this prove?

Judah did not need to make Egypt its ultimate refuge because God Himself had power over Assyria.

LXVIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 30 asks several searching questions.

Am I Making Plans Without God?

Do I pray:

Before?

Or merely ask God to bless what I already decided?

What Is My Egypt?

Money?

Connections?

Government?

Career?

A person?

My own intelligence?

Am I Carrying Treasure Toward Something That Cannot Help Me?

What am I investing heavily in because I think:

“This will save me”?

Do I Want Truth or Pleasant Things?

Would I rather hear:

Comfortable lies.

Or:

Corrective truth?

Am I Trying to Silence the Holy One?

Is there an area where I say:

God, do not confront me about this?

Do I Know How to Rest?

Can I believe that:

Quietness.

Trust.

Waiting.

Can be spiritual strength?

Am I Running on Horses God Never Told Me to ride?

Do I Believe the Lord Still Longs to Be Gracious?

Even after:

Failure?

Rebellion?

Wrong decisions?

Can I Hear:

“This is the way; walk in it”?

Am I willing to:

Walk?

What Idol Needs to Hear:

“Be gone”?

Can I Trust God in the Bread of Adversity?

Do I Believe God Can Heal After Discipline?

Am I Afraid of an Assyria God is fully able to defeat?

LXIX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Run to Egypt When God Is Calling You to Rest”

Judah thought strength looked like:

Horses.

Alliances.

Speed.

Military protection.

God said strength looked like:

Repentance.

Quietness.

Trust.

Waiting.

Principle:

Faith does not always move faster; sometimes faith becomes quiet enough to let God be God.

LXX. THE PLAN THAT WAS NOT GOD’S PLAN

It is possible to be:

Organized.

Strategic.

Wrong.

Spiritual Principle

Efficiency does not prove obedience.

LXXI. THE ALLIANCE NOT BY GOD’S SPIRIT

Political wisdom without spiritual dependence becomes:

Self-reliance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never mistake human agreement for divine approval.

LXXII. PHARAOH’S SHADOW

A shadow looks:

Large.

But cannot:

Hold you.

Spiritual Principle

Do not confuse appearance with substance.

LXXIII. EGYPT’S EMPTY HELP

Judah thought Egypt offered:

Strength.

God saw:

Emptiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God sees the weakness inside the thing that impresses us.

LXXIV. THE PEOPLE WHO DID NOT WANT TRUTH

Their problem was not:

No prophet.

They had prophets.

They wanted:

Different messages.

Spiritual Principle

Having access to truth does no good if we only accept messages that agree with us.

LXXV. THE HOLY ONE THEY WANTED REMOVED

God’s holiness made them:

Uncomfortable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never choose a religion that makes God less holy so you can feel more comfortable.

LXXVI. THE WALL ABOUT TO FALL

Sin can survive:

For a season.

But internal weakness continues.

Spiritual Principle

God sees cracks before everyone else sees collapse.

LXXVII. REPENTANCE AS SALVATION'S ROAD

The way back begins with:

Turning.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot rest in God while insisting on running away from Him.

LXXVIII. QUIETNESS AS STRENGTH

The world often defines strength as:

Noise.

Speed.

Control.

Isaiah says:

Quiet trust.

Spiritual Principle

A quiet heart can be stronger than a frantic army.

LXXIX. THE GOD WHO WAITS TO BE GRACIOUS

God is not impatiently looking for:

An excuse to destroy.

He longs to:

Show compassion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never interpret God’s patience as weakness or His discipline as absence of mercy.

LXXX. ADVERSITY AND INSTRUCTION

Bread.

Water.

Teachers.

All appear together.

Spiritual Principle

The classroom of suffering can produce deep spiritual hearing.

LXXXI. THE VOICE BEHIND YOU

The wanderer may turn:

Right.

Left.

God redirects:

“This is the way.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s guidance is not merely information.

It is mercy toward the wandering.

LXXXII. IDOLS BECOME UNCLEAN

What they once admired:

They now reject.

Spiritual Principle

Grace changes both:

Behavior.

And:

Taste.

LXXXIII. THE RAIN AFTER REPENTANCE

The chapter moves from:

Dry rebellion.

To:

Abundant provision.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can restore fruitfulness after a season of discipline.

LXXXIV. THE WOUNDS GOD HEALS

The same chapter acknowledges:

Bruises He inflicted.

And:

Healing He provides.

Spiritual Principle

Discipline and restoration can come from the same loving God.

LXXXV. ASSYRIA’S DEFEAT

Judah made a major mistake.

They treated:

Assyria.

As greater than:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fear becomes idolatrous when the enemy looks larger than the Lord.

LXXXVI. THE ROCK OF ISRAEL

The people eventually return toward:

The mountain of the Lord.

The Rock of Israel.

That is where their security should have been:

All along.

Spiritual Principle

God often restores us by bringing us back to the place we should never have left.

LXXXVII. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 30

1. Rebellion

Judah plans without God.

2. False Trust

Judah runs toward Egypt.

3. Rejected Truth

The people demand pleasant illusions.

4. Offered Salvation

God calls them to repentance, rest, quietness, and trust.

5. Amazing Grace

The Lord still longs to be gracious.

6. Restoration

Guidance, healing, provision, and renewed obedience follow.

7. Divine Victory

God Himself defeats Assyria.

Key Truth

The very God Judah refused to trust becomes the God who graciously restores them and defeats the enemy they thought only Egypt could handle.

LXXXVIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 30 is a chapter for people who are:

Afraid.

Planning.

Running.

Searching for help.

Judah faced a real enemy.

Assyria was not:

Imaginary.

Their danger was real.

But their fear led them toward:

Egypt.

Instead of:

God.

That is what fear often does.

Fear asks:

What can I see?

What can I control?

Who has:

Money?

Power?

Horses?

Connections?

Then God asks:

Did you seek:

Me?

Judah had a plan.

But God says:

It was not:

His plan.

They had an alliance.

But:

Not by His Spirit.

They had help.

But:

It was useless.

They had:

Horses.

But their enemies were:

Faster.

Then God offers:

Something that sounds weak to frightened people:

Repentance.

Rest.

Quietness.

Trust.

The world says:

Move.

Run.

Do something.

God sometimes says:

Come back.

Be still.

Trust Me.

The tragedy is:

> **“You would have none of it.”**

Then comes one of the most beautiful turns in Isaiah:

> **“Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you.”**

They rejected Him.

Yet:

Grace.

They ignored Him.

Yet:

Compassion.

They trusted Egypt.

Yet:

God still called them home.

That is mercy.

Then God teaches:

Again.

> **“This is the way; walk in it.”**

He does not merely:

Forgive.

He guides.

Then the idols go:

Into the trash.

That is repentance.

When God becomes:

Enough.

False gods become:

Unnecessary.

Then the wounds are:

Bound.

Bruises:

Healed.

Rain:

Falls.

Food:

Becomes plentiful.

Joy:

Returns.

And finally:

Assyria falls.

Think about the irony.

Judah crossed dangerous deserts.

Paid treasure.

Made alliances.

Trusted Egypt.

Because they were afraid of:

Assyria.

But God says:

“The voice of the Lord will shatter Assyria.”

They were trying to purchase from Egypt:

What God could give freely through His own power.

How often do we do the same?

We exhaust ourselves trying to secure:

What only God can ultimately provide.

Isaiah 30 calls us back.

Stop running to Egypt.

Stop demanding pleasant lies.

Stop trying to outrun spiritual problems on fast horses.

Return.

Rest.

Trust.

Wait.

Listen.

Walk in the way.

Throw away the idols.

And believe that the God you were afraid would reject you is still the God who says:

> **“The Lord longs to be gracious to you.”**

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Forgive us for making plans without:

You.

Forgive us for trusting:

Human strength.

Money.

Influence.

Governments.

People.

Our own intelligence.

More than:

Your wisdom.

Father, before we run toward Egypt:

Teach us to seek Your counsel.

Expose every false refuge.

Show us every place where we are carrying:

Our treasure.

Our energy.

Our confidence.

Toward something that cannot save.

Father, give us a love for:

Truth.

Do not let us demand:

Pleasant words.

Comforting illusions.

Easy messages.

Give us hearts willing to hear what You say.

Even when:

It confronts us.

Corrects us.

Convicts us.

Father, teach us the strength of:

Repentance.

Rest.

Quietness.

Trust.

When we want to run:

Teach us when to wait.

When fear becomes loud:

Make our confidence in You louder.

Thank You that even after rebellion:

You long to be gracious.

Thank You for:

Compassion.

Mercy.

Patience.

Father, when we turn:

Guide us.

Let us hear:

“This is the way; walk in it.”

Give us courage to obey.

Help us throw away every:

Idol.

False god.

False security.

False refuge.

Teach us to say:

“Be gone!”

Father, thank You that You can heal:

Wounds.

Bruises.

Brokenness.

Thank You that the God who disciplines is also:

The God who restores.

And when Assyria stands before us:

Remind us:

You are greater.

We do not need to trust Egypt.

Your voice is enough.

Your arm is strong.

Your power is complete.

Turn our fear:

Into praise.

Our running:

Into resting.

Our rebellion:

Into trust.

Our wounds:

Into healing.

And our lives:

Into worship.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength—but you would have none of it." — Isaiah 30:15**

Central Truth

Judah's rebellion was revealed by making plans without God, trusting Egypt instead of the Lord, and demanding pleasant lies instead of truth, yet God still called His people to repentance, rest, quietness, and trust, longed to show them grace, promised guidance and healing, required their idols to be cast away, and proved that He alone could defeat the Assyrian enemy they feared.

Isaiah 30 in One Sentence

Isaiah condemns Judah for seeking Egypt's worthless protection and rejecting God's truth, calls them back to salvation through repentance, rest, quietness, and trust, reveals the Lord's longing to show grace and guide His people, promises healing and restoration after their idols are cast away, and declares that God Himself—not Egypt—will shatter Assyria and turn His people's fear into praise.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 31 — Woe to Those Who Trust in Egypt Instead of God

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 31 continues the warning of Isaiah 30.

The issue is still:

Trust.

Judah faces the threat of:

Assyria.

Instead of looking first to:

The Lord.

They look toward:

Egypt.

Egypt has:

Horses.

Chariots.

Horsemen.

Military reputation.

Visible strength.

But Isaiah exposes the central error:

> **“They do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek the Lord!”**

That is the problem.

The chapter is not condemning every use of:

Military resources.

Political cooperation.

Practical planning.

The deeper issue is:

Where ultimate confidence rests.

Judah looks at:

What Egypt has.

But fails to ask:

Who God is.

Isaiah therefore draws a sharp contrast:

Egyptians are:

Men.

God is:

God.

Horses are:

Flesh.

God is:

Spirit.

One is:

Created.

The other is:

Creator.

One is:

Limited.

The other is:

Sovereign.

Then the chapter gives two powerful pictures of God’s protection.

First:

A lion over its prey.

Second:

Birds hovering protectively overhead.

The Lord is presented as:

Fearless.

Protective.

Present.

Active.

He will defend:

Zion.

He will shield:

Jerusalem.

He will deliver:

His people.

But before full restoration, there is a call:

“Return to Him.”

Real repentance includes:

Rejecting idols.

Silver idols.

Gold idols.

Anything made by sinful human hands and treated as a substitute for:

God.

Finally Isaiah answers Judah’s deepest fear.

What about:

Assyria?

Isaiah says:

Assyria will fall.

But not by:

Human sword.

Not by:

Mortal strength.

God Himself will bring the enemy down.

That is the great irony of the chapter.

Judah went to Egypt because they feared:

Assyria.

But God says:

Egypt cannot save you.

And:

Assyria cannot withstand Me.

The central truth of Isaiah 31 is:

Human strength, military power, and political alliances cannot replace trust in the Lord; Egypt is only flesh, but God is Spirit, and when His people return to Him, cast away their idols, and trust His protection, He alone is able to defend Zion and bring down the Assyrian enemy by His own power.

I. WOE TO THOSE WHO GO DOWN TO EGYPT FOR HELP

Isaiah 31:1 — Trusting Horses Instead of God

> **“Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who rely on horses, who trust in the multitude of chariots and in the great strength of horsemen, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek the Lord!”**

The problem is not simply:

Horses.

Chariots.

Horsemen.

The problem is:

Trust.

They rely upon:

Numbers.

Strength.

Visible power.

But neglect:

The Holy One of Israel.

Cross References

Psalm 20:7

Some people trust in chariots and others in horses, but God’s people remember and trust the name of the Lord their God.

Isaiah 30:1

God condemns rebellious children who make plans and alliances apart from His counsel and Spirit.

Jeremiah 17:5

The person who makes human strength his ultimate confidence and turns his heart away from the Lord places himself under a curse.

Spiritual Principle

The object of trust matters more than the size of the resource.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Use the horse if God provides it.

Do not make the horse your god.

II. GOD IS WISER THAN HUMAN STRATEGISTS

Isaiah 31:2 — His Word Stands

> **“Yet He too is wise and brings disaster; He does not take back His words. He will rise up against the house of evildoers, against those who help wrongdoers.”**

Judah acts as though:

Egyptian strategy.

Political wisdom.

Military calculation.

Are smarter than:

God.

Isaiah says:

God too is wise.

This is not saying:

God has some wisdom.

It is exposing the foolishness of treating human strategy as though it outranks:

Divine counsel.

Cross References

Isaiah 10:5

Assyria is described as the rod of God’s anger, showing that even powerful empires operate within His larger sovereign purpose.

Job 9:4

God is wise in heart and mighty in strength; no one can successfully harden himself against Him.

Proverbs 21:30

No wisdom, understanding, or counsel can ultimately succeed against the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Human plans may be clever.

God’s counsel is final.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A strategy is never wiser than the God who sees the end from the beginning.

III. EGYPTIANS ARE MEN, NOT GOD

Isaiah 31:3 — Flesh Cannot Replace Spirit

> **“But the Egyptians are mere men and not God; their horses are flesh and not spirit. When the Lord stretches out His hand, both he who helps will stumble and he who is helped will fall; together they will perish.”**

This is one of the strongest contrasts in the chapter.

Egyptians:

Men.

Not God.

Horses:

Flesh.

Not spirit.

Judah is trusting:

Creation.

Instead of:

Creator.

Cross References

2 Chronicles 32:8

Hezekiah encourages Judah that the enemy possesses only an arm of flesh, while the Lord their God is with them to help and fight their battles.

Isaiah 2:22

God’s people are told to stop placing ultimate confidence in human beings whose life depends upon a breath.

Ezekiel 28:9

A proud ruler who claimed godlike status is reminded that he is merely human and not God before the One who judges him.

Spiritual Principle

Everything human has:

Limits.

God does not.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never ask flesh to do what only Spirit can do.

IV. THE LORD IS LIKE A LION DEFENDING ZION

Isaiah 31:4 — Unafraid of the Noise

> **“This is what the Lord has said to me: ‘As a lion growls, a young lion over its prey—though a band of shepherds is called against it, it is not frightened by their shouts or disturbed by their noise—so the Lord Almighty will come down to fight for Mount Zion and its hill.’”**

The picture is:

Power.

Fearlessness.

Determination.

A lion does not abandon its claim because:

People shout.

People gather.

Noise increases.

So the Lord is not intimidated by:

Assyria.

Military threats.

Human noise.

Cross References

Amos 3:8

When a lion roars, people naturally fear; likewise, when the Lord speaks, His prophetic message carries unavoidable weight.

Hosea 11:10

The Lord is compared to a roaring lion whose voice gathers His trembling children back to Him.

Isaiah 42:13

The Lord is pictured advancing like a warrior, stirring His zeal and prevailing against His enemies.

Spiritual Principle

God is not intimidated by the noise of the enemy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The enemy may be loud.

God is not afraid.

V. THE LORD HOVERS OVER JERUSALEM

Isaiah 31:5 — Protection Like Birds Overhead

> **“Like birds hovering overhead, the Lord Almighty will shield Jerusalem; He will protect and deliver it, He will ‘pass over’ and rescue it.”**

The image changes.

From:

Lion.

To:

Birds.

From:

Strength.

To:

Protective care.

God is both:

Fierce defender.

Tender protector.

The phrase:

> **“Pass over”**

also recalls the language of:

Deliverance.

Protection.

Rescue.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 32:11

God is compared to an eagle stirring its nest, hovering over its young, spreading its wings, and carrying them securely.

Psalm 91:4

God covers His people with His feathers, and beneath His wings they find refuge and protection.

Matthew 23:37

Jesus expresses His desire to gather Jerusalem's children as a hen gathers chicks beneath her wings.

Spiritual Principle

God's protection is both:

Strong.

Tender.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The same God who roars like a lion can shelter like a bird.

VI. GOD CALLS ISRAEL TO RETURN

Isaiah 31:6 — Return from Deep Rebellion

> **"Return to Him you have so greatly revolted against, O people of Israel."**

The people have:

Greatly revolted.

Yet God says:

Return.

The depth of rebellion does not cancel:

The invitation.

Cross References

Hosea 14:1

Israel is called to return to the Lord because sin has caused the nation to stumble.

Joel 2:12

God calls His people to return to Him wholeheartedly with fasting, weeping, and mourning.

Isaiah 55:7

The wicked are called to abandon their sinful way, return to the Lord, and receive abundant mercy and pardon.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance is always a movement:

Back toward God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No matter how far rebellion has gone, the command remains:

Return.

VII. TRUE REPENTANCE REJECTS IDOLS

Isaiah 31:7 — Silver and Gold Idols Thrown Away

> **“For in that day every one of you will reject the silver idols and gold idols your sinful hands have made.”**

Repentance becomes:

Visible.

They do not merely:

Feel guilty.

They reject:

Idols.

The very objects they once:

Trusted.

Valued.

Worshiped.

Are now:

Discarded.

Cross References

Isaiah 2:20

People are pictured casting away their silver and gold idols when the emptiness of false worship is finally exposed.

Isaiah 30:22

God’s restored people throw away silver and gold idols as unclean objects and tell them to depart.

Micah 5:13

God promises to cut down idols and sacred objects so His people will no longer bow to the work of their hands.

Spiritual Principle

Real repentance changes:

Allegiance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You have not fully returned to God if you still insist on keeping the idol nearby.

VIII. ASSYRIA WILL FALL BY A SWORD NOT OF MAN

Isaiah 31:8 — God Alone Defeats the Enemy

> **“The Assyrian will fall by a sword not of man; a sword not of mortals will devour them. They will flee before the sword, and their young men will be forced into labor.”**

This is the answer to:

Judah’s fear.

They feared:

Assyria.

So they sought:

Egypt.

God says:

Assyria will fall.

But not because:

Egypt wins.

The victory comes by:

God’s power.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:35

The Lord struck the Assyrian camp, causing massive military loss without Judah winning through ordinary warfare.

Isaiah 37:36

The angel of the Lord struck the Assyrian army, demonstrating direct divine intervention.

2 Chronicles 32:21

God sent an angel who destroyed Assyria’s fighting forces, leaders, and commanders, causing the Assyrian king to return home in disgrace.

Spiritual Principle

God does not need human strength in order to accomplish divine deliverance.

Key Truth

The enemy Judah feared most was still helpless before:

God.

IX. ASSYRIA’S STRONGHOLD COLLAPSES

Isaiah 31:9 — Terror Before the Lord’s Banner

> **“Their stronghold will fall because of terror; their commanders will panic at the banner,’ declares the Lord, whose fire burns in Zion, whose furnace is in Jerusalem.”**

Assyria had:

Fortresses.

Commanders.

Military confidence.

Yet terror reaches:

Them.

Their leaders panic.

Why?

Because the Lord’s presence in Zion is pictured as:

Fire.

Furnace.

Cross References

Isaiah 33:14

Sinners in Zion tremble before God’s consuming holiness and ask who can dwell in the presence of everlasting burning.

Deuteronomy 32:31

Israel’s enemies cannot compare their false security with the true Rock who belongs to God’s people.

Isaiah 10:17

The Holy One becomes like a flame consuming Assyria’s pride and power.

Spiritual Principle

The fire of God is:

Protection for His people.

Judgment for His enemies.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The presence that warms the faithful can terrify the rebel.

X. EGYPT VERSUS GOD

Isaiah 31 presents a deliberate comparison.

Egypt

Men.

Flesh.

Horses.

Chariots.

Limited strength.

God

Holy One.

Spirit.

Wisdom.

Sovereignty.

Lion-like strength.

Protective wings.

Divine sword.

Spiritual Principle

The choice was never:

Egypt or nothing.

It was:

Egypt or God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

False trust grows when we forget who the real alternative is.

XI. HORSES CANNOT BECOME SAVIORS

Judah looked at:

Horses.

Chariots.

Horsemen.

They saw:

Visible strength.

But Isaiah reminds them:

Horses are:

Flesh.

Spiritual Principle

A resource can be useful without being worthy of trust.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Use the resource.

Trust the Provider.

XII. “DO NOT LOOK TO EGYPT—LOOK TO THE HOLY ONE”

The central failure is:

Direction.

They look:

South.

Toward Egypt.

They should look:

Up.

Toward God.

Spiritual Principle

Where the eyes turn in crisis often reveals where the heart has placed its hope.

XIII. GOD DOES NOT TAKE BACK HIS WORD

Isaiah says:

> **“He does not take back His words.”**

God is:

Reliable.

Consistent.

Faithful.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not issue empty threats or unreliable promises.

XIV. HUMAN WISDOM VERSUS DIVINE WISDOM

Judah considered:

Military possibilities.

Foreign alliances.

Assyrian power.

But Isaiah says:

> **“He too is wise.”**

This is almost ironic.

Spiritual Principle

Human intelligence becomes foolish when it treats God as though He has not considered the situation.

XV. THE ARM OF FLESH

Egypt’s strength may look:

Impressive.

But it remains:

Human.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The arm of flesh has a limit.

The arm of the Lord does not.

XVI. WHEN THE LORD STRETCHES OUT HIS HAND

Egypt falls.

Judah falls.

Helper.

Helped.

Both collapse if they stand against:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Mutual dependence between two weak parties does not create divine strength.

XVII. THE LION WHO WILL NOT BACK DOWN

Shepherds may:

Shout.

Gather.

Make noise.

The lion remains:

Unmoved.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Heaven does not panic because earth gets loud.

XVIII. THE BIRDS HOVERING OVERHEAD

The image suggests:

Constant attention.

Protective nearness.

Watchfulness.

Spiritual Principle

God’s defense is not distant observation.

It is engaged protection.

XIX. “RETURN TO HIM”

Repentance is not merely:

Turning away from sin.

It is:

Turning toward God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You have not completed repentance when you leave Egypt.

You must return to the Lord.

XX. IDOLS MADE BY SINFUL HANDS

The irony is obvious.

People:

Create the idol.

Then trust:

The idol.

Spiritual Principle

Anything we can manufacture is too small to become our God.

XXI. THE SWORD NOT OF MAN

Assyria will not fall by:

Human superiority.

God acts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some victories are designed so clearly by God that human boasting is removed.

XXII. THE ASSYRIAN WHO MADE OTHERS TREMBLE NOW TREMBLES

Earlier:

Nations feared Assyria.

Now:

Assyria fears.

Spiritual Principle

The intimidator can become intimidated when God intervenes.

XXIII. THE FIRE IN ZION

God’s fire represents:

Presence.

Holiness.

Judgment.

Protection.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s presence is never neutral.

It comforts the faithful and confronts rebellion.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 31 TEACHES ABOUT TRUST

Trust is revealed by:

Where we run.

Who we seek.

What we rely upon.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You discover your real god in the direction you run when you are afraid.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 31 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN POWER

Human power may be:

Real.

Impressive.

Useful.

But never:

Ultimate.

Spiritual Principle

Human strength becomes spiritually dangerous when it is treated as sufficient without God.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 31 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S WISDOM

God understands:

Assyria.

Egypt.

Judah.

The entire situation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God never needs our panic to improve His plan.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 31 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S PROTECTION

God protects like:

Lion.

Bird.

Fire.

Each picture adds something.

Lion:

Power.

Bird:

Care.

Fire:

Presence.

Spiritual Principle

God’s protection is stronger and more personal than Judah imagined.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 31 TEACHES ABOUT REPENTANCE

Repentance includes:

Returning.

Rejecting.

Turning back to God.

Casting idols away.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Repentance changes both direction and devotion.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 31 TEACHES ABOUT IDOLATRY

Idols do not have to be:

Statues.

Anything receiving:

Ultimate trust.

Ultimate fear.

Ultimate devotion.

Can function like an idol.

Spiritual Principle

Modern idols may look different while demanding the same heart.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 31 TEACHES ABOUT ASSYRIA

Assyria is:

Powerful.

But:

Temporary.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse what God allows for a season with what God cannot stop.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 31 TEACHES ABOUT DELIVERANCE

The victory is:

God’s.

Spiritual Principle

When God saves, He is not limited by the resources we can see.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 31 TEACHES ABOUT ZION

Zion represents:

The place of God’s covenant presence.

God says:

His fire burns there.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The security of Zion rests not in its walls but in the God who dwells there.

XXXIII. SIX GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 31

1. Human Power Cannot Save Ultimately

Egypt is:

Flesh.

Principle:

Never ask created power to replace the Creator.

---

2. God’s Wisdom Cannot Be Outsmarted

Principle:

No human strategy can overturn His counsel.

---

3. God Defends His People

Like:

Lion.

Bird.

He protects Zion.

Principle:

The Lord is both fierce against enemies and tender toward His people.

---

4. Repentance Means Returning to God

Principle:

Leave the false refuge and come back to the true one.

---

5. True Repentance Rejects Idols

Principle:

You cannot cling to the substitute while claiming renewed trust in God.

---

6. God Defeats the Enemy by His Own Power

Principle:

The sword not of man proves that salvation belongs to the Lord.

XXXIV. EGYPT’S HORSES AND GOD’S SPIRIT

This is one of the chapter’s clearest contrasts.

Horses:

Flesh.

God:

Spirit.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Flesh is impressive until Spirit acts.

XXXV. THE FALSE SAVIOR

Egypt was expected to:

Protect.

Rescue.

Defeat Assyria.

But Egypt itself:

Could fall.

Spiritual Principle

Do not make a savior out of something that still needs saving.

XXXVI. THE LION AND THE NOISE

Assyria made:

Noise.

Egypt made:

Noise.

Political fear made:

Noise.

But God remains:

Unmoved.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Noise is not authority.

XXXVII. THE HOVERING WINGS

God’s presence is:

Near.

Protective.

Watchful.

Spiritual Principle

Heaven’s protection does not require heaven’s panic.

XXXVIII. THE RETURN FROM REVOLT

The people had:

Greatly revolted.

Yet:

Return remained possible.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The depth of your wandering does not make the road home disappear.

XXXIX. THE SILVER AND GOLD IDOLS

The idols had:

Material value.

But:

No saving value.

Spiritual Principle

Something can be expensive and still be spiritually worthless.

XL. THE ASSYRIAN FALLS

What Judah feared as:

Unstoppable.

God describes as:

Defeatable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Your greatest fear is still smaller than your God.

XLI. THE COMMANDERS PANIC

Leaders who caused:

Others to fear.

Now fear:

The Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Earthly authority evaporates quickly before divine authority.

XLII. THE FIRE AND FURNACE OF JERUSALEM

God’s holy presence is:

Active.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Where God dwells, evil never possesses final ownership.

XLIII. EIGHT GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 31

1. Egypt → The Holy One of Israel

2. Horses → The Lord

3. Flesh → Spirit

4. Human Wisdom → Divine Wisdom

5. Fear of Assyria → God Fighting for Zion

6. Rebellion → Return

7. Idols → The Living God

8. Human Sword → Divine Deliverance

Key Truth

Every human substitute is exposed as limited when compared with the holy, wise, powerful, protective, and victorious Lord.

XLIV. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Why does Isaiah pronounce woe on those going to Egypt?

Because they trust Egypt’s military strength instead of seeking the Lord.

Question 2

What specifically do they rely upon?

Horses, chariots, and horsemen.

Question 3

What do they fail to do?

Look to the Holy One of Israel and seek the Lord.

Question 4

How does Isaiah describe God’s wisdom?

God is wise, acts according to His Word, and cannot be successfully opposed by human counsel.

Question 5

What are the Egyptians?

Human beings, not God.

Question 6

What are their horses?

Flesh, not spirit.

Question 7

What happens when God stretches out His hand?

Both the false helper and the one depending upon that help collapse.

Question 8

What animal illustrates God’s fearless defense of Zion?

A lion.

Question 9

What second picture illustrates God’s protection?

Birds hovering protectively overhead.

Question 10

What does God call Israel to do?

Return to Him.

Question 11

How far had Israel revolted?

Greatly.

Question 12

What evidence will demonstrate repentance?

They will reject their silver and gold idols.

Question 13

How will Assyria fall?

By a sword not of man or mortal power.

Question 14

What historical passages describe God’s defeat of Assyria?

2 Kings 19:35, Isaiah 37:36, and 2 Chronicles 32:21.

Question 15

What happens to Assyria’s commanders?

They panic in terror.

Question 16

What burns in Zion?

The Lord’s fire.

Question 17

What is the main message of the chapter?

Trust God rather than human power, return from rebellion, reject idols, and believe that the Lord Himself is able to deliver.

XLV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 31 asks several searching questions.

What Is My Egypt?

Where do I instinctively run when:

Afraid?

Uncertain?

Threatened?

What Horses Am I Trusting?

Money?

Government?

Technology?

Connections?

My own ability?

Am I Looking to the Holy One of Israel?

Or only looking at:

Resources?

Have I Made Flesh My Confidence?

Am I expecting a human being to provide what only God can provide?

Do I Believe God Is Wise Enough for My Crisis?

Or do I act as though He has overlooked something?

Am I More Impressed by the Enemy's Noise Than God's power?

Have I Returned Fully to God?

Or merely stopped going toward Egypt?

What Idol Still Needs to Be Thrown Away?

What do I treasure but trust too much?

Is There an Assyria I Think God Cannot Handle?

Do I Believe the Lord Can Fight for Me Without Human methods I can see?

XLVI. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Trust Flesh to Do the Work of Spirit”

Egypt:

Had horses.

God:

Had power.

Egypt:

Had chariots.

God:

Had sovereignty.

Egypt:

Had horsemen.

God:

Had the final word.

Principle:

Human help may be useful, but it must never become the foundation of faith.

XLVII. WHEN HELP BECOMES IDOLATRY

Seeking:

Advice.

Assistance.

Resources.

Is not automatically wrong.

But help becomes:

Idolatry.

When we place in it the confidence belonging to:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Use human help gratefully.

Trust God ultimately.

XLVIII. “THEY ARE MEN, NOT GOD”

This sentence should correct:

Fear.

Idolatry.

Hero worship.

Spiritual Principle

Every human helper remains:

Human.

XLIX. “THEIR HORSES ARE FLESH”

What appears powerful is still:

Created.

Limited.

Mortal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not confuse strength with sovereignty.

L. THE LORD COMES DOWN TO FIGHT

Judah is trying to find:

Someone to fight for them.

God says:

I will.

Spiritual Principle

The deepest security of God’s people is the presence of God Himself.

LI. THE LION WHO DOES NOT FLINCH

The Lord is not frightened by:

Shouts.

Noise.

Threats.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The enemy can increase the volume without increasing its authority.

LII. THE BIRD THAT HOVERS

God watches:

Closely.

Protects:

Tenderly.

Spiritual Principle

God’s power does not make Him distant.

LIII. THE GOD WHO SAYS “RETURN”

The command comes after:

Deep revolt.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s call to return is stronger than the distance created by rebellion.

LIV. IDOLS MUST GO

Silver.

Gold.

Value.

Beauty.

None matter when the object has become:

A rival god.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance decides that obedience is worth more than the idol.

LV. THE SWORD NOT OF MAN

This removes:

Human boasting.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some battles are won in ways designed to make one truth unmistakable:

The Lord did it.

LVI. THE STRONGHOLD FALLS FROM TERROR

Assyria’s strength melts when:

God acts.

Spiritual Principle

No earthly stronghold is emotionally or militarily beyond collapse.

LVII. THE FIRE OF ZION

The chapter ends not with:

Egypt.

Not with:

Assyria.

But with:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

History’s final focus is never the power of nations.

It is the presence of the Lord.

LVIII. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 31

1. Judah Runs to Egypt

Fear produces false trust.

2. God Exposes Egypt

Men are not God; horses are flesh.

3. God Reveals His Strength

He comes like a lion.

4. God Reveals His Tenderness

He protects like hovering birds.

5. God Calls for Repentance

Return to Him.

6. Idols Are Rejected

False gods lose their place.

7. Assyria Falls

God Himself provides the victory.

Key Truth

The chapter moves from fear-driven trust in human strength toward repentance, renewed trust in the Lord, rejection of idols, and divine deliverance.

LIX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 31 asks a simple but searching question:

Who are you trusting?

Judah had:

A real problem.

Assyria was:

Powerful.

Aggressive.

Dangerous.

They needed:

Help.

So they looked toward:

Egypt.

Egypt had:

Horses.

Chariots.

Horsemen.

From a human perspective:

It made sense.

But Isaiah says:

They made one fatal mistake.

They did not:

“Look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek the Lord.”

That is the issue.

The Bible does not teach that every practical resource is:

Wrong.

Doctors.

Money.

Government.

Military defense.

Friends.

Counsel.

Technology.

Planning.

All may have proper uses.

But none can become:

God.

Isaiah says:

Egyptians are:

Men.

Not God.

Horses are:

Flesh.

Not spirit.

That distinction still matters.

Every human resource has:

Limits.

Every human helper needs:

Help.

Every earthly system can:

Fail.

Then God gives two pictures of Himself.

First:

A lion.

The enemy shouts.

God does not flinch.

The enemy makes noise.

God is not intimidated.

Then:

Birds hovering over Jerusalem.

Protective.

Watchful.

Near.

God is both:

Lion.

And sheltering wings.

Strong enough to:

Fight.

Tender enough to:

Cover.

Then He says:

“Return to Him.”

That means:

Stop running toward Egypt.

Come back.

And when you come back:

Bring the idols out with you.

Silver.

Gold.

Whatever occupies:

God’s place.

Throw it away.

Finally:

Assyria falls.

Not by:

Egypt.

Not by:

Human sword.

Not by:

Mortal power.

But:

God.

That is the lesson.

Judah nearly exhausted itself trying to purchase a deliverance God could provide by:

His own hand.

Maybe you have an Assyria.

Something that looks:

Too large.

Too strong.

Too close.

Too dangerous.

Do not let the size of:

Assyria.

Make you forget the size of:

God.

And do not let fear make:

Egypt.

Look like:

A savior.

Egypt is:

Flesh.

God is:

Spirit.

Egypt may help temporarily.

Only God can carry:

Ultimate trust.

Therefore:

Seek the Lord.

Return to Him.

Throw away the idols.

Stop fearing the noise.

Rest beneath His wings.

Trust the Lion of Zion.

And remember:

The sword that finally defeats the enemy does not have to come from:

Man.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Forgive us for trusting:

Horses.

Chariots.

Human strength.

Political power.

Money.

Influence.

People.

More than:

You.

Teach us to use the resources You provide without turning them into:

Idols.

Remind us that human beings are:

Human.

And You alone are:

God.

Father, when enemies appear:

Large.

Powerful.

Loud.

Do not let fear control us.

Remind us that You are like:

A lion that does not tremble at noise.

And like:

Birds hovering protectively over their young.

Thank You for being both:

Strong.

Tender.

Powerful.

Near.

Father, call us back whenever we wander.

Help us hear:

“Return to Him.”

Give us courage to reject every idol:

Silver.

Gold.

Modern.

Hidden.

Personal.

Whatever competes with You:

Remove it from our hearts.

Father, when Assyria stands before us:

Remind us that You do not need human strength in order to save.

The sword does not have to be:

Man’s sword.

You are able to:

Deliver.

Protect.

Defend.

Judge.

Rescue.

Teach us to trust:

You.

Not flesh.

You.

Not fear.

You.

Not Egypt.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“But the Egyptians are mere men and not God; their horses are flesh and not spirit.”**
> **— Isaiah 31:3**

Central Truth

Human strength, military power, political alliances, and visible resources cannot replace trust in the Lord, because Egypt is only flesh while God is Spirit; therefore His people must return to Him, reject their idols, rest under His powerful protection, and believe that He alone can defeat the enemies they fear.

Isaiah 31 in One Sentence

Isaiah warns Judah not to trust Egypt's horses, chariots, and human strength instead of the Holy One of Israel, reveals the Lord as both a fearless lion and a hovering protector over Zion, calls His rebellious people to return and cast away their idols, and declares that Assyria will fall not by human sword but by the direct power of God.

Isaiah Chapter 32 — A Righteous King and the Outpouring of the Spirit

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 32 presents a dramatic contrast between:

Righteous leadership.

Corrupt character.

Careless complacency.

Divine judgment.

The transforming work of the Spirit.

Peace.

The chapter begins with:

A King.

But not merely:

Any king.

Isaiah says:

> **"A king will reign in righteousness."**

This ruler governs with:

Justice.

Integrity.

Protection.

Stability.

The chapter therefore looks beyond Judah’s imperfect rulers toward the ideal reign of:

The Messiah.

Its language fits the larger Isaianic hope of the righteous Davidic King already described in:

Isaiah 9.

Isaiah 11.

Under righteous rule:

People are protected.

Spiritual blindness is removed.

Understanding increases.

Speech becomes clear.

False labels disappear.

A fool will no longer be praised as:

Noble.

A miser will no longer be celebrated as:

Generous.

Why?

Because righteous rule exposes:

Character.

Truth is no longer manipulated by:

Titles.

Reputation.

Appearance.

The fool is known by:

Folly.

The selfish schemer is known by:

Injustice.

The noble person is known by:

Noble plans.

Noble deeds.

Then the chapter abruptly addresses:

Careless women.

These women represent people living with:

Ease.

Security.

Complacency.

They assume:

Tomorrow will look like today.

But Isaiah warns that:

Harvest will fail.

Fruitfulness will disappear.

Fields will become:

Thorns.

Briers.

The bustling city will become:

Desolate.

Yet the devastation is not the end.

One word changes the direction of the chapter:

“Until.”

Desolation continues:

“Until the Spirit is poured out on us from on high.”

That is the turning point.

The Spirit transforms:

Desert.

Into:

Fertile field.

Justice dwells where there was disorder.

Righteousness flourishes.

Peace becomes the fruit of righteousness.

Quietness and confidence replace:

Fear.

God’s people live in:

Secure homes.

Undisturbed places of rest.

The chapter ends with:

Blessing.

Sowing.

Fruitfulness.

Freedom.

The central truth of Isaiah 32 is:

The righteous reign of God’s appointed King exposes false character, protects the vulnerable, warns the complacent, and prepares the way for the Spirit’s transforming work, through which barrenness becomes fruitfulness, righteousness produces peace, and God’s people dwell in lasting security.

I. A KING WILL REIGN IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Isaiah 32:1 — The Righteous King

> **“Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice.”**

Isaiah begins with:

Leadership.

The king does not merely:

Rule.

He rules:

Righteously.

The princes do not merely:

Exercise authority.

They govern with:

Justice.

This is leadership as God intended it.

Cross References

Jeremiah 23:5

God promises to raise up a righteous Branch from David’s line who will reign wisely and practice justice and righteousness in the land.

Psalm 72:2

The ideal king is asked to judge God’s people with righteousness and defend the oppressed with justice.

Isaiah 9:7

The promised Davidic ruler will establish an everlasting kingdom upheld by justice and righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

The quality of leadership is measured not merely by:

Power.

Popularity.

Success.

But by:

Righteousness.

Justice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A ruler becomes great in God’s eyes when power is governed by righteousness.

II. RIGHTEOUS LEADERSHIP PROVIDES SHELTER

Isaiah 32:2 — Refuge in a Weary Land

> **“Each one will be like a shelter from the wind, a refuge from the storm, like streams of water in a dry land, like the shade of a great rock in a weary land.”**

Godly leadership should become:

Shelter.

Refuge.

Water.

Shade.

Notice the imagery.

Leadership is not pictured mainly as:

Privilege.

Status.

Recognition.

It is:

Protection.

Refreshment.

Relief.

Cross References

Isaiah 25:4

God is described as a refuge for the poor, a stronghold for the needy, a shelter from the storm, and shade from oppressive heat.

Psalm 61:3

God is praised as a refuge and strong tower against the enemy.

Isaiah 4:6

God provides shelter and shade from heat and protection from storm and rain.

Spiritual Principle

Leadership should make vulnerable people:

Safer.

Not:

More exposed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Godly authority becomes shade for the weary rather than heat upon them.

III. BLIND EYES BEGIN TO SEE

Isaiah 32:3 — Spiritual Perception Restored

> **“Then the eyes of those who see will no longer be dim, and the ears of those who hear will listen.”**

Righteous rule produces:

Clarity.

Those with eyes:

Actually see.

Those with ears:

Actually listen.

The issue is:

Spiritual perception.

Cross References

Isaiah 29:18

Isaiah promises that the deaf will hear the words of the scroll and the blind will see out of gloom and darkness.

Isaiah 35:5

The eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped under God’s restoring work.

Matthew 13:16

Jesus calls His disciples blessed because their eyes see and their ears hear the truth of God’s kingdom.

Spiritual Principle

God’s rule produces:

Sight.

Hearing.

Understanding.

IV. THE RECKLESS GAIN UNDERSTANDING

Isaiah 32:4 — Confusion Gives Way to Clarity

> **“The hearts of the reckless will understand knowledge, and the tongues of the stammering will speak clearly.”**

The reckless were previously:

Hasty.

Thoughtless.

Unwise.

Now:

They understand.

Speech once:

Confused.

Becomes:

Clear.

Cross References

Isaiah 35:6

Under God’s restoration, disabilities are overcome and the tongue that could not speak properly breaks into joyful expression.

Exodus 4:10

Moses describes himself as slow of speech and tongue, yet God reminds him that speech itself remains under divine authority.

James 1:19

Believers are urged to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger.

Spiritual Principle

God can transform:

Impulsive thinking.

Confused speech.

Into:

Wisdom.

Clarity.

V. FALSE HONOR WILL END

Isaiah 32:5 — Fools No Longer Called Noble

> **“No longer will fools be called noble, nor the miser said to be generous.”**

Righteous society refuses to:

Rename evil.

Flatter corruption.

Call selfishness generosity.

Call foolishness nobility.

Cross References

Proverbs 17:7

Fine speech does not fit a fool, and dishonesty is even more inappropriate for one claiming honorable status.

Isaiah 5:20

Isaiah pronounces woe upon those who call evil good and good evil, reversing moral categories.

Job 30:8

Job describes foolish and dishonorable people whose character does not match any claim to nobility.

Spiritual Principle

Truthful leadership restores:

Moral vocabulary.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One mark of moral decline is calling vice virtue and foolishness wisdom.

VI. THE FOOL REVEALS HIS CHARACTER

Isaiah 32:6 — Folly, Ungodliness, and Neglect

> **“For the fool speaks folly, and his heart plots evil: to practice ungodliness, to speak error against the Lord, to starve the hungry of food and deprive the thirsty of drink.”**

The fool is not merely:

Uneducated.

Socially awkward.

Intellectually limited.

Biblical folly is:

Moral.

Spiritual.

The fool:

Plots evil.

Speaks falsely about God.

Neglects the hungry.

Deprives the thirsty.

Cross References

Proverbs 15:2

Wise speech uses knowledge properly, while foolish speech pours out ignorance and folly.

Ezekiel 34:2

God condemns shepherds who feed themselves while neglecting the flock they were supposed to care for.

Isaiah 3:14

God brings judgment against leaders who have consumed what belonged to His people and oppressed the poor.

Spiritual Principle

A fool can be identified by:

What he says.

What he plans.

How he treats the vulnerable.

VII. THE MISER USES SCHEMES AGAINST THE POOR

Isaiah 32:7 — Injustice by Design

> **“The miser’s schemes are evil; he plans wickedness to ruin the poor with lies, even when the plea of the needy is just.”**

This is not accidental injustice.

It is:

Planned.

Calculated.

Strategic.

The poor person may have:

A legitimate case.

Still:

Lies are used against him.

Cross References

Amos 5:12

God knows those who oppress the righteous, accept bribes, and deny justice to the poor.

Proverbs 6:18

Among the things God hates is a heart that plans wicked schemes.

Micah 2:1

Woe is pronounced upon those who plan evil while lying awake and then carry it out because they possess the power to do so.

Spiritual Principle

God judges not only evil actions.

He judges:

The plans behind them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Power becomes corrupt when it learns how to turn lies into policy.

VIII. THE NOBLE PERSON MAKES NOBLE PLANS

Isaiah 32:8 — Character Revealed in Action

> **“But the noble person makes noble plans, and by noble deeds they will stand.”**

The contrast is:

Clear.

Fool:

Folly.

Miser:

Schemes.

Noble person:

Noble plans.

Noble deeds.

True nobility is:

Character.

Not title.

Cross References

Proverbs 16:12

Righteousness establishes leadership because wickedness is incompatible with a stable throne.

Philippians 4:8

Believers are called to fill their minds with what is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and worthy of praise.

Proverbs 12:5

The plans of righteous people are just, while the advice of the wicked is deceptive.

Spiritual Principle

Noble deeds begin with:

Noble intentions.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True nobility is not inherited in a name.

It is revealed in a life.

IX. CARELESS EASE RECEIVES A WARNING

Isaiah 32:9 — Listen, You Careless Ones

> **“Rise up, you women who live in ease; hear my voice, you daughters who live carelessly; listen to what I say.”**

Isaiah addresses:

Women living comfortably.

But the spiritual issue is broader:

Complacency.

They feel:

Safe.

Untroubled.

Secure.

Isaiah says:

Listen.

Cross References

Isaiah 3:16

Isaiah previously confronted the proud daughters of Zion for arrogance, luxury, and self-display during national spiritual decline.

Amos 4:1

Amos condemns wealthy, complacent women who enjoy luxury while benefiting from the oppression of the poor.

Isaiah 28:23

God calls His people to listen carefully, pay attention, and hear the message He is giving.

Spiritual Principle

Comfort can become dangerous when it produces:

Spiritual sleep.

X. FALSE SECURITY WILL BE SHAKEN

Isaiah 32:10 — Harvest Failure

> **“In little more than a year you who feel secure will tremble; the grape harvest will fail, and the fruit crop will not come.”**

They feel:

Secure.

Isaiah says:

You will tremble.

What they assume will always come:

Harvest.

Fruit.

Provision.

Will fail.

Cross References

Habakkuk 3:17

Even when the fig tree fails, vines produce no fruit, crops disappear, and livestock are gone, faith can still choose to rejoice in God.

Joel 1:11

Farmers and vineyard workers mourn because grain and fruit crops have been destroyed.

Isaiah 24:7

Wine dries up, vines wither, and those who depended upon earthly celebration begin to groan.

Spiritual Principle

Complacency assumes tomorrow belongs to us.

Faith knows tomorrow belongs to:

God.

XI. THE CARELESS ARE TOLD TO MOURN

Isaiah 32:11 — Sackcloth Replaces Comfort

> **“Tremble, you women who live in ease; shudder, you careless ones. Strip yourselves bare, and put sackcloth around your waists.”**

Ease gives way to:

Trembling.

Carelessness to:

Mourning.

Luxury to:

Sackcloth.

Cross References

Joel 1:8

The people are called to mourn deeply like someone grieving a devastating personal loss.

Isaiah 3:24

Luxury and beauty are replaced by mourning, humiliation, and loss under judgment.

Jeremiah 4:8

People are called to wear sackcloth, mourn, and cry because judgment has not turned away.

Spiritual Principle

There are times when repentance requires:

Grief.

Not entertainment.

XII. FRUITFUL FIELDS BECOME A CAUSE FOR MOURNING

Isaiah 32:12 — Loss of Vineyards

> **“Beat your breasts for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vines,”**

The people once enjoyed:

Fruitful land.

Now they mourn:

Its loss.

Cross References

Isaiah 16:9

Isaiah weeps over destroyed vineyards and harvests because judgment has silenced their former joy.

Micah 1:8

The prophet mourns openly and dramatically because of the devastation coming upon the people.

Joel 1:11

Farmers lament because wheat, barley, and harvest crops have been ruined.

Spiritual Principle

Blessings ignored in prosperity are often remembered deeply after loss.

XIII. THORNS AND BRIERS COVER THE LAND

Isaiah 32:13 — Joyful Houses Become Desolate

> **“And for the land of my people, overgrown with thorns and briers—yes, mourn for all the houses of joy and the bustling city.”**

Thorns and briers represent:

Neglect.

Judgment.

Desolation.

Places of:

Joy.

Activity.

Celebration.

Become:

Empty.

Cross References

Isaiah 7:23

Valuable land becomes overgrown with briers and thorns when judgment devastates the region.

Genesis 3:18

After human sin, the ground produces thorns and thistles as part of creation’s curse.

Hosea 9:6

Places once filled with possessions and prosperity become overgrown with thorns after devastation.

Spiritual Principle

Sin eventually leaves:

Thorns.

Where people expected:

Fruit.

XIV. THE CITY BECOMES A WASTELAND

Isaiah 32:14 — Human Security Deserted

> **“The fortress will be abandoned, the noisy city deserted; citadel and watchtower will become wastelands forever, a delight for donkeys, a pasture for flocks—”**

Fortress.

City.

Citadel.

Watchtower.

All become:

Abandoned.

Animals occupy:

Former centers of human power.

Cross References

Isaiah 13:21

Ruined cities are pictured becoming habitats for wild animals after human glory disappears.

Zephaniah 2:14

Animals inhabit the ruins of former cities whose political strength and population have vanished.

Jeremiah 9:11

Jerusalem is warned that it can become a heap of ruins and desolate place because of persistent rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

No city is too busy to become quiet under judgment.

XV. THE SPIRIT IS POURED OUT FROM ON HIGH

Isaiah 32:15 — The Great Turning Point

> **“Until the Spirit is poured out on us from on high. Then the desert will become a fertile field, and the fertile field will seem like a forest.”**

One word changes everything:

> **“Until.”**

Desolation is not:

The final word.

The turning point is:

The Spirit.

When He is poured out:

Desert becomes:

Field.

Field becomes:

Forest.

Barrenness becomes:

Abundance.

Cross References

Joel 2:28

God promises to pour out His Spirit upon people broadly, resulting in prophetic witness and divine activity among generations.

Isaiah 44:3

God promises to pour water upon thirsty land and His Spirit upon the descendants of His people.

Ezekiel 36:26

God promises inner transformation through a new heart and renewed spirit, replacing hardness with responsiveness.

Spiritual Principle

Human effort can cultivate.

Only God’s Spirit can transform at the deepest level.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Spirit can turn places we have labeled barren into places overflowing with life.

XVI. JUSTICE DWELLS IN THE WILDERNESS

Isaiah 32:16 — Righteousness Takes Root

> **“Justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness will live in the fertile field.”**

The Spirit’s work is not merely:

Emotional.

Spectacular.

Personal.

It produces:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Cross References

Isaiah 11:4

The Messiah judges the poor with righteousness and defends the meek with justice.

Psalm 85:10

Mercy and truth meet together, while righteousness and peace are pictured embracing.

Isaiah 60:17

God promises a restored order in which peace and righteousness characterize leadership and society.

Spiritual Principle

A genuine work of the Spirit produces:

Righteousness.

Justice.

Not merely excitement.

XVII. RIGHTEOUSNESS PRODUCES PEACE

Isaiah 32:17 — Quietness and Confidence

> **“The fruit of righteousness will be peace; its effect will be quietness and confidence forever.”**

Peace is called:

The fruit.

Righteousness is:

The root.

True peace does not come from:

Ignoring evil.

Redefining wrong.

Pretending everything is fine.

It grows from:

Righteousness.

Cross References

James 3:18

Those who make peace sow righteousness in peaceful conditions and reap righteous fruit.

Romans 5:1

Those justified by faith have peace with God through Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 26:3

God keeps the trusting and steadfast mind in perfect peace.

Spiritual Principle

Peace is not the absence of truth.

It is the fruit of righteousness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot plant unrighteousness and expect to harvest lasting peace.

XVIII. GOD’S PEOPLE LIVE SECURELY

Isaiah 32:18 — Peaceful Dwelling Places

> **“My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest.”**

The result of righteous rule and the Spirit’s work is:

Peace.

Security.

Rest.

Notice:

God calls them:

> **“My people.”**

Cross References

Leviticus 26:5

God promises covenant blessing in which His people eat, live securely, and enjoy the fruit of the land.

Ezekiel 34:25

God promises a covenant of peace in which His people can dwell securely without fear.

Jeremiah 33:16

Judah and Jerusalem are promised salvation and security under God’s righteous restoring work.

Spiritual Principle

God’s peace is more than:

An inward feeling.

His final restoration includes:

Security.

Wholeness.

Rest.

XIX. PROUD STRENGTH IS STILL BROUGHT LOW

Isaiah 32:19 — The Forest and City Fall

> **“But hail will flatten the forest, and the city will be brought low.”**

Even amid promises of:

Restoration.

Judgment remains for:

Pride.

Human strength.

Rebellion.

Cross References

Isaiah 30:30

God’s judgment is pictured with thunderstorm, fire, cloudburst, and hail.

Revelation 16:21

Enormous hail appears in final judgment imagery against persistent rebellion.

Isaiah 28:2

God’s instrument of judgment is compared to a destructive hailstorm and overwhelming flood.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration for God’s people does not mean evil escapes judgment.

XX. BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO SOW BESIDE ALL WATERS

Isaiah 32:20 — Fruitful Labor Under God’s Blessing

> **“Blessed are those who sow beside all waters, who let the ox and donkey range freely.”**

The chapter ends with:

Sowing.

Labor.

Abundance.

Freedom.

Water is plentiful.

Fields are fruitful.

Animals range freely.

Cross References

Ecclesiastes 11:1

The wise are encouraged to act generously and faithfully, trusting that what is sent out may return in due season.

Psalm 1:3

The righteous person is compared to a tree planted by streams of water, producing fruit in season and prospering in what God appoints.

Isaiah 30:23

God promises rain, rich crops, and broad pasture as part of restoration.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration produces renewed:

Work.

Fruitfulness.

Hope.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God sends the water, keep sowing.

XXI. THE RIGHTEOUS KING AND CHRIST

Isaiah 32 begins with:

> **“A king will reign in righteousness.”**

In its immediate setting, this expresses hope for:

Godly kingship.

But within Isaiah’s larger messianic vision, the language points beyond every imperfect human ruler.

Isaiah has already described the coming Davidic King in:

Isaiah 9.

Isaiah 11.

Jeremiah later speaks of:

The righteous Branch.

The New Testament reveals the ultimate righteous King as:

Jesus Christ.

Christ rules with:

Perfect justice.

Perfect righteousness.

Perfect wisdom.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every righteous ruler is temporary.

Christ is the righteous King without end.

XXII. WHAT ISAIAH 32 TEACHES ABOUT LEADERSHIP

Godly leadership provides:

Shelter.

Refuge.

Water.

Shade.

Spiritual Principle

The purpose of authority is not merely:

To command.

It is also:

To protect.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 32 TEACHES ABOUT CHARACTER

The chapter identifies three kinds of people.

The Fool

Speaks folly.

Plans evil.

Neglects the needy.

The Miser

Uses schemes.

Lies.

Oppresses.

The Noble

Plans noble things.

Practices noble deeds.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Character eventually identifies the person more accurately than titles do.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 32 TEACHES ABOUT COMPLACENCY

The women feel:

Secure.

But their security is:

Temporary.

Spiritual Principle

Comfort becomes dangerous when it destroys:

Watchfulness.

Prayer.

Dependence on God.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 32 TEACHES ABOUT THE SPIRIT

The Spirit changes:

Wilderness.

Fruitfulness.

Justice.

Righteousness.

Peace.

Security.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Where the Spirit truly transforms, barren things do not stay barren.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 32 TEACHES ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS

Righteousness produces:

Peace.

Quietness.

Confidence.

Spiritual Principle

God’s peace grows from:

God’s order.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 32 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE

Peace is not merely:

A treaty.

Silence after battle.

A temporary pause.

It is connected with:

Righteousness.

Justice.

Spirit-produced transformation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Lasting peace needs deeper roots than temporary circumstances.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 32 TEACHES ABOUT SECURITY

True security appears after:

God’s Spirit.

Justice.

Righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

Human systems often seek security without righteousness.

God connects the two.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 32 TEACHES ABOUT FRUITFULNESS

The desert becomes:

A fertile field.

The fertile field becomes:

Forest-like.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not limited by the condition of the soil when His Spirit begins to work.

XXX. THE KING WHO REIGNS RIGHTLY

A kingdom reflects:

Its ruler.

The righteous King produces:

Justice.

Protection.

Clarity.

Spiritual Principle

Good leadership creates conditions where truth and justice can flourish.

XXXI. SHELTER FROM THE WIND

People face:

Storms.

Heat.

Weariness.

Godly leadership should lessen:

The burden.

Not increase it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Ask whether your influence makes life safer or harder for people entrusted to your care.

XXXII. STREAMS IN A DRY LAND

Dry places need:

Water.

People living through spiritual dryness need:

Truth.

Grace.

Encouragement.

Spiritual Principle

A righteous person can become refreshing in a spiritually dry environment.

XXXIII. SHADE IN A WEARY LAND

Shade does not remove:

The desert.

But it gives:

Relief within it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You may not be able to remove someone’s entire desert.

You can still become shade.

XXXIV. EYES THAT SEE

In previous chapters Isaiah repeatedly described:

Blindness.

Here:

Sight returns.

Spiritual Principle

God’s kingdom restores perception.

XXXV. EARS THAT LISTEN

Hearing is different from:

Listening.

The people had often:

Heard.

But refused:

To listen.

Now:

They do.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual maturity begins when hearing turns into listening.

XXXVI. FOOLS CALLED NOBLE

Isaiah imagines a society where moral labels have become:

Confused.

The righteous reign corrects:

That confusion.

Spiritual Principle

One sign of cultural restoration is the recovery of truthful moral language.

XXXVII. THE FOOL’S HEART

The fool’s problem begins:

Inside.

His heart:

Plans evil.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Words and deeds eventually reveal what the heart has been planning.

XXXVIII. THE POOR WITH A JUST PLEA

The needy person can be:

Right.

Yet still be:

Oppressed.

Isaiah shows God sees:

The case.

The lies.

The injustice.

Spiritual Principle

God’s justice does not depend on social status.

XXXIX. NOBLE PLANS

Good deeds often begin long before:

Action.

They begin in:

Purpose.

Intent.

Character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If you want noble actions, cultivate noble thoughts and plans.

XL. WOMEN AT EASE

The specific audience should be respected.

Isaiah addresses women living in:

Ease.

Carelessness.

Security.

The warning is not a condemnation of women as a class.

It confronts:

Complacency among those enjoying comfort while judgment approaches.

Spiritual Principle

The spiritual danger is:

Carelessness.

Not gender.

XLI. A YEAR CAN CHANGE EVERYTHING

Isaiah says:

In little more than a year.

Harvest will:

Fail.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never build eternal confidence on temporary prosperity.

XLII. THE FAILED GRAPE HARVEST

They expected:

Wine.

Fruit.

Celebration.

Instead:

Loss.

Spiritual Principle

Earthly abundance should produce gratitude, not presumption.

XLIII. SACKCLOTH AFTER SILK

Comfort gives way to:

Mourning.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not wait for the loss of comfort before learning humility.

XLIV. THORNS IN THE JOYFUL CITY

Places once full of:

Celebration.

Become:

Overgrown.

Spiritual Principle

A society can move from abundance to abandonment more quickly than expected.

XLV. “UNTIL THE SPIRIT”

These may be the most important words in the chapter.

Everything before them shows:

What humanity becomes without divine renewal.

Everything after them shows:

What God can restore.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never put a period where God writes:

“Until.”

XLVI. THE DESERT BECOMES FERTILE

The Spirit reverses:

Barrenness.

Spiritual Principle

God specializes in bringing life where human strength sees only wasteland.

XLVII. JUSTICE IN THE WILDERNESS

The Spirit’s work changes:

Relationships.

Institutions.

Moral order.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual renewal should eventually become visible in how people treat one another.

XLVIII. RIGHTEOUSNESS IN THE FIELD

Fruitfulness without righteousness is:

Incomplete.

Spiritual Principle

God is interested in what grows morally as well as materially.

XLIX. PEACE AS FRUIT

Peace grows.

It is not merely:

Declared.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If you want peace as fruit, plant righteousness as seed.

L. QUIETNESS AND CONFIDENCE

Isaiah 30 spoke of:

Quietness and trust.

Isaiah 32 returns to:

Quietness and confidence.

Spiritual Principle

God’s kingdom replaces panic with:

Stable trust.

LI. SECURE HOMES

God’s vision includes:

Ordinary peace.

Homes.

Rest.

Safety.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoration is not only cosmic.

It reaches the home.

LII. HAIL AND THE FALLEN CITY

Even while:

God’s people rest.

Proud structures remain subject to:

Judgment.

Spiritual Principle

God can protect His people while bringing down what opposes His righteousness.

LIII. SOW BESIDE ALL WATERS

Blessed people continue:

Working.

Planting.

Sowing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The promise of blessing is never an excuse for laziness.

LIV. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 32

1. Righteous Leadership Matters

Principle:

Leadership shapes the moral climate of a people.

2. Godly Authority Protects

Principle:

Power should create refuge for the vulnerable.

3. Character Eventually Reveals Itself

Principle:

Foolishness, greed, and nobility all produce visible fruit.

4. Complacency Is Dangerous

Principle:

Ease can become spiritual anesthesia.

5. Judgment Can Turn Prosperity into Desolation

Principle:

Temporary blessing should never produce permanent presumption.

6. The Spirit Transforms Barrenness

Principle:

No wilderness is beyond divine renewal.

7. Righteousness Produces Peace

Principle:

Lasting peace grows out of right relationship with God and others.

8. Restoration Produces Fruitful Labor

Principle:

Those blessed by God keep sowing faithfully.

LV. THE MESSIANIC HOPE OF ISAIAH 32

The chapter begins with:

A righteous King.

Then moves toward:

The Spirit.

Justice.

Righteousness.

Peace.

These themes harmonize closely with Isaiah’s larger messianic vision.

In Isaiah 11:

The Spirit rests upon the Branch.

He judges righteously.

Peace follows.

In Isaiah 32:

A King reigns righteously.

The Spirit is poured out.

Peace follows.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The King and the Spirit belong together in Isaiah’s vision of restoration.

LVI. THE SPIRIT AND PENTECOST

Isaiah 32:15 belongs to the Old Testament expectation of:

The Spirit poured out from above.

Joel 2 later expands that hope.

Acts 2 records a decisive New Testament fulfillment of the promised outpouring of:

The Holy Spirit.

Yet Isaiah 32 also looks toward a broad transformation involving:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Peace.

Creation-like fruitfulness.

Therefore the prophecy has a rich redemptive horizon that should not be reduced merely to:

One historical moment.

Spiritual Principle

The Spirit who was poured out upon the church is also the Spirit whose ultimate work moves creation and God’s people toward full restoration.

LVII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who reigns in Isaiah 32:1?

A king who reigns in righteousness.

Question 2

How do the princes rule?

With justice.

Question 3

What does godly leadership resemble?

A shelter from wind, refuge from storm, streams in a dry land, and shade in a weary land.

Question 4

What happens to spiritual perception?

Eyes see more clearly and ears begin listening.

Question 5

What happens to reckless people?

They gain understanding.

Question 6

What happens to confused speech?

It becomes clear.

Question 7

What happens to false moral labels?

Fools are no longer called noble and misers are no longer called generous.

Question 8

How is the fool identified?

By foolish speech, evil plans, ungodliness, falsehood about God, and neglect of hungry and thirsty people.

Question 9

How is the miser identified?

By schemes and lies used to ruin the poor.

Question 10

How is the noble person identified?

By noble plans and noble deeds.

Question 11

Who receives a warning beginning in verse 9?

Women living carelessly and comfortably.

Question 12

What happens to their false security?

It is shaken when harvest and fruitfulness fail.

Question 13

What happens to the city?

It becomes desolate and overgrown.

Question 14

What changes everything?

The Spirit being poured out from on high.

Question 15

What happens to the desert?

It becomes a fertile field.

Question 16

What dwells in the wilderness?

Justice.

Question 17

What lives in the fertile field?

Righteousness.

Question 18

What is the fruit of righteousness?

Peace.

Question 19

What are the lasting effects of righteousness?

Quietness and confidence.

Question 20

Where will God’s people live?

In peaceful dwellings, secure homes, and undisturbed places of rest.

Question 21

Who are called blessed at the end?

Those who faithfully sow beside all waters.

LVIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 32 asks several searching questions.

Does My Leadership Provide Shelter?

Do people under my influence experience:

Safety?

Justice?

Refreshment?

Or:

Pressure?

Fear?

Am I Calling Things What God Calls Them?

Do I excuse:

Folly?

Greed?

Selfishness?

By giving them respectable names?

Am I Noble in Character or Only in Reputation?

What kind of:

Plans.

Words.

Actions.

Come from me?

Have I Become Careless Because Life Is Comfortable?

Does ease reduce:

Prayer?

Watchfulness?

Dependence?

Am I Assuming Tomorrow’s Harvest Is Guaranteed?

Have I confused:

Present blessing.

With:

Permanent security?

Is There a Wilderness in My Life That Needs the Spirit’s Work?

Marriage?

Ministry?

Heart?

Family?

Church?

Am I Trying to Produce Spiritual fruit without the Spirit?

Does My Idea of Spiritual Renewal Include Justice and Righteousness?

Or only:

Emotion?

Am I Pursuing Peace without righteousness?

Am I Still Sowing Faithfully?

Even while waiting for:

Harvest?

LIX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Spirit Turns Wilderness into Fruitfulness and Righteousness into Peace”

Isaiah’s order matters:

Spirit.

Transformation.

Justice.

Righteousness.

Peace.

Security.

Principle:

Lasting peace is not manufactured from the outside; it grows from the transforming work of God within people and among His people.

LX. RIGHTEOUS RULE

The chapter begins with:

Government.

But not merely:

Government structure.

It focuses on:

Character.

Spiritual Principle

The best system becomes corrupted when rulers abandon righteousness.

LXI. PROTECTION AS A MARK OF LEADERSHIP

Shelter.

Water.

Shade.

These are all:

Life-giving images.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Leadership is healthiest when those under it can breathe.

LXII. THE END OF MORAL CONFUSION

Fool.

Miser.

Noble.

Each is finally:

Named correctly.

Spiritual Principle

God’s kingdom does not need lies in order to protect reputations.

LXIII. FOLLY AND HUNGER

Isaiah connects foolish leadership with:

Hungry people.

Thirsty people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Bad character at the top often becomes suffering at the bottom.

LXIV. NOBLE PEOPLE PLAN NOBLE THINGS

Good character:

Thinks ahead.

Spiritual Principle

Righteous deeds are often the fruit of righteous planning.

LXV. CARELESS SECURITY

The warning is:

Not against rest.

But:

Complacency.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Rest in God is faith.

Carelessness toward God is danger.

LXVI. THE HARVEST THAT DOES NOT COME

People assume:

The normal cycle.

Will continue.

God warns:

It may not.

Spiritual Principle

Every harvest is:

Grace.

LXVII. THORNS AFTER FRUITFULNESS

This is one of the chapter’s saddest reversals.

Fruitful land becomes:

Thorns.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Blessings that are taken for granted can become memories.

LXVIII. THE ABANDONED WATCHTOWER

Human defenses become:

Pasture.

Spiritual Principle

Structures designed to provide security cannot guarantee security apart from God.

LXIX. THE SPIRIT FROM ON HIGH

Humanity cannot:

Manufacture.

Vote in.

Engineer.

The Spirit’s outpouring.

It comes:

From above.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The deepest renewal always begins with God.

LXX. FROM DESERT TO FOREST

This is not:

Minor improvement.

It is:

Transformation.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration is capable of exceeding the condition that existed before.

LXXI. JUSTICE AND THE SPIRIT

A Spirit-filled society cannot ignore:

Justice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Any claimed spirituality that consistently excuses injustice should be tested carefully.

LXXII. RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PEACE

People often want:

Peace first.

Isaiah gives:

Righteousness first.

Spiritual Principle

Peace separated from truth becomes fragile.

LXXIII. QUIETNESS FOREVER

Not merely:

Temporary calm.

The vision reaches toward:

Enduring confidence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s goal is deeper than relief.

It is settled security in His righteous order.

LXXIV. GOD’S PEOPLE AT REST

Isaiah moves from:

Careless ease.

To:

True rest.

There is a difference.

Careless ease says:

Nothing can happen.

Faithful rest says:

God is with us.

Spiritual Principle

False security rests in circumstances.

True security rests in God.

LXXV. SOWING AFTER RESTORATION

The chapter ends:

Not with inactivity.

But:

Sowing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Peaceful people can still be productive people.

LXXVI. NINE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 32

1. Unrighteous Rule → Righteous King

2. Exposure → Shelter

3. Blindness → Sight

4. Recklessness → Understanding

5. Foolishness → Nobility

6. Careless Ease → Mourning

7. Wilderness → Fertile Field

8. Unrighteousness → Peace

9. Desolation → Fruitful Sowing

Key Truth

The Spirit of God reverses what sin and careless leadership have damaged, producing righteousness, clarity, fruitfulness, peace, and security beneath the reign of the righteous King.

LXXVII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 32 begins with:

A King.

And ends with:

A field.

Between those two pictures lies:

The transformation of a people.

The King reigns:

Righteously.

That matters.

Leadership always:

Influences.

Shapes.

Affects.

Those beneath it.

Godly leadership becomes:

Shelter from wind.

Refuge from storm.

Water in dryness.

Shade in weariness.

That is a good test for anyone with authority.

Pastor.

Parent.

Employer.

Teacher.

Leader.

Ask:

Do people under my influence experience:

Shelter?

Or:

Storm?

Then Isaiah speaks about:

Character.

Fools eventually reveal:

Folly.

Misers reveal:

Schemes.

Noble people reveal:

Noble deeds.

God is not impressed by:

Titles.

Labels.

Reputations.

He looks at:

Character.

Then comes the warning to the comfortable.

People at ease assumed:

Harvest.

Fruit.

Security.

Would continue.

Isaiah says:

Do not confuse:

Comfort.

With:

Safety.

Prosperity.

With:

Godliness.

Routine.

With:

Guarantee.

Then everything becomes:

Desolate.

Thorns.

Briers.

Empty towers.

Abandoned cities.

But then:

One word.

“Until.”

Never forget:

“Until.”

The field is barren:

Until.

The city is empty:

Until.

The people are struggling:

Until.

Until what?

“Until the Spirit is poured out on us from on high.”

That changes:

Everything.

The Spirit turns:

Desert.

Into:

Fertile land.

He brings:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Peace.

Quietness.

Confidence.

Security.

That means real spiritual renewal is not merely:

Feeling something.

It changes:

Character.

Relationships.

Justice.

Behavior.

Community.

Then Isaiah says:

“The fruit of righteousness will be peace.”

We often want:

Peace.

Without:

Righteousness.

We want:

Calm.

Without:

Change.

Security.

Without:

Repentance.

Isaiah says:

Righteousness comes first.

Then:

Peace.

Finally the chapter ends with people:

Sowing beside all waters.

The Spirit’s blessing does not make people:

Lazy.

It makes them:

Fruitful.

So:

Submit to the righteous King.

Use your influence as shelter.

Call folly what it is.

Reject complacency.

Do not despair over wilderness.

Seek the Spirit’s transforming work.

Practice righteousness.

Pursue justice.

And keep:

Sowing.

Because when God sends:

Water.

The faithful still need to plant:

Seed.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for the promise of:

The righteous King.

Thank You for Jesus Christ:

The perfect King.

The just King.

The holy King.

Teach every person in authority to lead with:

Righteousness.

Justice.

Compassion.

Help us become:

Shelter for the hurting.

Refuge for the weary.

Water for the thirsty.

Shade for those walking through difficult places.

Father, expose:

Folly.

Greed.

Selfish schemes.

False labels.

Give us noble hearts that make:

Noble plans.

And practice:

Noble deeds.

Protect us from:

Carelessness.

Complacency.

False security.

Do not let prosperity make us:

Spiritually asleep.

Father, where there is wilderness:

Pour out Your Spirit.

Where there is barrenness:

Bring fruit.

Where there is confusion:

Bring understanding.

Where there is injustice:

Bring righteousness.

Where there is fear:

Bring peace.

Thank You for the promise:

> **“The fruit of righteousness will be peace.”**

Make us people of:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Quietness.

Confidence.

Teach us to rest:

Not carelessly.

But faithfully.

And when You send:

Water.

Help us keep:

Sowing.

Let our lives produce:

Fruit.

Blessing.

Peace.

For Your glory.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“The fruit of righteousness will be peace; its effect will be quietness and confidence forever.” — Isaiah 32:17**

Central Truth

God promises a righteous King whose rule brings justice and protection, exposes foolishness and selfishness, warns the complacent, and prepares the way for the Spirit’s transforming work,

through which wilderness becomes fruitful, justice and righteousness flourish, and God's people experience lasting peace, confidence, security, and fruitful service.

Isaiah 32 in One Sentence

Isaiah promises a righteous King whose just leadership becomes shelter for the vulnerable, exposes the difference between foolish and noble character, warns those living carelessly that prosperity can disappear, and declares that when the Spirit is poured out from on high, wilderness becomes fruitful, righteousness produces peace, and God's people live securely while faithfully sowing under His blessing.

Isaiah Chapter 33 — Woe to the Destroyer, But the Lord Saves Zion

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 33 moves between:

Judgment.

Prayer.

Fear.

Righteousness.

Deliverance.

The beauty of the King.

The security of Zion.

The chapter opens with a warning against:

The destroyer.

The treacherous.

The one who plunders others without having first been plundered.

This violent power may seem successful for a time.

But Isaiah announces:

> **"When you finish destroying, you will be destroyed."**

The principle is:

God sees treachery.

God records injustice.

God repays according to righteousness.

The chapter then turns quickly from:

Woe.

To:

Prayer.

God’s people cry:

> **“O Lord, be gracious to us; we wait for You.”**

This is one of the strongest devotional statements in the chapter.

The people recognize that they need:

Grace.

Strength.

Salvation.

Not once.

But:

Every morning.

Isaiah then declares that when God rises:

Nations scatter.

Human armies flee.

The Lord is exalted because:

He dwells on high.

Yet His exaltation is not distant from human need.

He fills Zion with:

Justice.

Righteousness.

And then comes one of the chapter’s great promises:

> **“He will be the sure foundation of your times, a rich store of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge. The fear of the Lord is the key to this treasure.”**

In unstable times:

God is stability.

When human wisdom fails:

God possesses wisdom.

When danger rises:

God is salvation.

When knowledge becomes confused:

God remains truth.

The chapter then describes the collapse of:

Peace negotiations.

Roads.

Covenants.

Public order.

The land itself mourns.

But then God says:

> **“Now I will arise.”**

Everything changes when:

God rises.

The destroyer has acted.

The treacherous have acted.

The nations have acted.

But now:

The Lord acts.

Then comes a deeply serious question:

> **“Who of us can live with the consuming fire?”**

The answer is not:

The proud.

The hypocrite.

The unjust.

The bribe-taker.

Isaiah describes the person who walks:

Righteously.

Speaks:

Uprightly.

Rejects:

Unjust gain.

Bribes.

Bloodshed.

Evil.

That person finds:

Refuge.

Provision.

Security.

Then the chapter rises from:

The fear of judgment.

To:

The beauty of the King.

“Your eyes will see the King in His beauty.”

The people who once remembered:

Terror.

Enemies.

Tax collectors.

Military officials.

Will instead behold:

The King.

Finally Zion is pictured as:

Peaceful.

Stable.

Unmovable.

Protected by the Lord.

And one of the greatest declarations in the chapter appears:

> **“The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; He will save us.”**

The chapter ends with:

Healing.

Forgiveness.

No resident saying:

“I am sick.”

The people’s iniquity:

Forgiven.

The central truth of Isaiah 33 is:

The treacherous destroyer will eventually face destruction, but those who wait upon the Lord find daily strength and salvation; God rises to defend Zion, fills it with justice and righteousness, secures the upright, reveals the beauty of the King, and brings His people into a future marked by peace, healing, and forgiveness.

I. WOE TO THE DESTROYER

Isaiah 33:1 — Treachery Will Be Repaid

> **“Woe to you who plunder, though you were not plundered, and you who deal treacherously, though others did not deal treacherously with you! When you finish destroying, you will be destroyed; when you stop betraying, you will be betrayed.”**

The chapter opens with:

Divine justice.

The destroyer believes:

He is untouchable.

The betrayer believes:

He can keep betraying.

But God says:

The pattern will turn.

Cross References

Habakkuk 2:8

Because violent powers plundered many nations, the surviving peoples are told that the plunderer himself will eventually be plundered.

Obadiah 1:15

The day of the Lord brings repayment according to deeds; what a person or nation has done returns upon them.

Isaiah 10:12

After God finishes using Assyria for His disciplinary purpose, He will punish the proud arrogance of the Assyrian ruler.

Spiritual Principle

Unchecked success in wrongdoing does not mean:

God has approved it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Treachery may have a season.

It does not have the final word.

II. A PRAYER FOR GRACE EVERY MORNING

Isaiah 33:2 — Daily Strength

> **“O Lord, be gracious to us; we wait for You. Be our strength every morning, our salvation in times of trouble.”**

This verse is:

Personal.

Practical.

Daily.

The people ask for:

Grace.

Strength.

Salvation.

And they ask for strength:

Every morning.

Cross References

Psalm 25:5

The psalmist asks God to lead him in truth and teaches him to wait upon the Lord throughout the day.

Isaiah 40:31

Those who wait for the Lord renew their strength and receive endurance beyond their own ability.

Lamentations 3:22

The Lord’s faithful mercies do not cease, and His compassion continues from day to day.

Spiritual Principle

Yesterday’s strength is not always enough for:

Today’s trouble.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Seek fresh strength from God every morning because every day carries its own burden.

III. NATIONS FLEE AT THE SOUND OF GOD’S VOICE

Isaiah 33:3 — The Roar That Scatters Armies

> **“At the sound of Your roar, the nations flee; when You rise up, the peoples scatter.”**

Nations that appear:

Confident.

Organized.

Powerful.

Scatter when:

God rises.

Cross References

Psalm 46:6

Nations rage and kingdoms shake, but when God raises His voice, the earth itself melts before His authority.

2 Chronicles 32:21

The Lord intervened against the Assyrian army and brought down its warriors and leaders without Judah’s own military strength achieving the victory.

Isaiah 17:13

The nations may roar like mighty waters, but when God rebukes them they flee like chaff before the wind.

Spiritual Principle

Human power sounds loud until:

God speaks.

IV. THE PLUNDERERS BECOME PLUNDER

Isaiah 33:4 — Wealth Gathered Like Locusts

> **“The nations’ wealth will be gathered like locusts, like swarming insects rushing in.”**

The conqueror’s wealth becomes:

Spoil.

The one who gathered wealth through:

Violence.

Loses it.

Cross References

Judges 6:5

Enemy forces swarmed into Israel like locusts, consuming resources and overwhelming the land.

Joel 1:4

Successive waves of locusts are pictured consuming what previous waves left behind.

Exodus 10:15

Locusts covered Egypt so thoroughly that they consumed what remained after earlier judgments.

Spiritual Principle

Accumulated wealth does not guarantee:

Ownership forever.

V. THE LORD IS EXALTED IN ZION

Isaiah 33:5 — Justice and Righteousness

> **“The Lord is exalted, for He dwells on high; He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness.”**

God’s greatness is revealed through:

Justice.

Righteousness.

His exaltation produces:

Moral order.

Cross References

Psalm 46:10

God calls people to recognize His sovereignty and know that He will be exalted among the nations.

Isaiah 57:15

The high and exalted One lives in holiness yet also comes near to revive the humble and contrite.

Psalm 99:2

The Lord is great in Zion and exalted over all peoples.

Spiritual Principle

God’s glory and God’s righteousness belong together.

VI. GOD IS THE STABILITY OF HIS PEOPLE'S TIMES

Isaiah 33:6 — Salvation, Wisdom, Knowledge

> **"He will be the sure foundation of your times, a rich store of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge. The fear of the Lord is the key to this treasure."**

This verse speaks directly to:

Unstable times.

God becomes:

The sure foundation.

He provides:

Salvation.

Wisdom.

Knowledge.

And the doorway into these treasures is:

The fear of the Lord.

Cross References

Proverbs 9:10

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One produces true understanding.

Colossians 2:3

In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Deuteronomy 33:25

God promises strength proportionate to the days His people must face.

Spiritual Principle

Stable times do not create stable faith.

God creates stability:

In unstable times.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When the times are uncertain, make sure the foundation is not.

VII. THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS TREASURE

The chapter does not describe reverence for God as:

Burden.

Loss.

Restriction.

It calls it:

Treasure.

Spiritual Principle

The fear of the Lord produces:

Wisdom.

Humility.

Stability.

Obedience.

Discernment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What the world may call limitation, Scripture calls treasure when it teaches us to reverence God.

VIII. THE BRAVE MEN WEEP

Isaiah 33:7 — Failed Peace

> **“Look, their brave men cry out in the streets; the envoys of peace weep bitterly.”**

Those expected to show:

Strength.

Weep.

Diplomatic efforts have:

Failed.

Peace envoys return:

Broken.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:37

Officials returned to Hezekiah with their clothes torn after hearing humiliating Assyrian threats against Jerusalem.

Isaiah 22:4

Isaiah himself wept bitterly because of the devastation coming upon his people.

Lamentations 1:2

Jerusalem is pictured weeping bitterly because those she trusted have failed her.

Spiritual Principle

Human diplomacy has limits.

IX. THE HIGHWAYS ARE EMPTY

Isaiah 33:8 — Society Breaks Down

> **“The highways are deserted, travelers have stopped. Covenants are broken, witnesses despised, and respect for people is no more.”**

This verse describes:

Social collapse.

Travel stops.

Agreements fail.

Human dignity is ignored.

Cross References

Judges 5:6

During oppression, normal travel stopped and people avoided the main roads.

Isaiah 24:5

The earth is defiled because people break laws, violate decrees, and shatter covenant responsibilities.

Lamentations 1:4

Roads to Zion mourn because travelers and worshipers no longer fill them.

Spiritual Principle

When truth and covenant faithfulness disappear, public life eventually suffers.

X. THE LAND MOURNS

Isaiah 33:9 — Lebanon, Sharon, Bashan, and Carmel

> **“The land mourns and wastes away; Lebanon withers with shame, Sharon is like a desert, and Bashan and Carmel shed their leaves.”**

Places known for:

Beauty.

Fertility.

Strength.

Become:

Withered.

Dry.

Stripped.

Cross References

Isaiah 24:4

The earth mourns, withers, and wastes away under judgment.

Nahum 1:4

God’s power causes fertile regions to wither and productive lands to dry up.

Amos 1:2

Under the voice of the Lord, pastures mourn and the fertile top of Carmel dries up.

Spiritual Principle

Creation itself reflects the consequences of human rebellion and divine judgment.

XI. “NOW I WILL ARISE”

Isaiah 33:10 — God Steps Into the Crisis

> **“‘Now I will arise,’ says the Lord. ‘Now I will be exalted; now I will be lifted up.’”**

This is the turning point.

Three times:

> **“Now.”**

God has allowed:

Treachery.

Threats.

Negotiations.

Fear.

But now:

He acts.

Cross References

Psalm 12:5

God declares that He will arise because of the oppression of the poor and the groaning of the needy.

Psalm 68:1

When God arises, His enemies scatter and those who hate Him flee.

Numbers 10:35

Israel called upon the Lord to arise so that His enemies would be scattered.

Spiritual Principle

Divine delay is not divine absence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The situation changes completely when God says:

“Now.”

XII. THE ENEMY CONCEIVES CHAFF

Isaiah 33:11 — Empty Plans Produce Destruction

> **“You conceive chaff, you give birth to stubble; your own breath will be a fire that consumes you.”**

Their plans appear:

Powerful.

But produce:

Chaff.

Stubble.

Nothing substantial.

Then their own actions become:

Destructive.

Cross References

Job 15:35

Wickedness is pictured as conceiving trouble and giving birth to emptiness and deceit.

Isaiah 5:24

Dry grass and stubble disappear before fire, just as rebellion collapses under God’s judgment.

Psalm 1:4

The wicked are like chaff driven away by the wind because they lack lasting substance.

Spiritual Principle

Evil often contains the seeds of:

Its own destruction.

XIII. THE NATIONS ARE LIKE BURNED THORNS

Isaiah 33:12 — Judgment Consumes Pride

> **“The peoples will be burned to ashes, like cut thornbushes set ablaze.”**

Dry thorns:

Burn quickly.

So do proud powers under:

Divine judgment.

Cross References

Malachi 4:1

The coming day burns like an oven, and persistent arrogance and wickedness are compared to stubble consumed by fire.

Amos 2:1

God judges violent nations for cruel and desecrating actions.

Isaiah 9:18

Wickedness burns like fire consuming briers and thorns.

Spiritual Principle

What appears difficult for humans to remove may be quickly consumed by God.

XIV. GOD CALLS EVERYONE TO RECOGNIZE HIS POWER

Isaiah 33:13 — Near and Far Must Hear

> **“Hear, you who are far away, what I have done; acknowledge My might, you who are near.”**

God’s works become:

Testimony.

For:

Near.

Far.

Cross References

Isaiah 5:26

God summons nations from far away according to His sovereign purpose.

Psalm 46:8

People are invited to come and observe the works of the Lord and recognize what He has done.

Micah 6:1

God summons people to hear His case and listen to His righteous controversy.

Spiritual Principle

God’s acts are intended to reveal:

God’s character.

XV. SINNERS IN ZION TREMBLE

Isaiah 33:14 — The Consuming Fire

> **“The sinners in Zion are terrified; trembling grips the hypocrites. ‘Who of us can live with the consuming fire? Who of us can dwell with everlasting flames?’”**

The problem is not:

God being unsafe.

The problem is:

Sin before holiness.

God is described as:

Consuming fire.

Cross References

Hebrews 12:29

God is described as a consuming fire, emphasizing His absolute holiness.

Deuteronomy 4:24

The Lord is called a consuming fire and a jealous God who tolerates no rival worship.

Psalm 15:1

The psalm asks who may dwell in God’s sacred presence and remain upon His holy hill.

Spiritual Principle

The right question is not:

How close can sin get to holiness?

But:

How can sinful people be made fit for God’s presence?

XVI. WHO CAN DWELL WITH THE HOLY GOD?

Isaiah 33:15 — The Character of the Upright

> **“The one who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, who refuses unjust gain, who shakes his hands free of bribes, who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed and shuts his eyes from looking at evil—”**

Isaiah describes a life shaped by:

Righteousness.

Truth.

Integrity.

Justice.

Purity.

The person refuses:

Corrupt money.

Bribery.

Violence.

Evil.

Cross References

Psalm 15:2

The person dwelling with God walks blamelessly, practices righteousness, and speaks truth from the heart.

Ezekiel 18:5

The righteous person practices justice and righteousness in daily conduct.

Micah 6:8

God requires His people to practice justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with Him.

Spiritual Principle

Holiness is visible in:

Money.

Speech.

Justice.

What we hear.

What we watch.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Righteousness is not merely what happens in worship.

It follows us into:

Business.

Conversation.

Courtrooms.

Private choices.

XVII. THE RIGHTEOUS HAVE A SECURE REFUGE

Isaiah 33:16 — Bread and Water Supplied

> **“He will dwell on the heights, his refuge will be the mountain fortress. His bread will be supplied, and his water will not fail him.”**

God promises:

Refuge.

Provision.

Security.

Bread.

Water.

Cross References

Psalm 91:1

The person who dwells under the protection of the Most High rests beneath the shadow of the Almighty.

Psalm 34:10

Those who seek the Lord are not abandoned when it comes to what is truly good and necessary.

Isaiah 41:17

God promises to answer the poor and needy when they seek water and to provide for them in their distress.

Spiritual Principle

God is concerned with:

Spiritual security.

And:

Daily provision.

XVIII. THE PEOPLE WILL SEE THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY

Isaiah 33:17 — A Glorious Vision

> **“Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; they will behold a land stretching far and wide.”**

This is one of Isaiah’s most beautiful promises.

The focus changes from:

Enemy.

Siege.

Terror.

To:

The King.

The ultimate hope is not merely:

The enemy disappears.

It is:

The King is seen.

Cross References

Psalm 27:4

David desires above everything else to dwell in the Lord’s presence and gaze upon His beauty.

Isaiah 6:5

Isaiah himself had seen the glory of the King, the Lord Almighty, and was overwhelmed by God’s holiness.

Revelation 22:4

God’s servants will see His face and bear His name.

Spiritual Principle

Deliverance is wonderful.

The Deliverer is better.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest promise is not merely:

“You will escape the enemy.”

It is:

“You will see the King.”

XIX. FORMER TERROR BECOMES A MEMORY

Isaiah 33:18 — “Where Are They Now?”

> **“In your thoughts you will ponder the past terror: ‘Where is the scribe? Where is the tax collector? Where is the one who counted the towers?’”**

Those who once controlled:

Taxes.

Military calculations.

Siege preparations.

Are:

Gone.

The people look back and ask:

Where are they?

Cross References

1 Corinthians 1:20

Paul asks where the wise, scholar, and debater of the age are, showing how God overturns human boasting.

2 Kings 18:14

Judah had faced heavy tribute demands from Assyria under intense political pressure.

Isaiah 10:8

Assyria boasted in its commanders and military greatness as though its strength were unstoppable.

Spiritual Principle

The thing terrifying you today may one day become:

A memory.

XX. THE FOREIGN OPPRESSOR DISAPPEARS

Isaiah 33:19 — Strange Speech Heard No More

> **“You will see them no more—a fierce people with obscure speech, with strange, incomprehensible tongues.”**

Foreign language had become:

A sign of invasion.

Now:

The invader disappears.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:49

Israel had been warned that rebellion could bring a distant nation speaking an unfamiliar language.

Jeremiah 5:15

God warned Judah that a powerful foreign nation with an unknown language would come against them.

Isaiah 28:11

Isaiah previously warned that God would speak to the unbelieving people through foreign lips and strange tongues.

Spiritual Principle

God can remove what once seemed permanently threatening.

XXI. ZION BECOMES A PEACEFUL DWELLING

Isaiah 33:20 — An Unmovable Tent

> **“Look upon Zion, the city of our festivals. Your eyes will see Jerusalem, a peaceful dwelling place, a tent that will never be moved; its stakes will never be pulled up, nor any of its ropes broken.”**

Jerusalem had experienced:

Threat.

Siege.

Fear.

Now:

Peace.

Stability.

Security.

The tent image seems:

Fragile.

Yet God makes it:

Unmovable.

Cross References

Psalm 46:5

God is within His city, so she will not be ultimately moved; He helps her at the proper time.

Hebrews 12:28

Believers receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken and therefore should worship God with reverence and gratitude.

Psalm 48:8

God establishes His city and demonstrates that His presence gives security beyond human defenses.

Spiritual Principle

Something can appear fragile and still be secure when:

God holds it.

XXII. THE LORD IS ZION’S MIGHTY ONE

Isaiah 33:21 — Broad Rivers Without Enemy Ships

> **“There the Lord will be our Mighty One. It will be a place of broad rivers and streams, but no enemy galley with oars will approach it, no mighty ship will sail through it.”**

Jerusalem did not possess great rivers like:

Some imperial capitals.

Yet Isaiah says the Lord Himself becomes:

The city’s greatness.

Broad rivers symbolize:

Abundance.

Protection.

Life.

But hostile ships:

Cannot enter.

Cross References

Psalm 46:4

A river is pictured making glad the city of God and the holy dwelling of the Most High.

Ezekiel 47:1

Ezekiel sees life-giving water flowing from the restored temple.

Revelation 22:1

John sees the river of the water of life flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb.

Spiritual Principle

God can provide what geography cannot.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When the Lord is present, lack of natural advantage does not mean lack of divine provision.

XXIII. THE LORD IS JUDGE, LAWGIVER, AND KING

Isaiah 33:22 — “He Will Save Us”

> **“For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; He will save us.”**

Three offices appear:

Judge.

Lawgiver.

King.

Then:

Savior.

God possesses:

Judicial authority.

Moral authority.

Royal authority.

Saving authority.

Cross References

James 4:12

There is one ultimate Lawgiver and Judge who possesses authority to save and judge.

Isaiah 9:6

The promised royal Son carries divine authority and exercises everlasting government and peace.

Psalm 99:4

The King loves justice and establishes what is equitable and righteous among His people.

Spiritual Principle

God does not merely advise His people.

He:

Rules.

Judges.

Commands.

Saves.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The safest kingdom is the one where the Judge, Lawgiver, King, and Savior are perfectly righteous—and are one Lord.

XXIV. EVEN THE LAME SHARE IN THE SPOIL

Isaiah 33:23 — Weakness Does Not Exclude Participation

> **“Your riggings hang loose; the mast is not secured, the sail is not spread. Then abundant spoil will be divided, and even the lame will carry off plunder.”**

The enemy is pictured like:

A disabled ship.

Its rigging:

Loose.

Its mast:

Unstable.

Its sail:

Useless.

Then:

Spoil.

Victory.

Even those usually considered:

Weak.

Participate.

Cross References

Isaiah 35:6

Under God’s restoration, the lame are pictured leaping with new strength.

Luke 14:21

Jesus describes the invitation of the poor, crippled, blind, and lame into the kingdom banquet.

2 Samuel 5:6

The early capture of Jerusalem involved taunting language about the blind and lame, making Isaiah’s later inclusion of the lame in victory especially striking.

Spiritual Principle

God’s victory does not belong only to:

The visibly strong.

XXV. ZION’S PEOPLE ARE HEALED AND FORGIVEN

Isaiah 33:24 — Sickness and Sin Removed

> **“No one living in Zion will say, ‘I am sick.’ The people who dwell there will be forgiven their iniquity.”**

The chapter ends with:

Healing.

Forgiveness.

This is deeper than:

Military victory.

The enemy can leave while:

Sin remains.

God’s final restoration addresses:

Both.

Cross References

Jeremiah 33:8

God promises to cleanse His people from guilt and forgive their sins and rebellion.

Psalm 103:3

The Lord is praised as the One who forgives sin and heals diseases.

Revelation 21:4

God’s final dwelling with His people includes the removal of death, grief, crying, and pain.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation reaches:

Body.

Soul.

Guilt.

Community.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The deepest problem is not merely the enemy outside the walls.

It is sin inside the heart.

XXVI. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 33

1. Treachery Will Be Judged

Principle:

Wrongdoing can succeed temporarily without escaping final accountability.

---

2. God Is Daily Strength

Principle:

We need fresh dependence every morning.

---

3. The Fear of the Lord Is Treasure

Principle:

Reverence for God creates wisdom and stability.

---

4. Human Peace Efforts Can Fail

Principle:

Diplomacy cannot substitute for righteousness or divine help.

---

5. God Knows When to Arise

Principle:

His timing may seem delayed, but His intervention is never late.

---

6. Holiness Requires Integrity

Principle:

Those who dwell near God must reject corruption, bribery, violence, and evil.

---

7. The King Is the Greatest Hope

Principle:

Deliverance is good, but seeing the King is greater.

---

8. Zion Is Secure Because God Is There

Principle:

The Lord’s presence creates security beyond human structures.

---

9. God Alone Is Judge, Lawgiver, King, and Savior

Principle:

All final authority belongs to Him.

---

10. Salvation Ends in Forgiveness

Principle:

God does more than defeat enemies; He removes iniquity.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 33 TEACHES ABOUT JUSTICE

The chapter begins with:

Treachery.

And ends with:

Forgiveness.

Between them:

God establishes justice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s salvation never requires Him to stop being just.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 33 TEACHES ABOUT WAITING

The prayer says:

> **“We wait for You.”**

Waiting is connected to:

Grace.

Strength.

Salvation.

Spiritual Principle

Waiting on God is not:

Doing nothing.

It is:

Refusing to replace Him with panic.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 33 TEACHES ABOUT DAILY DEPENDENCE

The prayer asks:

> **“Be our strength every morning.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith is not merely stored for emergencies.

It is renewed:

Daily.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 33 TEACHES ABOUT STABILITY

God is:

The sure foundation.

Not:

Circumstances.

Spiritual Principle

The stability of the believer is not measured by how stable the age is.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 33 TEACHES ABOUT THE FEAR OF THE LORD

The fear of the Lord is:

Treasure.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Reverence for God protects us from fearing everything else excessively.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 33 TEACHES ABOUT HOLINESS

God is:

Consuming fire.

The hypocrite trembles.

The upright person:

Dwells securely.

Spiritual Principle

God’s holiness is terrifying to rebellion and beautiful to those reconciled to Him.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 33 TEACHES ABOUT CHARACTER

Isaiah highlights:

Speech.

Money.

Bribes.

Violence.

What we hear.

What we watch.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Holiness is practical before it is impressive.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 33 TEACHES ABOUT THE KING

The King is seen in:

Beauty.

The chapter’s focus ultimately moves from:

What God gives.

To:

God Himself.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest reward of salvation is:

The presence of the King.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 33 TEACHES ABOUT ZION

Zion is:

Peaceful.

Stable.

Protected.

Not because:

Enemies cease existing by human power.

But because:

God is present.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Security follows presence.

God’s presence is greater than stronger walls.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 33 TEACHES ABOUT FORGIVENESS

The last word is:

Iniquity forgiven.

Spiritual Principle

Any salvation that leaves sin untouched is incomplete.

XXXVII. “BE OUR STRENGTH EVERY MORNING”

Every morning brings:

New decisions.

New temptations.

New burdens.

New responsibilities.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before asking for strength for the year, ask God for strength:

Today.

XXXVIII. THE TREASURE HOUSE OF GOD

Verse 6 describes:

Salvation.

Wisdom.

Knowledge.

As treasures.

Spiritual Principle

The richest person is not always the one with the most money.

It may be the one possessing:

Wisdom.

Salvation.

Knowledge of God.

XXXIX. WHEN PEACE ENVOYS WEEP

Even the best negotiations can:

Fail.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do everything righteous wisdom requires for peace, but never make human diplomacy your ultimate hope.

XL. EMPTY HIGHWAYS

When trust breaks down:

Travel.

Business.

Community.

Life.

Can deteriorate.

Spiritual Principle

Moral collapse eventually becomes social collapse.

XLI. “NOW I WILL ARISE”

These words interrupt:

Despair.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never write the ending while God is still saying:

“Now I will arise.”

XLII. EVIL GIVES BIRTH TO STUBBLE

The wicked plan:

Great things.

God calls the result:

Stubble.

Spiritual Principle

Plans against God may look impressive before they reach maturity.

XLIII. THE CONSUMING FIRE

The question:

Who can dwell there?

Not:

Who can hide?

Who can manipulate?

But:

Who walks uprightly?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The right preparation for God’s presence is not pretense.

It is righteousness flowing from a heart made right with Him.

XLIV. NO BRIBES

Isaiah specifically includes:

Money.

This matters.

Spiritual Principle

Integrity is tested when money offers us a reason to compromise.

XLV. CLOSE THE EARS TO BLOODSHED

Godly people refuse to become comfortable with:

Violence.

Plans of violence.

Celebration of evil.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What you repeatedly listen to can eventually shape what you tolerate.

XLVI. SHUT THE EYES FROM EVIL

This is not ignorance.

It is refusal to:

Enjoy.

Approve.

Feed upon.

Evil.

Spiritual Principle

Guarding the eyes is part of guarding the heart.

XLVII. BREAD AND WATER

God promises:

Ordinary provision.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God of cosmic deliverance still cares about:

Daily bread.

XLVIII. “THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY”

This verse lifts the chapter above:

Temporary political deliverance.

Within Isaiah’s larger messianic hope, the language naturally points toward the ultimate righteous King.

Spiritual Principle

The believer’s final hope is not merely a better situation.

It is:

The beautiful King.

XLIX. THE LAND FAR AND WIDE

The people once felt:

Trapped.

Besieged.

Restricted.

Now:

They see space.

Freedom.

A broad land.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can move His people from:

Siege mentality.

To:

Open horizon.

L. “WHERE IS THE TERROR NOW?”

Things that once dominated the mind:

Disappear.

Spiritual Principle

Do not let today’s fear convince you it deserves a permanent place in tomorrow.

LI. THE UNMOVABLE TENT

A tent looks:

Temporary.

But God says:

Its stakes will not be pulled.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God secures does not need to look impressive in order to be stable.

LII. THE BROAD RIVERS

Jerusalem did not possess the great river systems of some major ancient cities.

But the Lord Himself becomes:

Its sufficiency.

Spiritual Principle

God can compensate for every natural disadvantage.

LIII. NO ENEMY SHIP

The river gives:

Life.

But enemy vessels cannot exploit it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God knows how to make blessing accessible to His people while restricting what would destroy them.

LIV. JUDGE, LAWGIVER, KING

God is not:

One authority among many.

He is:

Ultimate authority.

Spiritual Principle

His rule is complete because His character is completely righteous.

LV. “HE WILL SAVE US”

This is the conclusion of all three offices.

Judge.

Lawgiver.

King.

And:

Savior.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One with the right to judge is also the One who provides salvation.

LVI. THE LAME TAKE SPOIL

God reverses expectations.

Those thought:

Weak.

Participate in:

Victory.

Spiritual Principle

Divine victory is not limited to human strength.

LVII. “I AM SICK” NO MORE

The future vision removes:

Sickness.

Suffering.

Brokenness.

Spiritual Principle

God’s final restoration reaches farther than temporary relief.

LVIII. INIQUITY FORGIVEN

The chapter’s greatest problem is resolved at:

The deepest level.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Forgiveness is greater than military victory because it reconciles us to God.

LIX. NINE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 33

1. Destroyer → Destroyed

2. Treachery → Divine Justice

3. Human Weakness → Morning Strength

4. Unstable Times → Sure Foundation

5. Broken Covenants → God’s Faithful Rule

6. Terror → The King’s Beauty

7. Siege → Peaceful Zion

8. Enemy Power → The Lord as King

9. Sickness and Sin → Healing and Forgiveness

Key Truth

The chapter moves from treachery and instability toward righteousness, divine intervention, the beauty of the King, the security of Zion, and the final blessings of healing and forgiveness.

LX. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What warning opens Isaiah 33?

The destroyer and treacherous person will eventually face destruction and betrayal.

Question 2

What does God’s people ask for in verse 2?

Grace, daily strength, and salvation in trouble.

Question 3

When do they ask God to be their strength?

Every morning.

Question 4

What happens when God rises?

Nations flee and peoples scatter.

Question 5

What fills Zion?

Justice and righteousness.

Question 6

What is God called in unstable times?

The sure foundation.

Question 7

What treasures does God provide?

Salvation, wisdom, and knowledge.

Question 8

What is called the key to this treasure?

The fear of the Lord.

Question 9

What happens to the envoys of peace?

They weep because human peace efforts have failed.

Question 10

What happens to the highways?

They become deserted.

Question 11

What does God say in verse 10?

> **“Now I will arise.”**

Question 12

Who trembles before God’s holiness?

Sinners and hypocrites in Zion.

Question 13

What kind of person can dwell securely before God?

One who walks righteously, speaks uprightly, rejects dishonest gain, refuses bribes, rejects bloodshed, and turns from evil.

Question 14

What provision is promised to the upright?

Bread, water, refuge, and security.

Question 15

What will the redeemed see?

The King in His beauty.

Question 16

What happens to the fierce foreign oppressor?

He disappears from sight.

Question 17

How is Jerusalem described?

As a peaceful dwelling and secure tent.

Question 18

Who is Zion’s Mighty One?

The Lord.

Question 19

What three titles are given to God in verse 22?

Judge.

Lawgiver.

King.

Question 20

What promise follows those titles?

> **“He will save us.”**

Question 21

Who participates in the victory?

Even the lame.

Question 22

What will no resident of Zion say?

> **“I am sick.”**

Question 23

What happens to the people’s iniquity?

It is forgiven.

LXI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 33 asks several searching questions.

Am I Trusting God for Strength Every Morning?

Or do I try to live:

Today.

On:

Yesterday’s grace?

Is the Lord the Stability of My Times?

What happens to my peace when:

Politics change?

Economies shift?

Plans fail?

People disappoint?

Do I Treasure the Fear of the Lord?

Or do I treat reverence as:

Optional?

Am I Upright in My Finances?

Would I accept:

Dishonest gain?

A bribe?

A deceptive advantage?

What Do I Allow My Ears to Enjoy?

Violence?

Gossip?

Plots against others?

What Do I Allow My Eyes to Feed Upon?

Do I Want Only God’s Deliverance?

Or do I also desire:

To see the King in His beauty?

Am I letting past terror dominate present faith?

Do I believe God can make what feels fragile:

Stable?

Can I say:

> **“The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; He will save us”?**

Have I received His forgiveness?

LXII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“When the Times Are Unstable, God Himself Must Become the Stability of Your Times”

Governments change.

Enemies rise.

Agreements fail.

Highways empty.

Land withers.

But:

God remains.

Principle:

Faith does not require stable circumstances when it possesses a stable God.

LXIII. THE DESTROYER’S END

The destroyer thinks:

Destruction belongs to others.

Isaiah says:

Your turn comes.

Spiritual Principle

God’s justice may be delayed.

It is not cancelled.

LXIV. MORNING-BY-MORNING STRENGTH

God’s people do not pray merely for:

One great act.

They pray for:

Daily strength.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A lifetime of faithfulness is built from many mornings of dependence.

LXV. THE LORD DWELLS ON HIGH

God is:

Exalted.

Yet still:

Near enough to save.

Spiritual Principle

Transcendence does not make God distant from the cries of His people.

LXVI. STABILITY IN DIFFICULT TIMES

God does not promise:

Unchanging circumstances.

He promises:

Himself.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not demand that the times become stable before allowing your faith to become stable.

LXVII. WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge without:

Fear of God.

Can become:

Pride.

Spiritual Principle

The highest wisdom begins with recognizing who God is.

LXVIII. FAILED PEACE AGREEMENTS

Human agreements:

Break.

God’s Word:

Does not.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not build eternal confidence upon temporary agreements.

LXIX. WHEN THE LAND MOURNS

The visible world reflects:

Invisible spiritual crisis.

Spiritual Principle

National and social health is not disconnected from righteousness.

LXX. GOD’S “NOW”

The destroyer had:

A season.

Then God says:

Now.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s silence should never be interpreted as surrender.

LXXI. CHAFF AND STUBBLE

The enemy appears:

Substantial.

God says:

Chaff.

Stubble.

Spiritual Principle

Divine perspective often reveals how fragile human arrogance really is.

LXXII. THE HYPOCRITE BEFORE FIRE

Outward religion cannot:

Protect.

An inwardly rebellious heart.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot hide behind Zion while resisting the God of Zion.

LXXIII. THE RIGHTEOUS WALK

Isaiah uses the word:

Walks.

Righteousness is:

A way of life.

Spiritual Principle

Holiness is more than occasional behavior.

It is:

A path.

LXXIV. THE KING’S BEAUTY

The future is not ultimately about:

Buildings.

Land.

Spoil.

It is about:

The King.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Heaven would not be heaven without the King.

LXXV. PAST TERROR BECOMES A QUESTION

“Where is the scribe?”

“Where is the tax collector?”

“Where is the one who counted the towers?”

They are:

Gone.

Spiritual Principle

Fear often looks permanent only while you are inside the crisis.

LXXVI. ZION’S UNBREAKABLE ROPES

The tent survives because:

God secures it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Weak-looking things can become unshakable in God’s hands.

LXXVII. THE LORD AS OUR MIGHTY ONE

God is not merely:

Present.

He is:

Mighty.

Spiritual Principle

Divine presence without divine power would not be enough.

Isaiah promises:

Both.

LXXVIII. THE ONE TRUE GOVERNMENT

Judge.

Lawgiver.

King.

All perfectly united in:

The Lord.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human government divides authority because humans are imperfect.

God requires no such safeguard against corruption because His character is perfectly holy.

LXXIX. SALVATION BELONGS TO THE LORD

The chapter’s political, military, and spiritual tensions converge in:

> **“He will save us.”**

Spiritual Principle

Salvation is not merely:

A doctrine.

It is:

God acting for His people.

LXXX. THE VICTORY OF THE WEAK

Even the lame:

Carry spoil.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God enjoys accomplishing victories that make human strength impossible to worship.

LXXXI. HEALING AND FORGIVENESS TOGETHER

The chapter ends with:

No sickness.

Forgiven iniquity.

Spiritual Principle

God addresses both:

Consequences.

And:

Cause.

LXXXII. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 33

1. The Destroyer Is Warned

Treachery will be repaid.

2. Zion Prays

God becomes morning strength and salvation.

3. Human Systems Fail

Peace envoys weep and highways empty.

4. The Lord Arises

Enemy pride collapses.

5. Holiness Is Revealed

The hypocrite trembles and the upright stand secure.

6. The King Is Seen

Terror gives way to beauty.

7. Zion Is Restored

God reigns, saves, heals, and forgives.

Key Truth

Isaiah 33 moves from treachery, fear, and instability toward divine intervention, righteous living, the beauty of the King, the security of Zion, and the final blessings of salvation, healing, and forgiveness.

LXXXIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 33 begins with:

A destroyer.

But it ends with:

A Savior.

It begins with:

Treachery.

It ends with:

Forgiveness.

It begins with:

Fear.

It ends with:

Peace.

That progression matters.

The destroyer thinks:

He controls history.

Isaiah says:

No.

When you finish:

Destroying.

You will be:

Destroyed.

God remains:

Judge.

Then the people pray:

“Be our strength every morning.”

That is a prayer worth carrying into:

Every day.

Not:

Strength once.

Strength:

Every morning.

Why?

Because:

Every morning has new burdens.

New decisions.

New temptations.

New fears.

New opportunities.

Then Isaiah says:

God will be:

“The sure foundation of your times.”

Not:

Your bank account.

Your government.

Your health.

Your plans.

Your reputation.

God.

That matters especially when:

Times feel unstable.

Then God says:

“Now I will arise.”

Maybe you have prayed and wondered:

When will God move?

Isaiah reminds us:

Silence is not surrender.

Delay is not absence.

The Lord knows when to say:

Now.

Then comes the great question:

Who can dwell with:

The consuming fire?

Isaiah’s answer forces us to examine:

How we live.

Our:

Speech.

Money.

Integrity.

Response to bribes.

Attitude toward violence.

What we watch.

What we listen to.

Holiness reaches:

Every part of life.

Then suddenly Isaiah lifts our eyes:

“Your eyes will see the King in His beauty.”

That is greater than:

Escaping Assyria.

Greater than:

Restored highways.

Greater than:

Political stability.

The believer’s deepest hope is:

The King.

Then Zion becomes:

Secure.

And the Lord is declared:

Judge.

Lawgiver.

King.

And Isaiah says:

> **“He will save us.”**

Finally:

No sickness.

Forgiven iniquity.

This is salvation in its fullness.

Not merely:

Enemies defeated.

But:

People forgiven.

Therefore:

Wait for the Lord.

Ask for morning strength.

Fear Him as treasure.

Walk uprightly.

Reject dishonest gain.

Guard your ears.

Guard your eyes.

Do not let temporary terror become permanent faithlessness.

Look for:

The King.

And rest in this confession:

> **“The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; He will save us.”**

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Be gracious to us.

We wait for You.

Be our:

Strength every morning.

Salvation in every trouble.

When the times are:

Unstable.

Become the stability of our times.

Give us:

Wisdom.

Knowledge.

Salvation.

Teach us to treasure:

The fear of the Lord.

Father, when human plans fail:

Keep us from despair.

When peace agreements collapse:

Remind us that Your Word remains.

When enemies seem powerful:

Remind us that when You arise:

Nations scatter.

Father, make us people who:

Walk righteously.

Speak uprightly.

Reject dishonest gain.

Refuse bribes.

Turn away from bloodshed.

Guard our ears.

Guard our eyes.

Purify our hearts so we may live in reverence before:

Your holiness.

Father, thank You for the promise that:

We will see the King in His beauty.

Lift our eyes above:

Fear.

Politics.

Conflict.

Loss.

And fix them upon:

You.

Thank You that You are:

Our Judge.

Our Lawgiver.

Our King.

Our Savior.

Bring peace to Your people.

Give security where there has been fear.

Bring healing where there has been sickness.

And above all:

Forgive our iniquity.

May our lives rest upon this confidence:

You will save us.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; He will save us." — Isaiah 33:22**

Central Truth

Though treacherous powers destroy and human systems fail, the Lord remains the sure foundation of His people's times, providing daily strength, wisdom, justice, protection, and salvation; He calls His people to righteous living, reveals the beauty of the King, secures Zion in His presence, and brings His redeemed people into healing and forgiveness.

Isaiah 33 in One Sentence

Isaiah warns that the treacherous destroyer will himself be destroyed, calls God's people to wait on the Lord for daily strength, declares Him the stability and treasure of Zion, describes the terror of sinners before His holiness and the security of the upright, promises that the redeemed will see the King in His beauty, and concludes that the Lord as Judge, Lawgiver, and King will save, heal, and forgive His people.

Isaiah Chapter 34 — God's Judgment on the Nations

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 34 is one of the strongest judgment chapters in the book of Isaiah.

Its scope begins with:

The nations.

The peoples.

The whole earth.

The entire world.

Then the prophecy focuses specifically upon:

Edom.

Edom becomes the representative example of:

Pride.

Violence.

Hostility toward God’s people.

Human rebellion.

Divine judgment.

The chapter opens with a universal summons:

> **“Come near, you nations, and listen; pay attention, you peoples!”**

God is not speaking privately.

He calls:

The earth.

The world.

All peoples.

To hear.

Why?

Because His judgment concerns:

Everyone who opposes Him.

Isaiah then uses extremely severe prophetic imagery.

Armies fall.

The heavens shake.

Stars fall.

God’s sword descends.

Edom is judged.

Bozrah experiences destruction.

The land becomes:

Desolate.

Burned.

Abandoned.

Overrun by wild creatures.

The picture is meant to communicate:

Complete judgment.

Irreversible humiliation.

The collapse of proud human power.

Yet the chapter should not be read as though God delights in suffering for its own sake.

Isaiah presents this judgment as:

Justice.

Verse 8 calls it:

> **“The year of recompense for Zion’s cause.”**

God is answering:

Violence.

Treachery.

Oppression.

Pride.

The chapter therefore teaches that divine vengeance is not:

Personal spite.

Uncontrolled anger.

Human revenge magnified.

It is:

Holy justice.

The Lord repays evil according to:

Truth.

Righteousness.

His own perfect judgment.

The chapter also contains powerful cosmic imagery.

The heavens are pictured as:

Dissolving.

Rolling up like a scroll.

Stars falling like:

Withered leaves.

Shriveled figs.

This language places Edom’s judgment within the broader biblical theme of:

The Day of the Lord.

Historical judgment becomes a window into:

Final judgment.

The chapter ends with a striking contrast.

Human rulers disappear.

Palaces become:

Thorns.

Strongholds become:

Habitats for wild animals.

But one thing remains absolutely certain:

God’s Word.

Isaiah says:

> **“Search the book of the Lord and read.”**

Not one thing God has spoken will fail.

The chapter begins with:

Listen.

It ends with:

Read.

The central truth of Isaiah 34 is:

The Lord summons the nations to hear that rebellion, violence, and pride will not escape His righteous judgment; Edom becomes a vivid picture of the downfall of powers that oppose God

and His people, creation itself is portrayed as shaken under His wrath, and the chapter concludes by declaring that every word spoken by the Lord will certainly be fulfilled.

I. GOD CALLS THE NATIONS TO LISTEN

Isaiah 34:1 — A Worldwide Summons

> **“Come near, you nations, and listen; pay attention, you peoples! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world and everything that comes from it.”**

The audience is:

Universal.

Nations.

Peoples.

Earth.

World.

Everyone is called to:

Listen.

Cross References

Psalm 49:1

All peoples and inhabitants of the world are summoned to hear words of wisdom regardless of wealth or social position.

Micah 1:2

All peoples are told to listen as the Lord Himself bears witness concerning the sins of the earth.

Joel 3:11

The surrounding nations are summoned to gather as God prepares to judge the powers assembled against His purposes.

Spiritual Principle

God’s moral authority extends beyond:

One nation.

One culture.

One generation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who created all nations has the right to summon all nations to account.

II. THE LORD’S ANGER IS AGAINST REBELLIOUS NATIONS

Isaiah 34:2 — Divine Judgment on Armies

> **“For the Lord’s anger is against all nations, and His fury is against all their armies.**
> **He has completely destroyed them, He has given them over to slaughter.”**

This language is:

Severe.

Universal.

Judicial.

It describes military powers standing under:

God’s judgment.

Cross References

Jeremiah 25:31

God enters into judgment with the nations because of their wickedness and gives the guilty over to destruction.

Zephaniah 3:8

The Lord speaks of gathering nations and kingdoms for judgment and pouring out righteous indignation upon persistent rebellion.

Revelation 19:15

The victorious Messiah judges rebellious nations with absolute authority and carries out God’s righteous wrath.

Spiritual Principle

Military power does not create:

Moral exemption.

III. THE HORROR OF WAR IS EXPOSED

Isaiah 34:3 — The Dead Left Unburied

> **“Their dead will be thrown out, their stench will rise from their corpses, and the mountains will be soaked with their blood.”**

Isaiah does not romanticize:

War.

Judgment.

Violence.

The imagery is:

Disturbing.

And intended to be.

Cross References

Ezekiel 32:5

Judgment imagery describes the remains of a defeated power scattered over mountains and valleys.

Revelation 14:20

Apocalyptic imagery describes judgment using a vast flow of blood to communicate its horrifying magnitude.

Nahum 3:3

The fall of a violent city is pictured with heaps of bodies and the terrible consequences of accumulated bloodshed.

Spiritual Principle

Sinful violence eventually produces:

Horror.

Not glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Bible can describe judgment graphically without celebrating human suffering.

IV. THE HEAVENS ARE SHAKEN

Isaiah 34:4 — The Sky Rolled Like a Scroll

> **“All the stars of the heavens will be dissolved, and the skies rolled up like a scroll; all the stars will fall like withered leaves from a vine, like shriveled figs from a fig tree.”**

The imagery expands beyond:

Edom.

Battlefields.

Nations.

It becomes:

Cosmic.

This is classic prophetic Day-of-the-Lord language.

Cross References

Revelation 6:14

The sky is pictured disappearing like a scroll being rolled up while mountains and islands are shaken.

Matthew 24:29

Jesus describes cosmic disturbances involving the sun, moon, stars, and powers of heaven in connection with final judgment.

2 Peter 3:10

Peter speaks of the day of the Lord involving dramatic dissolution and judgment of the present created order.

Spiritual Principle

God’s judgment reaches beyond human politics into the total order of creation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When the Creator judges, even creation is pictured as trembling.

V. THE SWORD OF THE LORD DESCENDS ON EDOM

Isaiah 34:5 — Edom Singled Out

> **“My sword has drunk its fill in the heavens; see, it will come down in judgment on Edom, the people I have doomed to destruction.”**

The prophecy now narrows.

From:

All nations.

To:

Edom.

Edom had a long history of:

Hostility.

Pride.

Violence toward Judah.

Isaiah uses Edom as a particular example of divine judgment.

Cross References

Jeremiah 49:12

God warns Edom that judgment cannot be escaped merely because others also face punishment.

Ezekiel 25:12

Edom is condemned for acting in vengeance against Judah and taking satisfaction in hostility.

Obadiah 1:1

Obadiah announces God’s judgment against Edom for pride and violence toward Jacob.

Spiritual Principle

Long-standing hostility does not remain outside God’s courtroom.

VI. BOZRAH BECOMES A PLACE OF JUDGMENT

Isaiah 34:6 — The Lord’s Sacrifice

> **“The sword of the Lord is filled with blood; it is covered with fat—the blood of lambs and goats, the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the Lord has a sacrifice in Bozrah, a great slaughter in the land of Edom.”**

Isaiah uses sacrificial language.

This is not ordinary temple worship.

It is:

Judgment imagery.

Edom’s military and social power is pictured as being offered up under divine justice.

Cross References

Jeremiah 49:22

Judgment against Edom and Bozrah is pictured with sudden terror and decisive defeat.

Amos 1:12

God promises judgment against Teman and Bozrah because of Edom’s cruelty.

Isaiah 63:1

Isaiah later sees a majestic figure coming from Edom and Bozrah in imagery connected with judgment and victory.

Spiritual Principle

What humanity offers in rebellion can eventually become the very object of divine judgment.

VII. THE MIGHTY FALL WITH THE REST

Isaiah 34:7 — Wild Oxen and Bulls

> **“Wild oxen will fall with them, young bulls along with the mighty bulls. Their land will be drenched with blood, and the soil enriched with fat.”**

The animals likely symbolize:

Strength.

Nobility.

Military power.

The great fall alongside:

The small.

Cross References

Jeremiah 49:20

God announces a determined plan against Edom in which even the strongest are unable to resist His judgment.

Psalm 22:21

Powerful enemies are pictured using the imagery of wild oxen, emphasizing strength and danger.

Numbers 23:22

The wild ox is used as a symbol of great strength, making Isaiah’s picture of their fall especially significant.

Spiritual Principle

Strength cannot become:

Immunity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not need the strong to become weak before He can judge them.

VIII. THE DAY OF THE LORD’S VENGEANCE

Isaiah 34:8 — Recompense for Zion

> **“For this is the day of the Lord’s vengeance, the year of recompense for Zion’s cause.”**

This verse explains:

Why.

God’s vengeance is connected to:

Justice.

Recompense.

Zion’s cause.

Cross References

Isaiah 61:2

Isaiah announces both the year of the Lord’s favor and the day of His vengeance.

Luke 21:22

Jesus speaks of days of judgment in which what has been written reaches fulfillment.

Isaiah 63:4

The Lord speaks of a day of vengeance and a year of redemption arriving according to His purpose.

Spiritual Principle

Divine vengeance is not sinful revenge.

It is:

Holy recompense.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God avenges, He does not lose control of justice.

He fulfills it.

IX. EDOM’S LAND BECOMES BURNING PITCH

Isaiah 34:9 — Sulfur and Fire

> **“Edom’s streams will be turned into pitch, its dust into burning sulfur; its land will become blazing pitch.”**

The imagery recalls:

Sodom and Gomorrah.

It communicates:

Total devastation.

Cross References

Genesis 19:24

The Lord rained sulfur and fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah in judgment.

Revelation 19:20

Final judgment imagery includes fire and sulfur against powers in rebellion against God.

Deuteronomy 29:23

A judged land is pictured as burned with sulfur and salt, unable to produce ordinary vegetation.

Spiritual Principle

Persistent rebellion can transform a place of life into a picture of judgment.

X. THE SMOKE RISES

Isaiah 34:10 — Lasting Desolation

> **“It will burn night and day, unquenched; its smoke will rise forever. From generation to generation it will lie desolate; no one will ever pass through it again.”**

This is prophetic imagery of:

Complete.

Decisive.

Enduring.

Judgment.

The phrase “forever” emphasizes the lasting result of the judgment rather than requiring us to picture the entire historic territory literally burning without interruption through all subsequent history.

Cross References

Revelation 14:11

The smoke of judgment is pictured rising continually as a sign of irreversible divine punishment.

Isaiah 66:24

The final chapter of Isaiah also uses unquenchable-fire imagery to describe the disgrace and judgment of rebellion.

Mark 9:48

Jesus uses similar imagery to warn soberly about the seriousness and finality of divine judgment.

Spiritual Principle

God’s judgment should never be treated as:

Temporary inconvenience.

XI. CHAOS REPLACES CIVILIZATION

Isaiah 34:11 — The Measuring Line of Emptiness

> **“The desert owl and the screech owl will possess it; the raven will dwell there. The Lord will stretch out over it the measuring line of chaos and the plumb line of emptiness.”**

Earlier Isaiah used:

Measuring line.

Plumb line.

For justice.

Now God measures Edom for:

Desolation.

“Chaos” and “emptiness” echo creation language of:

Formlessness.

Vacancy.

Cross References

Zephaniah 2:14

Animals inhabit ruined cities after human pride and population disappear.

2 Kings 21:13

God uses the image of measuring lines to describe precise and deliberate judgment.

Isaiah 13:21

Wild animals inhabit the ruins of Babylon after human glory collapses.

Spiritual Principle

God’s judgment is not:

Random destruction.

It is measured.

Deliberate.

Just.

XII. EDOM’S NOBILITY DISAPPEARS

Isaiah 34:12 — No Kingdom Remains

> **“Its nobles will have nothing left to call a kingdom, and all its princes will vanish away.”**

No:

Royal structure.

Political continuation.

Noble class.

Ruling elite.

Pride loses:

Its throne.

Cross References

Obadiah 1:8

God promises to destroy Edom’s wisdom and understanding.

Jeremiah 49:7

The wisdom for which Edom was famous is mocked when judgment reveals its limits.

Ezekiel 32:29

Edom and its rulers are pictured among fallen powers brought down in judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Human titles cannot survive when:

The kingdom itself disappears.

XIII. PALACES BECOME THORNS

Isaiah 34:13 — Strongholds Overgrown

> **“Thorns will overrun her palaces, nettles and brambles her strongholds. It will be a haunt for jackals, a home for owls.”**

Palaces once represented:

Power.

Luxury.

Prestige.

Now:

Thorns.

Brambles.

Wild creatures.

Cross References

Isaiah 13:22

Wild creatures inhabit ruined palaces where human splendor once stood.

Jeremiah 49:33

A judged land becomes desolate and occupied by wild animals rather than thriving communities.

Zephaniah 2:9

Proud nations are warned that their lands can become overgrown wastelands.

Spiritual Principle

Pride builds palaces.

Judgment can leave:

Thorns.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse impressive architecture with permanent security.

XIV. THE WILDERNESS TAKES OVER

Isaiah 34:14 — Wild Creatures Find Rest

> **“Desert creatures will meet hyenas, and wild goats will call to each other; there the night creatures will settle and find themselves a resting place.”**

The point is:

Abandonment.

No ordinary human civilization remains.

The wild replaces:

The organized.

The inhabited becomes:

Desolate.

Cross References

Isaiah 13:21

Wild desert creatures occupy ruined cities after judgment.

Jeremiah 50:39

Babylon is pictured becoming a wilderness inhabited by desert animals and abandoned by people.

Job 30:29

Job poetically associates himself with wilderness creatures in a picture of desolation and isolation.

Spiritual Principle

What humanity refuses to steward under God can eventually become:

Uninhabitable.

XV. WILD CREATURES MULTIPLY IN THE RUINS

Isaiah 34:15 — Nature Occupies the Empty Land

> **“The owl will nest there, lay eggs and hatch them, and care for her young under her shadow; there also the vultures will gather, each with its mate.”**

The imagery emphasizes:

Continuity of desolation.

Animals find:

Nesting.

Rest.

Security.

Where human kingdoms once boasted.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 14:16

Owls are listed among birds familiar within Israel’s world and ceremonial classifications.

Leviticus 11:17

Certain birds associated with wilderness and scavenging appear among creatures Israel was not to eat.

Zephaniah 2:14

Birds and wild creatures are pictured occupying the ruins of former centers of human power.

Spiritual Principle

When God removes human glory, creation continues without asking permission from fallen kings.

XVI. SEARCH THE BOOK OF THE LORD

Isaiah 34:16 — God’s Word Will Not Fail

> **“Search the book of the Lord and read: Not one of these creatures will be missing, none will lack her mate. For it is His mouth that has commanded it, and His Spirit that has gathered them.”**

The focus moves from:

Landscape.

To:

Scripture.

Isaiah says:

Search.

Read.

Compare fulfillment with:

The Word.

Why will it happen?

Because:

God’s mouth commanded.

God’s Spirit gathered.

Cross References

John 5:39

Jesus speaks of searching the Scriptures because they testify concerning God’s redemptive revelation.

Joshua 21:45

Not one of the Lord’s good promises to Israel failed; everything He had spoken came to pass.

2 Timothy 3:16

Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, correction, and training in righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

Prophecy rests upon:

The authority of the Speaker.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The certainty of Scripture comes from the faithfulness of the God who spoke it.

XVII. GOD HIMSELF ASSIGNS THE LAND

Isaiah 34:17 — His Hand Measures It

> **“He has cast the lot for them; His hand has measured it off for them. They will possess it forever; they will dwell there from generation to generation.”**

God determines:

Boundaries.

Outcome.

Possession.

The land once ruled by:

Edom.

Becomes assigned to:

Wild creatures.

Cross References

Joshua 18:6

Land was divided by lot according to the Lord’s direction.

Psalm 16:5

The psalmist recognizes the Lord as the One who determines and secures his portion and inheritance.

Numbers 26:55

Israel’s land inheritance was divided by lot according to God’s appointed order.

Spiritual Principle

God has authority to:

Give.

Remove.

Reassign.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What humans call possession always remains under the authority of the true Owner.

XVIII. EDOM AS A PICTURE OF PROUD REBELLION

Edom had a specific:

History.

Geography.

National identity.

Therefore Isaiah 34 should first be understood as an oracle involving:

Real judgment against Edom.

But the chapter begins with:

All nations.

Its imagery becomes:

Cosmic.

That means Edom also becomes a representative picture of:

Human hostility toward God.

Pride.

Violence.

Opposition to Zion.

Spiritual Principle

Historical judgment can become a prophetic pattern of:

Final judgment.

XIX. WHAT ISAIAH 34 TEACHES ABOUT THE NATIONS

The nations are called:

To hear.

Because nations themselves are:

Morally accountable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

National power does not remove national accountability before God.

XX. WHAT ISAIAH 34 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S ANGER

God’s anger is:

Holy.

Judicial.

Directed against:

Sin.

Violence.

Pride.

Rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

God’s anger is not uncontrolled emotion.

It is the holy response of a righteous God toward evil.

XXI. WHAT ISAIAH 34 TEACHES ABOUT VENGEANCE

Humans are often tempted toward:

Personal revenge.

God’s vengeance is different.

It is:

Perfect justice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We can leave vengeance to God precisely because He judges better than we do.

XXII. WHAT ISAIAH 34 TEACHES ABOUT CREATION

The heavens are pictured:

Dissolving.

Rolling.

Falling.

Spiritual Principle

Creation is not:

Eternal in itself.

It remains subject to:

Its Creator.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 34 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN GLORY

Kings.

Princes.

Palaces.

Strongholds.

All vanish.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greater human glory appears, the more important it is to remember how quickly it can fade.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 34 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S WORD

The final appeal is:

Search.

Read.

God’s mouth:

Commanded.

God’s Spirit:

Gathered.

Spiritual Principle

God’s Word is not merely:

Information.

It is:

Authoritative revelation.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 34 TEACHES ABOUT CERTAINTY

Isaiah does not say:

Perhaps.

Maybe.

Possibly.

God has spoken.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God makes a promise or pronounces judgment, time does not weaken His Word.

XXVI. “COME NEAR AND LISTEN”

Before God judges:

He speaks.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment is preceded by:

Warning.

The summons to listen is itself:

Mercy.

XXVII. THE LORD’S SWORD

The sword represents:

Judicial action.

It shows God is not:

Passive toward evil.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine patience should never be mistaken for divine indifference.

XXVIII. THE FALLING STARS

The cosmic imagery communicates:

World-shaking judgment.

Spiritual Principle

What humanity regards as fixed and untouchable remains:

Created.

XXIX. THE YEAR OF RECOMPENSE

There is an appointed:

Time.

God determines when justice:

Comes due.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s justice has a calendar even when we cannot see the date.

XXX. STREAMS OF PITCH

Water normally gives:

Life.

Here:

The streams become pictures of destruction.

Spiritual Principle

Persistent rebellion can turn blessings into witnesses of judgment.

XXXI. PALACES BECOME WILDERNESS

Human glory ends.

Animals occupy:

The ruins.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A palace without God can become a future home for thorns.

XXXII. THE MEASURING LINE OF CHAOS

God once measured for:

Construction.

Here He measures for:

Desolation.

Spiritual Principle

The same sovereign God who establishes can:

Remove.

XXXIII. NOBLES WITHOUT A KINGDOM

Titles remain meaningful only while:

The kingdom remains.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human importance is fragile when detached from eternal purpose.

XXXIV. THE BOOK OF THE LORD

Isaiah calls the people back to:

Written revelation.

Spiritual Principle

When circumstances become confusing:

Search what God has said.

XXXV. “NOT ONE WILL BE MISSING”

The language emphasizes:

Detailed fulfillment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not lose track of the details of His own Word.

XXXVI. HIS MOUTH AND HIS SPIRIT

Verse 16 joins:

Word.

Spirit.

God speaks.

God’s Spirit accomplishes.

Spiritual Principle

The Spirit of God never works contrary to:

The Word of God.

XXXVII. GOD’S HAND MEASURES

God’s rule is:

Personal.

Deliberate.

Exact.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Nothing in divine judgment is careless.

XXXVIII. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 34

1. God Judges All Nations

Principle:

No nation possesses an exemption from God’s moral authority.

---

2. Violence and Treachery Bring Accountability

Principle:

What nations do to others matters before God.

---

3. Edom Becomes a Picture of Proud Rebellion

Principle:

Historical enemies can illustrate larger spiritual realities.

---

4. Creation Itself Is Subject to God

Principle:

Heaven and earth belong to the Creator.

---

5. Divine Vengeance Is Righteous

Principle:

God repays evil without injustice, exaggeration, or sinful passion.

---

6. Human Glory Can Become Desolation

Principle:

Palaces, rulers, and strongholds are temporary.

---

7. God’s Judgment Is Measured

Principle:

His plumb line reveals deliberate justice rather than random destruction.

---

8. God’s Word Is Certain

Principle:

What His mouth commands, His Spirit is able to accomplish.

XXXIX. THE UNIVERSAL CALL

Isaiah says:

Nations.

Peoples.

Earth.

World.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No one should assume:

“This message is for someone else.”

XL. GOD’S ANGER AGAINST ARMIES

Armies may become:

Instruments of oppression.

Isaiah reminds us:

Military strength is not moral authority.

Spiritual Principle

A weapon can win a battle without proving the cause is righteous.

XLI. JUDGMENT WITHOUT GLAMOUR

Isaiah’s battlefield imagery is:

Ugly.

That is deliberate.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Bible strips war of romance when war becomes the fruit of human wickedness.

XLII. THE COSMIC DAY OF THE LORD

Isaiah looks beyond:

One battlefield.

One country.

Toward:

A final reckoning.

Spiritual Principle

Historical judgments remind us that history itself moves toward accountability.

XLIII. EDOM AND ZION

Verse 8 says:

Recompense for Zion’s cause.

God remembers:

The oppressed.

The attacked.

The wronged.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not lose the case file of His suffering people.

XLIV. GOD’S JUSTICE AND HUMAN REVENGE

We should never use Isaiah 34 as permission for:

Personal vengeance.

Cruelty.

Hatred.

The Lord’s vengeance belongs to:

The Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Faith entrusts final justice to the Judge who cannot be corrupted by hatred.

XLV. FOREVER SMOKE

The language emphasizes:

Finality.

Irreversibility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not build theology by flattening prophetic imagery, but do not weaken the warning the imagery was designed to give.

XLVI. CHAOS AND EMPTINESS

The vocabulary echoes:

Creation reversed.

Order becomes:

Disorder.

Inhabitation becomes:

Emptiness.

Spiritual Principle

Sin always moves creation away from:

God’s good order.

XLVII. THE EMPTY THRONE

Edom’s nobles lose:

Kingdom.

Power.

Legacy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every throne that opposes God eventually becomes empty.

XLVIII. THORNS IN THE PALACE

Imagine:

A royal building.

Now:

Overgrown.

Silent.

Abandoned.

Spiritual Principle

Pride plans monuments.

Judgment leaves ruins.

XLIX. THE CREATURES INHERIT THE LAND

The land once controlled by:

Human rulers.

Becomes:

Wild habitat.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can redistribute what human beings assume permanently belongs to them.

L. “SEARCH AND READ”

This is an important command.

God wants:

Faith informed by revelation.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical faith does not fear:

Examination.

Read.

Search.

Remember.

LI. SCRIPTURE AND FULFILLMENT

Isaiah calls readers to compare:

What God says.

With:

What God does.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fulfilled truth strengthens confidence in promises still awaiting fulfillment.

LII. THE WORD THAT DOES NOT FAIL

Joshua says:

Not one promise failed.

Isaiah says:

Not one will be missing.

Spiritual Principle

God’s reliability is:

Total.

LIII. THE SPIRIT GATHERS

God does not merely:

Predict.

He acts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prophecy is certain because the One who knows the future also has power over history.

LIV. SEVEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 34

1. Proud Nations → Divine Judgment

2. Mighty Armies → Fallen Armies

3. Cosmic Order → Cosmic Shaking

4. Royal Palaces → Thorn-Covered Ruins

5. Human Kingdoms → Empty Wilderness

6. Human Boasting → Divine Recompense

7. Changing Nations → Unchanging Word

Key Truth

Human power, military strength, political glory, and national pride all pass away, but the Word and justice of the Lord stand certain.

LV. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who is called to hear Isaiah 34?

The nations, peoples, earth, world, and all its inhabitants.

Question 2

Against whom is the Lord’s anger directed?

Against rebellious nations and their armies.

Question 3

What does the gruesome battlefield imagery emphasize?

The seriousness and horror of judgment rather than the glorification of violence.

Question 4

What happens to the heavens in verse 4?

They are pictured dissolving, rolling up like a scroll, and losing their stars.

Question 5

What broader biblical theme does this imagery evoke?

The Day of the Lord and final judgment.

Question 6

Which nation becomes the chapter’s specific focus?

Edom.

Question 7

What city is mentioned in Edom?

Bozrah.

Question 8

Why is Edom especially associated with judgment in the prophets?

Because of pride, violence, and hostility toward Judah.

Question 9

What does verse 8 call the time of judgment?

The day of the Lord’s vengeance and year of recompense for Zion’s cause.

Question 10

What does Edom’s land become?

A picture of burning devastation and long-term desolation.

Question 11

Who occupies the ruined land?

Wild and desert creatures.

Question 12

What happens to Edom’s nobles and princes?

Their kingdom disappears and their ruling power vanishes.

Question 13

What grows over palaces and strongholds?

Thorns, nettles, and brambles.

Question 14

What are readers told to do in verse 16?

Search the book of the Lord and read.

Question 15

Why is fulfillment certain?

Because the Lord’s mouth has commanded it and His Spirit accomplishes His purpose.

Question 16

What does God’s hand do in verse 17?

Measures and assigns the land.

Question 17

What is one central lesson from the chapter?

Human power passes, but God’s justice and Word remain certain.

LVI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 34 asks several searching questions.

Am I Listening When God Warns?

Or do I assume:

Judgment is always for someone else?

Do I Believe Nations Are Accountable to God?

Do I think:

Military strength.

Economic power.

Political influence.

Can place anyone above:

God’s moral law?

How Do I Think About Divine Judgment?

Do I take it:

Seriously?

Or minimize it because it makes me uncomfortable?

Am I Carrying Personal Vengeance?

Can I release:

Revenge.

To the God who judges perfectly?

Is Pride Building a Palace in My Heart?

What am I treating as:

Permanent.

Untouchable.

Secure?

Could My Greatest Earthly security become tomorrow’s ruins?

Do I trust God’s Word even when fulfillment seems delayed?

Do I search the Scriptures?

Or merely:

Assume I know what they say?

Does my faith rest upon:

Changing circumstances?

Or:

The God whose Word does not fail?

LVII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Human Kingdoms Become Ruins, but the Word of God Never Becomes a Ruin”

Edom had:

Princes.

Cities.

Strongholds.

Palaces.

But:

They faded.

God’s Word remained.

Principle:

Build your life on what survives history, not merely on what looks impressive inside history.

LVIII. THE GOD WHO SUMMONS THE WORLD

Isaiah does not ask nations:

Whether they want to listen.

He says:

Come near.

Listen.

Spiritual Principle

God’s authority does not depend upon human consent.

LIX. THE DAY ARMIES CANNOT SAVE

The armies themselves become:

Objects of judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A nation’s greatest weapon may become useless when the battle is with God.

LX. THE HEAVENS ROLLED UP

What looks:

Permanent.

Fixed.

Untouchable.

Is still:

Creation.

Spiritual Principle

Only the Creator is truly unshakable.

LXI. THE SWORD COMES DOWN

God’s patience has:

An end point.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace gives time to repent.

It should never be interpreted as permission to continue rebelling.

LXII. BOZRAH’S FALL

The city had:

Strength.

History.

Identity.

God still judged:

Sin.

Spiritual Principle

Heritage cannot shield rebellion.

LXIII. THE YEAR OF RECOMPENSE

There is:

A day.

A year.

An appointed time.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Justice may appear slow because we do not own God’s calendar.

LXIV. SODOM-LIKE IMAGERY

Fire.

Sulfur.

Burning land.

All communicate:

The seriousness of moral rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

God’s holiness has not changed since Genesis.

LXV. THE WILDERNESS AFTER THE KINGDOM

First:

Princes.

Then:

Owls.

First:

Palaces.

Then:

Thorns.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human glory is one generation away from becoming archaeology if God permits it.

LXVI. THE PLUMB LINE OF EMPTINESS

God measures exactly.

Spiritual Principle

His judgment is never:

Sloppy.

Impulsive.

Miscalculated.

LXVII. THE EMPTY KINGDOM

No noble has:

Anything left to call a kingdom.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A title becomes meaningless when the throne beneath it disappears.

LXVIII. SCRIPTURE AT THE END OF JUDGMENT

Why end with:

A book?

Because:

Understanding history requires revelation.

Spiritual Principle

Without God’s Word, people may see events and still miss their meaning.

LXIX. HIS MOUTH HAS COMMANDED

God does not merely:

Observe history.

He speaks with:

Authority.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The same mouth that created by command can command history toward judgment and restoration.

LXX. HIS SPIRIT HAS GATHERED

Word and Spirit act:

Together.

Spiritual Principle

Never separate confidence in Scripture from confidence in the Spirit who inspired and fulfills God’s purposes.

LXXI. THE CERTAINTY OF GOD’S WORD

Nations:

Change.

Borders:

Change.

Kings:

Change.

God’s Word:

Stands.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

History is temporary commentary on the permanent Word of God.

LXXII. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 34

1. The Nations Are Summoned

Everyone must hear.

2. Universal Judgment Is Announced

God confronts rebellious powers.

3. Creation Is Shaken

Cosmic imagery enlarges the vision.

4. Edom Is Singled Out

Historical pride and violence face recompense.

5. The Land Becomes Desolate

Palaces and strongholds become wilderness.

6. Human Rule Disappears

Princes and kingdoms vanish.

7. God’s Word Remains

Readers are commanded to search and read.

Key Truth

Isaiah 34 moves from the noise of proud nations to the silence of ruined kingdoms and finally to the enduring certainty of the Word of the Lord.

LXXIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 34 is:

Severe.

It is supposed to be.

It confronts the human tendency to believe:

Nations are too powerful to judge.

Armies are too strong to defeat.

Kings are too important to fall.

Palaces are too permanent to become ruins.

God says:

No.

The chapter begins:

> **“Come near, you nations, and listen.”**

That is where wisdom begins.

Listen.

Before:

Judgment.

Before:

Consequences.

Before:

The sword.

God speaks first.

Then Isaiah shows:

The nations.

Armies.

Heavens.

Edom.

Bozrah.

Everything coming under:

God’s authority.

One of the chapter’s central lessons is:

Nothing is too large for God to judge.

Not:

A nation.

An army.

A city.

A culture.

A system.

The heavens themselves are pictured as:

Rolling away.

Then Edom becomes the example.

Edom had:

History.

Pride.

Strength.

Strongholds.

But opposition to God eventually produced:

Desolation.

The royal palace became:

Thorns.

The kingdom became:

Wilderness.

The princes:

Disappeared.

This is what human pride never wants to imagine.

Every earthly empire believes:

We are different.

We will last.

Isaiah reminds us:

Only God is eternal.

Then comes verse 8:

> **“The day of the Lord’s vengeance, the year of recompense for Zion’s cause.”**

That should teach us two truths.

First:

Do not take personal revenge.

Second:

Do not assume injustice will last forever.

God sees:

Violence.

Oppression.

Betrayal.

The blood of the innocent.

And God’s judgment is:

Righteous.

Then the chapter closes in an unexpected place:

Not with fire.

Not with Edom.

But with:

A book.

“Search the book of the Lord and read.”

That is the final instruction.

When kingdoms rise:

Read.

When nations boast:

Read.

When events confuse you:

Read.

When prophecy seems delayed:

Read.

When history appears uncontrolled:

Read.

Because:

God’s mouth has spoken.

God’s Spirit carries out His purpose.

Human kingdoms can become:

Ruins.

But:

The Word of God never does.

Therefore:

Listen when God warns.

Walk humbly.

Reject pride.

Leave vengeance with the Lord.

Do not trust the permanence of:

Human power.

And search:

The Book.

Because what God has spoken:

Will stand.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are:

Lord over all nations.

Judge of all the earth.

Creator of heaven and earth.

Teach us to:

Listen.

Give us hearts that respond to warning before:

Consequences.

Father, forgive:

Pride.

Violence.

Rebellion.

Self-sufficiency.

Help us never place:

Nations.

Governments.

Armies.

Leaders.

Above:

Your authority.

Father, when injustice appears to prosper:

Help us trust:

Your justice.

Keep us from:

Hatred.

Personal revenge.

Bitterness.

Teach us to leave vengeance with:

You.

Because You judge:

Perfectly.

Father, humble every place in our hearts where we believe:

We cannot fall.

Expose every false stronghold.

Remind us that:

Kings fade.

Empires pass.

Palaces crumble.

But:

You remain.

Thank You for:

Your Word.

Help us search it.

Read it.

Believe it.

Obey it.

When circumstances change:

Keep our confidence in:

What You have spoken.

Thank You that Your mouth commands.

Your Spirit accomplishes.

Your purposes stand.

May we build our lives not on:

Changing kingdoms.

But on:

Your unchanging truth.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"Search the book of the Lord and read: Not one of these creatures will be missing, none will lack her mate. For it is His mouth that has commanded it, and His Spirit that has gathered them." — Isaiah 34:16**

Central Truth

God summons all nations to hear that pride, violence, hostility, and rebellion will face His righteous judgment; Edom becomes a vivid historical and prophetic picture of the downfall of those who oppose Him, creation itself is portrayed as shaken under the Day of the Lord, human glory is reduced to desolation, and the chapter concludes by declaring that every word spoken by the Lord is certain to be fulfilled.

Isaiah 34 in One Sentence

Isaiah summons the whole world to hear the certainty of God's judgment, portrays the nations and even the heavens trembling before His wrath, identifies Edom as a particular example of proud and violent rebellion brought to desolation, and concludes by commanding readers to search the book of the Lord because what His mouth has commanded and His Spirit has appointed will certainly come to pass.

Isaiah Chapter 35 — The Highway of Holiness and the Joy of the Redeemed

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 35 is one of the most beautiful chapters of hope in the entire book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 34 described:

Judgment.

Desolation.

Burning.

Ruined kingdoms.

Wild creatures occupying abandoned lands.

Isaiah 35 now answers that darkness with:

Life.

Healing.

Holiness.

Restoration.

Joy.

The chapter opens with:

A wilderness.

A dry land.

A desert.

But something happens.

The desert:

Rejoices.

The wilderness:

Becomes glad.

The barren land:

Blooms.

The chapter then moves from:

Creation restored.

To:

People strengthened.

Weak hands become:

Strong.

Feeble knees become:

Firm.

Fearful hearts hear:

“Be strong, do not be afraid!”

Why?

Because:

God is coming.

He comes with:

Justice.

Retribution.

Salvation.

Then Isaiah describes dramatic healing.

Blind eyes:

Open.

Deaf ears:

Hear.

Lame people:

Leap.

Mute tongues:

Shout.

The New Testament later uses this kind of language in connection with the ministry of:

Jesus Christ.

When John the Baptist asked whether Jesus was truly the Coming One, Jesus pointed to:

The blind seeing.

The lame walking.

The deaf hearing.

The good news being proclaimed.

Isaiah’s promise therefore belongs within the larger messianic hope fulfilled in Christ and ultimately completed in God’s final restoration.

Then the wilderness itself is transformed.

Waters break out.

Streams cross the desert.

Burning sand becomes:

A pool.

Thirsty ground becomes:

Springs.

The chapter then introduces one of Isaiah’s most memorable images:

“The Way of Holiness.”

God does not merely:

Restore a land.

Heal bodies.

Remove fear.

He creates:

A road.

The redeemed travel toward:

Zion.

This highway is:

Holy.

Safe.

Clear.

Reserved for:

The redeemed.

No ravenous beast can:

Attack.

Destroy.

Prevent their arrival.

The chapter ends with:

Singing.

Everlasting joy.

Gladness.

And one final reversal:

> **“Sorrow and sighing will flee away.”**

Isaiah 35 begins with a:

Desert.

It ends with:

Joy.

The central truth of Isaiah 35 is:

The Lord transforms barren places, strengthens fearful people, heals what is broken, provides a safe Highway of Holiness for His redeemed, and brings the ransomed home to Zion with everlasting joy while sorrow and sighing disappear.

I. THE WILDERNESS BECOMES GLAD

Isaiah 35:1 — The Desert Blooms

> **“The wilderness and the dry land will be glad; the desert will rejoice and bloom like a rose.”**

The chapter begins with:

Impossible-looking transformation.

Wilderness becomes:

Glad.

Desert becomes:

Joyful.

Dry land:

Blooms.

Cross References

Isaiah 51:3

The Lord promises to comfort Zion and transform her ruined places so that wilderness becomes like Eden and desert becomes like the garden of the Lord, filled with joy and thanksgiving.

Isaiah 41:18

God promises to open rivers on barren heights, springs in valleys, and turn dry ground into sources of water.

Psalm 107:35

God transforms wilderness into pools of water and dry land into flowing springs.

Spiritual Principle

Barrenness is not beyond:

God’s transforming power.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never judge what God can produce by what the ground looks like today.

II. THE DESERT BLOOMS ABUNDANTLY

Isaiah 35:2 — Glory Replaces Barrenness

> **“It will bloom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.”**

The desert does not merely produce:

A few flowers.

It blooms:

Abundantly.

Three famous places symbolize:

Beauty.

Fertility.

Splendor.

Lebanon.

Carmel.

Sharon.

But the climax is not:

Flowers.

Forests.

Fields.

It is:

> **“They will see the glory of the Lord.”**

Cross References

Isaiah 60:13

The glory of Lebanon comes to beautify the place God has appointed for His dwelling and worship.

John 1:14

The Word became flesh and lived among humanity, and His followers beheld His glory, the glory of the Father’s unique Son.

Isaiah 40:5

The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all humanity will ultimately witness what God has spoken.

Spiritual Principle

Creation’s restoration points beyond itself toward:

The glory of God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest beauty in the restored world is not the blooming desert.

It is the revealed glory of the Lord.

III. STRENGTHEN THE WEAK HANDS

Isaiah 35:3 — Encouragement for the Weary

> **“Strengthen the weak hands; make firm the feeble knees.”**

God gives His people a responsibility toward:

One another.

Some hands are:

Weak.

Some knees:

Feeble.

Faithful people should:

Strengthen.

Support.

Encourage.

Cross References

Hebrews 12:12

Believers are urged to strengthen weak hands and feeble knees so they can continue walking faithfully.

Job 4:3

Job is reminded that he had often instructed others and strengthened hands that had become weak.

2 Chronicles 15:7

God’s people are told to remain strong and not give up because faithful labor in the Lord is not without reward.

Spiritual Principle

Hope should become:

Something we give to others.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not merely notice weak hands.

Help strengthen them.

IV. SPEAK COURAGE TO FEARFUL HEARTS

Isaiah 35:4 — “Be Strong, Do Not Be Afraid”

> **“Say to those with fearful hearts, ‘Be strong, do not be afraid! Behold, your God will come with vengeance; with divine retribution He will come and save you.’”**

Fearful people need:

Truth.

Not empty reassurance.

Isaiah does not say:

There is no danger.

He says:

> **“Your God will come.”**

Their courage rests on:

God’s arrival.

God’s justice.

God’s salvation.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 31:6

God’s people are commanded to be strong and courageous because the Lord goes with them and will not abandon them.

Philippians 4:6

Believers are instructed not to live under controlling anxiety but to bring requests before God with prayer, thanksgiving, and trust.

Isaiah 43:1

God tells His redeemed people not to fear because He has redeemed them, called them by name, and claims them as His own.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical courage is not pretending danger is absent.

It is believing:

God is present.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The answer to a fearful heart is not always:

“Nothing bad can happen.”

It is:

“Your God is coming.”

V. THE BLIND WILL SEE

Isaiah 35:5 — Eyes Opened, Ears Unstopped

> **“Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.”**

This promise carries both:

Physical.

Spiritual.

Messianic.

Restorative significance.

God reverses what had been:

Closed.

Dark.

Silent.

Cross References

Matthew 11:5

Jesus tells John’s messengers that the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the deaf hear, and the poor receive good news.

Luke 7:22

Jesus points to His works of healing as evidence that the messianic promises are being fulfilled in His ministry.

Mark 7:37

Those witnessing Jesus' healing ministry declare that He does all things well, even making the deaf hear and those unable to speak communicate.

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah brings:

Sight.

Hearing.

Restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When the King comes, darkness and silence begin losing their grip.

VI. THE LAME LEAP AND THE MUTE SHOUT

Isaiah 35:6 — Healing Produces Joy

> **"Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the mute tongue will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert."**

The healing is not:

Barely functional.

The lame:

Leap.

The mute:

Shout.

Restoration becomes:

Celebration.

Then Isaiah connects human healing with:

Creation renewal.

Cross References

Acts 3:8

A man unable to walk is healed through the power of Jesus' name and begins walking, leaping, and praising God.

Matthew 11:5

Jesus points to the lame walking and other works of healing as signs of God's kingdom breaking into human suffering.

Exodus 17:6

God brought water from a rock in the wilderness, providing for Israel where natural resources were absent.

Spiritual Principle

God's salvation does not merely restore function.

It produces:

Joy.

VII. BURNING SAND BECOMES A POOL

Isaiah 35:7 — Thirst Gives Way to Water

> **"The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass, reeds, and rushes will grow."**

The image is:

Total reversal.

Burning sand:

Pool.

Thirsty ground:

Springs.

Desolate animal habitat:

Green growth.

Cross References

Psalm 107:35

God turns desert into pools of water and dry land into springs.

John 7:38

Jesus speaks of rivers of living water flowing from those who believe in Him, which John connects with the Spirit.

Isaiah 41:18

God promises rivers, fountains, pools, and springs in places previously barren and dry.

Spiritual Principle

God does not merely help people survive the desert.

He can transform the desert itself.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The place that made you thirsty can become the place where God gives you water.

VIII. A HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS APPEARS

Isaiah 35:8 — The Way for the Redeemed

> **“And a highway will be there—it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it; it will be for those who walk in the way. Even if they are fools, they will not go astray.”**

Now Isaiah gives:

A road.

A highway.

A clear way toward:

Zion.

Its name is:

> **“The Way of Holiness.”**

The road belongs to:

Those made fit to walk upon it.

The destination is:

God’s presence.

Cross References

Isaiah 43:19

God promises to make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

John 14:6

Jesus identifies Himself as the way, the truth, and the life and declares that access to the Father comes through Him.

Isaiah 62:10

God’s people are told to prepare the highway, remove obstacles, and raise a banner for returning peoples.

Spiritual Principle

God not only tells the redeemed where to go.

He provides:

The way.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Salvation does not leave the redeemed wandering without a road.

IX. THE WAY IS HOLY

The highway is not called:

The Way of Comfort.

The Way of Popularity.

The Way of Self-Expression.

It is:

> **“The Way of Holiness.”**

Spiritual Principle

The destination of redemption is not merely:

Safety.

It is:

Holiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not redeem us merely from danger.

He redeems us for a holy walk.

X. THE UNCLEAN DO NOT TRAVEL THERE

The language emphasizes:

Purity.

Separation.

Fitness for:

God’s presence.

This should not be interpreted as salvation earned through moral perfection.

Throughout Scripture, cleansing is ultimately:

God’s work.

Those He redeems are then called to:

Walk in holiness.

Spiritual Principle

Grace does not make holiness unnecessary.

Grace makes holy life possible.

XI. EVEN THE FOOLISH WILL NOT GO ASTRAY

Isaiah emphasizes:

Clarity.

Safety.

God’s guidance.

The road is not a maze.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is able to make His way clear enough for the humble traveler to follow.

XII. NO LION WILL BE ON THE HIGHWAY

Isaiah 35:9 — The Redeemed Walk Safely

> **“No lion will be there, nor will any ravenous beast go upon it; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there.”**

Travel through wilderness could involve:

Danger.

Predators.

Fear.

But this highway is:

Secure.

Cross References

Isaiah 11:6

Isaiah pictures the coming kingdom as a place where former hostility within creation gives way to peace.

Ezekiel 34:25

God promises a covenant of peace in which dangerous beasts are removed and His people dwell securely.

Isaiah 65:25

Predatory violence is removed in Isaiah’s vision of restored creation under God’s rule.

Spiritual Principle

God knows how to bring His redeemed:

All the way home.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who provides the road also guards the road.

XIII. ONLY THE REDEEMED WALK THERE

The key identity is:

Redeemed.

Not:

Strong.

Wealthy.

Educated.

Powerful.

Religiously prestigious.

But:

Redeemed.

Spiritual Principle

Entrance into God’s salvation depends upon:

Redemption.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Highway of Holiness is traveled by people who belong to the Redeemer.

XIV. THE RANSOMED RETURN TO ZION

Isaiah 35:10 — Everlasting Joy

> **“The ransomed of the Lord will return, they will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.”**

This is the climax.

The people are called:

Ransomed.

They:

Return.

Enter Zion.

Sing.

And joy becomes:

Everlasting.

Notice the reversal.

Earlier:

Enemies pursued.

Now:

Joy overtakes them.

Sorrow:

Flees.

Sighing:

Runs away.

Cross References

Isaiah 51:11

Isaiah repeats this promise that the redeemed of the Lord will return to Zion singing, crowned with everlasting joy while grief and sighing disappear.

Revelation 21:4

God wipes every tear from His people’s eyes, and death, mourning, crying, and pain finally pass away.

Psalm 126:5

Those who sow in tears are promised a harvest accompanied by songs of joy.

Spiritual Principle

Sorrow is:

Real.

But for the redeemed:

Not eternal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sorrow may accompany you for part of the road.

It does not get through the gates with you.

XV. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 35

1. God Brings Life to Barren Places

Principle:

The desert is not too dry for God.

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2. God’s Glory Is the Goal of Restoration

Principle:

The greatest blessing is seeing the majesty of the Lord.

---

3. God’s People Should Strengthen the Weak

Principle:

Hope should be shared with tired people.

---

4. Fear Is Answered by God’s Presence

Principle:

Courage grows when the fearful heart remembers who is coming.

---

5. The Messiah Brings Healing

Principle:

The works of Jesus reveal the kingdom Isaiah anticipated.

---

6. God Can Transform the Wilderness

Principle:

He does not merely provide water in dry places; He can change the nature of the landscape.

---

7. Salvation Has a Holy Way

Principle:

Redemption leads to holiness, not lawlessness.

---

8. God Protects the Redeemed

Principle:

The One who opens the road also secures the journey.

---

9. The Redeemed Are Going Home

Principle:

The Christian journey has a destination.

---

10. Everlasting Joy Will Outlast Sorrow

Principle:

Grief belongs to the present age; everlasting joy belongs to the redeemed future.

XVI. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT BARRENNESS

Wilderness.

Dry land.

Desert.

All speak of:

Lack.

Need.

Emptiness.

Yet:

God transforms all three.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never call permanently barren what God has not finished touching.

XVII. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT ENCOURAGEMENT

The strong are told:

Strengthen the weak.

The confident are told:

Speak to the fearful.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical encouragement is not:

Flattery.

It is truth spoken into:

Weakness.

XVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

Fear says:

The enemy is coming.

Faith says:

> **“Your God will come.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fear shrinks when God becomes larger in our thinking.

XIX. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S VENGEANCE

Verse 4 combines:

Vengeance.

Retribution.

Salvation.

This reminds us:

God’s judgment against evil is part of His deliverance of the oppressed.

Spiritual Principle

The God who saves His people must ultimately deal with what destroys them.

XX. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT HEALING

Blind.

Deaf.

Lame.

Mute.

All experience:

Transformation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s kingdom confronts brokenness at every level.

XXI. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT JESUS

Jesus intentionally pointed to:

Blind eyes opened.

Lame people walking.

Deaf people hearing.

As evidence of:

His messianic identity.

Isaiah’s hope therefore finds decisive fulfillment in:

Christ.

Yet the chapter’s picture extends toward:

Complete restoration.

Because sickness, sorrow, danger, and sighing have not yet entirely disappeared from the present world.

Spiritual Principle

Christ’s miracles are:

Signs.

They reveal what His kingdom is like and anticipate what His final restoration will complete.

XXII. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

The redeemed do not wander:

Aimlessly.

There is:

A highway.

A way.

A destination.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Biblical faith is not wandering through life hoping somehow to reach God.

God provides the road.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT HOLINESS

The road is:

Holy.

Spiritual Principle

Holiness is not an optional side road of salvation.

It belongs to the main highway.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT REDEMPTION

The travelers are called:

Redeemed.

Ransomed.

These words communicate:

Deliverance at cost.

Freedom.

Ownership transferred.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The redeemed walk differently because they belong to Someone different.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT JOY

Joy appears:

In creation.

In healing.

In worship.

At Zion.

And finally becomes:

Everlasting.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation moves His people toward:

Joy.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT SORROW

Sorrow is not:

Denied.

Minimized.

Mocked.

It is:

Defeated.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Christian hope never says:

“You did not really hurt.”

It says:

“Your hurt will not last forever.”

XXVII. THE DESERT THAT SINGS

The desert itself is pictured:

Rejoicing.

Spiritual Principle

When God restores, even places associated with death can become testimonies of life.

XXVIII. THE GLORY OF LEBANON

Lebanon symbolized:

Majestic beauty.

Carmel:

Fruitfulness.

Sharon:

Splendor.

All become pictures of:

Restored abundance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoration is not reluctant.

Isaiah describes it as:

Abundant.

XXIX. “THEY WILL SEE THE GLORY OF THE LORD”

This is the true goal.

Not merely:

Better circumstances.

Spiritual Principle

Every blessing is incomplete if it does not direct us toward:

God Himself.

XXX. WEAK HANDS

Hands become weak when people feel unable to:

Continue.

Work.

Fight.

Serve.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes people need another believer to hold hope in front of them until their hands become strong again.

XXXI. FEEBLE KNEES

Weak knees picture:

Instability.

Fear.

Exhaustion.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people are called to help one another stand.

XXXII. FEARFUL HEARTS

Fear begins:

Inside.

God sends His Word:

Inside.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Speak God’s promises where fear has been speaking the loudest.

XXXIII. “BEHOLD, YOUR GOD”

Not merely:

Help is coming.

But:

Your God.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation is personal because the Savior belongs in covenant relationship with His people.

XXXIV. THE BLIND EYES OPEN

Blindness had been a major theme in:

Isaiah 6.

Isaiah 29.

Now:

Eyes open.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s final word over His redeemed is not blindness.

It is sight.

XXXV. THE DEAF EARS OPEN

Earlier:

They would not hear.

Now:

Hearing is restored.

Spiritual Principle

Grace can open what rebellion once closed.

XXXVI. THE LAME LEAP

Isaiah does not say:

The lame barely walk.

They:

Leap.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God restores, He is not limited to barely repairing what was broken.

XXXVII. THE MUTE SHOUT

Silence becomes:

Praise.

Spiritual Principle

The tongue once unable to speak becomes an instrument of:

Joy.

XXXVIII. WATER IN THE WILDERNESS

Water symbolizes:

Life.

Provision.

Refreshment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God knows where every dry place is.

XXXIX. STREAMS IN THE DESERT

A stream means:

Continuing supply.

Not merely:

A cup.

Spiritual Principle

God can provide ongoing grace in places that seem incapable of sustaining life.

XL. THE BURNING SAND BECOMES A POOL

What looked like:

Water.

But was actually:

Heat.

Becomes:

Real water.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can replace mirages with reality.

XLI. THE HIGHWAY

Highways connect:

Places.

People.

Destinations.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption creates access where exile created separation.

XLII. THE WAY OF HOLINESS

The road has:

A name.

Its name identifies:

Its character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If the path continually leads away from holiness, it is not the road Isaiah describes.

XLIII. THE WAY AND CHRIST

Jesus says:

> **“I am the way.”**

Isaiah says:

A holy way leads the redeemed home.

These themes beautifully converge in:

Christ.

He is not merely:

A guide standing beside the road.

He is:

The Way.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation is ultimately not found in:

A system.

But:

A Person.

XLIV. NO LION ON THE ROAD

The danger is removed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s final salvation does not leave predators waiting around the last corner.

XLV. THE REDEEMED WALK

Notice:

They still:

Walk.

God provides:

Road.

Safety.

Destination.

They travel.

Spiritual Principle

Grace provides the way and calls us to walk in it.

XLVI. THE RANSOMED RETURN

The word:

Return.

Suggests:

Homecoming.

Exile ends.

Distance ends.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption is God bringing His people home.

XLVII. THEY ENTER WITH SINGING

Not:

Silence.

Not:

Fear.

Not:

Sighing.

Singing.

Spiritual Principle

The journey of redemption ends in worship.

XLVIII. EVERLASTING JOY

Most earthly joys are:

Temporary.

This joy:

Everlasting.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Temporary sorrow cannot defeat everlasting joy.

XLIX. JOY OVERTAKES THEM

Usually:

Trouble overtakes people.

Enemies overtake.

Fear overtakes.

Isaiah reverses it.

> **“Gladness and joy will overtake them.”**

Spiritual Principle

For the redeemed, joy eventually becomes the pursuer.

L. SORROW FLEES

Earlier the redeemed:

Fled from enemies.

Now:

Sorrow flees from them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is coming a day when grief will have to leave because it no longer belongs where God’s redeemed dwell.

LI. SIGHING FLEES AWAY

Sighing is the sound of:

Weariness.

Frustration.

Grief.

Longing.

It disappears.

Spiritual Principle

God’s final restoration removes even the exhausted breath of sorrow.

LII. ISAIAH 34 AND ISAIAH 35

These chapters belong together.

Isaiah 34

Judgment.

Fire.

Desolation.

Thorns.

Wildness.

Isaiah 35

Restoration.

Water.

Flowers.

Highway.

Joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s story does not end in Isaiah 34.

Judgment is real.

So is restoration.

LIII. EDEN-LIKE RESTORATION

The imagery of:

Water.

Fruitfulness.

Safety.

Joy.

Echoes:

Creation restored.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption includes God reversing the damage of:

Sin.

Curse.

Death.

LIV. THE HIGHWAY AS A NEW EXODUS

Isaiah frequently uses imagery of:

Return.

Road.

Wilderness.

Water.

Homecoming.

This recalls:

The Exodus.

God once brought Israel:

Out of Egypt.

Through wilderness.

Toward the land.

Isaiah now pictures a greater return.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who made a way through the sea can make a highway through the wilderness.

LV. CHRIST AND THE NEW EXODUS

In the larger biblical story, Christ leads a deeper deliverance:

From sin.

Death.

Condemnation.

Into:

Life.

Holiness.

God’s presence.

Spiritual Principle

The Exodus was a great salvation.

Christ accomplishes the greater redemption toward which salvation history points.

LVI. SIX GREAT REVERSALS IN ISAIAH 35

1. Desert → Blossoming Garden

2. Weakness → Strength

3. Fear → Courage

4. Disability → Healing

5. Wilderness → Highway

6. Sorrow → Everlasting Joy

Key Truth

God’s salvation is a great reversal in which barrenness, weakness, fear, brokenness, danger, and sorrow give way to life, strength, healing, holiness, safety, and everlasting joy.

LVII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What happens to the wilderness?

It becomes glad.

Question 2

What happens to the desert?

It rejoices and blooms.

Question 3

What ultimately becomes visible in the restored land?

The glory and majesty of the Lord.

Question 4

What should be done for weak hands?

They should be strengthened.

Question 5

What should be done for feeble knees?

They should be made firm.

Question 6

What should fearful hearts be told?

> **“Be strong, do not be afraid!”**

Question 7

Why should they not fear?

Because God is coming with justice and salvation.

Question 8

What happens to the blind?

Their eyes are opened.

Question 9

What happens to the deaf?

Their ears are unstopped.

Question 10

What happens to the lame?

They leap like a deer.

Question 11

What happens to the mute?

Their tongues shout for joy.

Question 12

What happens in the wilderness?

Waters break forth.

Question 13

What happens to burning sand?

It becomes a pool.

Question 14

What is the highway called?

The Way of Holiness.

Question 15

Who walks on that highway?

The redeemed.

Question 16

What will not be found there?

Lions and ravenous beasts.

Question 17

Where are the ransomed going?

Zion.

Question 18

How do they enter?

With singing.

Question 19

What crowns their heads?

Everlasting joy.

Question 20

What happens to sorrow and sighing?

They flee away.

LVIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 35 asks several searching questions.

What Wilderness Am I Looking At?

A:

Broken relationship?

Dry ministry?

Discouraged heart?

Family struggle?

Season of grief?

Do I believe God can:

Bring life?

Whose Weak Hands Can I Strengthen?

Who around me needs:

Encouragement?

Prayer?

Help?

Truth?

Who Has Feeble Knees?

Am I helping them:

Stand?

What Fearful Heart Needs to Hear:

“Be strong, do not be afraid”?

Am I Focusing More on the Threat Than on:

“Your God will come”?

Do I Believe Jesus Is Still the Messiah Who Restores?

Is There a Dry Place in Me That Needs Living Water?

Am I Walking the Way of Holiness?

Or merely claiming to know where the road goes?

Have I Confused Grace with Permission to Wander?

Am I Living like a:

Redeemed person?

Do I remember that my present sorrow is not:

Permanent?

Am I walking toward Zion with:

Hope?

LIX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Can Build a Highway Through the Place You Thought Was Only a Desert”

The wilderness looks like:

An obstacle.

God sees:

A road.

The desert looks like:

Death.

God sees:

Flowers.

The thirsty ground looks:

Empty.

God sees:

Springs.

Principle:

God’s greatest roads are sometimes built through places where we thought there could never be a way.

LX. THE DESERT HAS A FUTURE

Dryness may describe:

Today.

It does not necessarily describe:

Tomorrow.

Spiritual Principle

Never confuse a season with a destiny.

LXI. GLADNESS IN THE WILDERNESS

Joy appears before:

The city.

In:

The wilderness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not always wait until you leave the wilderness before He teaches you to rejoice.

LXII. BLOOMING ABUNDANTLY

God’s restoration is not:

Barely enough.

Isaiah says:

Abundantly.

Spiritual Principle

Divine renewal can exceed merely returning things to their former condition.

LXIII. STRENGTHEN SOMEBODY

Verse 3 is directed toward:

People helping people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One of God’s methods for strengthening the weak is another believer who refuses to let them fall alone.

LXIV. SPEAK TO FEAR

Isaiah does not say:

Ignore the fearful.

He says:

Speak.

Spiritual Principle

Encouraging words grounded in truth can become instruments of grace.

LXV. YOUR GOD WILL COME

These words change:

Everything.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The believer’s hope is not merely that circumstances will change.

It is that God comes into the circumstances.

LXVI. VENGEANCE AND SALVATION

The same coming means:

Judgment for evil.

Salvation for God’s people.

Spiritual Principle

God’s justice and salvation are not competing purposes.

His defeat of evil is part of His rescue of the oppressed.

LXVII. JESUS AND ISAIAH 35

Jesus’ miracles deliberately resemble:

Isaiah’s promised restoration.

Blind eyes.

Deaf ears.

Lame legs.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every healing miracle of Christ was a preview of the kingdom He came to bring.

LXVIII. WATER BREAKS FORTH

Not:

Drips.

Breaks forth.

Spiritual Principle

God can produce sudden abundance after prolonged dryness.

LXIX. THE HIGHWAY GOD PROVIDES

A highway suggests:

Access.

Direction.

Purpose.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not save people and then leave them without direction.

LXX. HOLINESS AS A JOURNEY

Holiness is both:

Position in God’s saving work.

And:

A walk.

Spiritual Principle

The redeemed life moves in:

God’s direction.

LXXI. SAFETY ON THE ROAD

No lion.

No predator.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Nothing God has defeated will ultimately prevent His redeemed from reaching home.

LXXII. THE JOURNEY TO ZION

The travelers know:

Where they are going.

Spiritual Principle

Hope becomes stronger when we remember:

The destination.

LXXIII. SONGS ON THE WAY HOME

Singing accompanies:

Return.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption gives people a song because grace gives people a future.

LXXIV. JOY AS A CROWN

Isaiah pictures joy resting:

On their heads.

Spiritual Principle

What once crowned them with:

Grief.

Shame.

Fear.

Is replaced with:

Joy.

LXXV. SORROW’S EXPIRATION DATE

Sorrow feels:

Permanent.

Isaiah says:

It flees.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never give eternal status to something God says is temporary.

LXXVI. SIGHING’S FINAL BREATH

Sighing eventually:

Ends.

Spiritual Principle

The redeemed future contains no exhausted lament.

LXXVII. EIGHT GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 35

1. Wilderness → Gladness

2. Desert → Blossoming

3. Weak Hands → Strength

4. Fearful Hearts → Courage

5. Blindness → Sight

6. Dry Ground → Springs

7. Dangerous Wilderness → Highway of Holiness

8. Sorrow and Sighing → Everlasting Joy

Key Truth

Everything the curse has made barren, fearful, broken, dangerous, and sorrowful is placed under the transforming promise of God’s salvation.

LXXVIII. ISAIAH 35 AND THE GOSPEL

The chapter gives us several gospel themes:

God comes to save.

Healing accompanies the Messiah.

A way is provided.

The travelers are:

Redeemed.

Ransomed.

They journey toward:

God’s presence.

Their destination is:

Joy.

The New Testament shows that:

Jesus Christ.

Is central to this salvation.

He came.

He healed.

He called Himself:

The Way.

He gave His life as:

A ransom.

And through His resurrection He guarantees the final restoration in which:

Sorrow.

Sighing.

Death.

Will not remain.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah’s highway ultimately leads us toward the saving work and kingdom of Jesus Christ.

LXXIX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 35 comes immediately after:

Isaiah 34.

That matters.

Isaiah 34 was:

Judgment.

Fire.

Desolation.

Ruins.

Isaiah 35 is:

Flowers.

Water.

Healing.

Highway.

Singing.

That is a powerful reminder.

God’s story does not end with:

The desert.

The desert blooms.

God’s story does not end with:

Weak hands.

They are strengthened.

It does not end with:

Feeble knees.

They become firm.

It does not end with:

Fearful hearts.

They hear:

> **“Be strong, do not be afraid!”**

Why?

Not because:

There is no enemy.

Not because:

Nothing hurts.

Not because:

Everything already makes sense.

But because:

“Your God will come.”

That is the heart of hope.

Then:

Blind eyes open.

Deaf ears hear.

Lame people leap.

Mute tongues shout.

Jesus later points to these very kinds of miracles as evidence that:

The Messiah has come.

His miracles were not:

Random acts of power.

They were signs saying:

God’s restoration has begun.

But Isaiah looks beyond individual healings toward:

A restored world.

Desert becomes:

Water.

Dryness becomes:

Springs.

And then:

A highway.

Maybe today you are standing in:

A wilderness.

You see no:

Road.

No:

Water.

No:

Flowers.

Isaiah says:

God sees possibilities the desert cannot see.

He can build:

A road.

Where you see:

Sand.

Then notice the road's name:

"The Way of Holiness."

God is not merely trying to make your life:

Easier.

He is making His people:

Holy.

He wants us:

Redeemed.

Clean.

Walking His way.

And the road is protected.

No lion ultimately stops:

The redeemed.

Why?

Because God intends:

To get His people home.

Then comes:

Verse 10.

The ransomed return.

They enter:

Singing.

Joy crowns:

Their heads.

Gladness overtakes:

Them.

Sorrow and sighing:

Flee.

Maybe sorrow has overtaken you before.

Maybe grief has chased you.

Maybe fear has followed you.

But there is coming a day when:

Joy does the overtaking.

And:

Sorrow does the fleeing.

That is the hope of the redeemed.

So strengthen:

Weak hands.

Steady:

Feeble knees.

Speak courage to:

Fearful hearts.

Look for:

God’s glory.

Walk:

The Way of Holiness.

Keep moving toward:

Zion.

And remember:

The desert does not get the last word.

The lion does not get the last word.

Sorrow does not get the last word.

God does.

And His last word over the redeemed is:

Everlasting joy.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You can make:

The wilderness glad.

The desert bloom.

The dry land rejoice.

Where our lives feel:

Barren.

Dry.

Empty.

Pour out:

Your grace.

Bring life where we see:

No possibility.

Father, strengthen:

Weak hands.

Steady:

Feeble knees.

Encourage:

Fearful hearts.

Teach us to say to one another:

> **“Be strong, do not be afraid!”**

Not because trouble is imaginary.

But because:

You are greater.

Thank You for Jesus Christ.

Thank You that through His ministry:

Blind eyes saw.

Deaf ears heard.

Lame people walked.

Mute tongues spoke.

Thank You that these signs point toward:

Your greater restoration.

Father, bring living water into:

Dry places.

Turn burning sand into:

Pools.

Thirsty ground into:

Springs.

Lead us onto:

The Way of Holiness.

Keep us from wandering.

Make our lives:

Clean.

Faithful.

Obedient.

Thank You for redeeming us.

Thank You for ransoming us.

Thank You that the journey has:

A destination.

And thank You that one day:

Your redeemed will enter Zion with singing.

Everlasting joy will crown their heads.

Gladness will overtake them.

Sorrow and sighing will:

Flee away.

Until that day:

Keep us walking.

Keep us trusting.

Keep us holy.

Keep us encouraging one another.

And keep our eyes fixed upon:

Jesus.

In His name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“The ransomed of the Lord will return, they will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.” — Isaiah 35:10**

Central Truth

The Lord transforms barren places into places of life, strengthens the weak and fearful, brings messianic healing and restoration, provides a holy and protected highway for His redeemed, and promises that the ransomed will finally come home to Zion with everlasting joy while sorrow and sighing flee forever.

Isaiah 35 in One Sentence

Isaiah proclaims that God will transform the wilderness into a blooming land, strengthen weak and fearful people, open blind eyes and deaf ears, cause the lame to leap and the mute to shout, provide the redeemed with a safe Highway of Holiness, and bring His ransomed people home to Zion with singing, everlasting joy, and the permanent end of sorrow and sighing.

Isaiah Chapter 36 — Sennacherib Challenges Hezekiah’s Trust in the Lord

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 36 moves from:

Prophecy.

To:

History.

The great theological themes of the previous chapters are now tested in an actual national crisis.

For many chapters Isaiah has warned Judah:

Do not trust Egypt.

Do not trust horses.

Do not trust alliances.

Trust:

The Lord.

Now the question becomes:

Will Judah actually do it?

The enemy standing outside Jerusalem is:

Assyria.

The Assyrian king is:

Sennacherib.

His representative is:

Rabshakeh.

“Rabshakeh” is a title for a high-ranking Assyrian official rather than necessarily the man’s personal name.

Assyria had already captured:

Many fortified cities of Judah.

Jerusalem now appeared:

Vulnerable.

Militarily inferior.

Surrounded by an empire that had defeated:

City after city.

Nation after nation.

Rabshakeh therefore attacks more than:

Jerusalem’s walls.

He attacks:

Jerusalem’s faith.

His central question is:

> **“On what are you basing this confidence of yours?”**

That is one of the most important questions in the chapter.

Rabshakeh systematically tries to destroy every possible source of confidence.

He attacks trust in:

Military strategy.

Egypt.

Hezekiah.

The Lord.

Then he replaces faith with:

Fear.

Propaganda.

Half-truths.

Threats.

Promises.

He argues:

Egypt cannot save you.

Hezekiah cannot save you.

Your God cannot save you.

Assyria has defeated everyone else.

Therefore:

Surrender.

Some of Rabshakeh's statements contain:

Truth.

Egypt really was an unreliable ally.

Judah really was militarily weak.

Assyria really had conquered other nations.

God really had used Assyria as an instrument of judgment.

But Rabshakeh takes true facts and drives them toward:

A false conclusion.

That is what makes his speech so dangerous.

The enemy does not always lie by saying:

Nothing true.

Sometimes deception takes:

Facts.

Removes God's promises.

Distorts spiritual meaning.

Then produces:

Despair.

Verse 7 shows this clearly.

Rabshakeh argues that Hezekiah had offended God by removing:

High places.

Altars.

But Hezekiah's removal of unauthorized worship sites was actually part of his:

Reform.

Rabshakeh misunderstood or deliberately distorted:

Faithful obedience.

Verse 10 contains another dangerous claim.

Rabshakeh says:

> **"The Lord Himself told me, 'Go up against this land and destroy it.'"**

Isaiah had indeed previously described Assyria as an instrument of God’s judgment.

But being:

Used by God.

Did not mean Assyria understood God’s purposes correctly.

Nor did it authorize Assyria’s:

Pride.

Blasphemy.

Mockery.

Assyria was an instrument.

Not:

The sovereign Lord.

Rabshakeh then deliberately speaks in:

Hebrew.

Why?

Because his real target is:

The people on the wall.

His strategy is psychological warfare.

He wants to:

Create panic.

Break confidence.

Separate the people from Hezekiah.

Separate Hezekiah from God.

He offers them:

Peace.

Food.

Water.

Another fertile land.

But beneath the attractive language is:

Exile.

He describes deportation as though it were:

Opportunity.

Then his argument reaches its greatest arrogance:

> **“Who among all the gods of these lands has delivered his land from my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?”**

Here Assyria makes its fatal mistake.

It treats:

The Lord.

As though He were merely:

Another territorial god.

One deity among many.

An idol comparable to the gods Assyria had already defeated.

But the Lord is not:

One god among many.

He is:

The Holy One of Israel.

Creator.

Sovereign.

Lord of nations.

The chapter ends without:

Battle.

Miracle.

Victory.

Instead:

Silence.

The people obey Hezekiah:

> **“Do not answer him.”**

Sometimes faith answers.

Sometimes faith argues.

Sometimes faith testifies.

And sometimes:

Faith remains silent before propaganda and carries the matter to God.

The central truth of Isaiah 36 is:

When Assyria challenged Judah's faith, Rabshakeh used intimidation, half-truths, false theology, political pressure, and promises of comfort to persuade God's people that trust in the Lord was foolish; yet the proper response was not panic or compromise, but disciplined silence and continued confidence in the God whom Assyria had wrongly treated as though He were merely another powerless idol.

I. SENNACHERIB INVADES JUDAH

Isaiah 36:1 — The Fortified Cities Fall

> **"In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, marched against all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them."**

The crisis is:

Real.

This is not imagined fear.

Assyria had already demonstrated:

Military strength.

Siege skill.

Political power.

Judah's fortified cities were falling.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:13

The historical record likewise states that Sennacherib invaded Judah during Hezekiah's reign and attacked its fortified cities.

2 Chronicles 32:1

After Hezekiah's acts of faithfulness, Sennacherib entered Judah and laid siege to fortified cities, intending to capture them.

2 Kings 17:5

Assyria had previously invaded the northern kingdom and besieged Samaria, demonstrating the empire's military power.

Spiritual Principle

Faith is not pretending:

The threat is small.

Faith recognizes:

God is greater.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A real enemy does not make God less real.

II. ASSYRIA COMES TO JERUSALEM

Isaiah 36:2 — Rabshakeh at the Aqueduct

> **“Then the king of Assyria sent the commander, Rabshakeh, from Lachish to Jerusalem, to King Hezekiah, with a large army. He stood by the aqueduct of the upper pool, on the road to the washer’s field.”**

Rabshakeh arrives with:

Authority.

Army.

Confidence.

He comes from:

Lachish.

A major fortified city under Assyrian attack.

He positions himself near:

Jerusalem’s water system.

That location is significant.

Water is essential during:

Siege.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:17

The parallel account records Assyrian officials coming from Lachish to Jerusalem with a large force and standing near the upper pool.

2 Chronicles 32:9

Sennacherib and his army were engaged against Lachish while representatives were sent to pressure Jerusalem.

Isaiah 10:28

Isaiah had previously pictured Assyria advancing town by town toward Jerusalem in an apparently unstoppable march.

Spiritual Principle

The enemy often attacks where:

Fear feels practical.

Food.

Water.

Safety.

Survival.

III. HEZEKIAH'S OFFICIALS MEET THE ASSYRIAN ENVOY

Isaiah 36:3 — Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah

> **"Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was over the palace, Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, went out to meet him."**

Judah sends:

Senior officials.

This is now:

Diplomatic confrontation.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:18

The same officials are named as representatives meeting the Assyrian delegation.

Isaiah 22:20

Isaiah had earlier spoken of Eliakim son of Hilkiah being raised into a position of significant responsibility.

2 Kings 18:37

These same men later return to Hezekiah with torn clothing after hearing Rabshakeh's words.

Spiritual Principle

Leadership sometimes means:

Standing where threatening words are being spoken.

IV. "WHAT ARE YOU TRUSTING?"

Isaiah 36:4 — The Central Question

> **"Rabshakeh said to them, 'Tell Hezekiah, "This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, says: On what are you basing this confidence of yours?"'"**

Rabshakeh calls Sennacherib:

> **"The great king."**

That title is deliberate.

He wants Hezekiah to appear:

Small.

Weak.

Insignificant.

Then comes the question:

> **"On what are you basing this confidence?"**

Ironically, that is the right question.

But Rabshakeh expects the wrong answer.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:19

The parallel account records Rabshakeh challenging Hezekiah's source of confidence.

2 Chronicles 32:10

Sennacherib asks what basis Jerusalem has for remaining under siege rather than surrendering.

Isaiah 30:1

Judah had previously been condemned for making plans and alliances apart from God.

Spiritual Principle

Every crisis eventually asks:

What are you trusting?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pressure does not create your foundation.

It reveals it.

V. ASSYRIA MOCKS JUDAH'S STRATEGY

Isaiah 36:5 — "Empty Words"

> **"You say you have strategy and strength for war, but they are empty words. On whom are you relying, that you rebel against me?"**

Rabshakeh attacks:

Military planning.

Political resistance.

Human confidence.

There is some truth here.

Judah is:

Militarily weaker.

But Rabshakeh assumes:

Military strength decides everything.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:20

Rabshakeh dismisses Judah's supposed counsel and strength for war as mere words.

Psalm 33:16

A king is not saved simply because he possesses a large army, nor is a warrior delivered merely by great strength.

Jeremiah 9:23

The wise, strong, and wealthy are warned not to boast in human wisdom, strength, or riches.

Spiritual Principle

Human weakness does not equal:

Divine inability.

VI. EGYPT IS A BROKEN REED

Isaiah 36:6 — A True Observation Used for Manipulation

> **“Look! You are relying on Egypt, that broken reed of a staff, which pierces the hand of anyone who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who depend on him.”**

Ironically:

Rabshakeh is correct about Egypt.

Isaiah himself had warned Judah repeatedly:

Do not trust Egypt.

But Rabshakeh uses a true statement to argue:

Therefore trust Assyria.

God’s message was:

Do not trust Egypt.

Trust:

The Lord.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:21

Egypt is similarly described as a broken reed that injures anyone who leans upon it.

Ezekiel 29:6

Egypt is compared to an unreliable staff that failed those who depended upon it.

Isaiah 30:7

Isaiah had already called Egypt’s help worthless and empty.

Spiritual Principle

Someone can diagnose your false trust correctly while still offering:

Another false trust.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Rejecting one idol does not help if you replace it with another.

VII. RABSHAKEH MISUNDERSTANDS HEZEKIAH’S REFORM

Isaiah 36:7 — Truth Twisted Against Faith

> **“But if you say, ‘We trust in 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’?”**

Rabshakeh interprets Hezekiah’s reforms as:

An offense against God.

But Hezekiah had removed:

Idolatrous.

Unauthorized.

Corrupt.

High places.

He had called Judah back toward:

Proper worship.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:22

Rabshakeh makes the same accusation, suggesting Hezekiah weakened Judah’s relationship with God by removing worship sites.

2 Kings 18:4

Hezekiah had actually removed high places, destroyed sacred pillars, cut down the Asherah, and eliminated corrupt worship.

2 Chronicles 32:12

Assyria again presents Hezekiah's reforms as though reducing unauthorized altars somehow made Judah spiritually vulnerable.

Spiritual Principle

People unfamiliar with true worship may interpret:

Obedience.

As:

Disobedience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not let an enemy define whether your obedience to God was actually faithful.

VIII. ASSYRIA MOCKS JUDAH'S MILITARY WEAKNESS

Isaiah 36:8 — "Can You Find Riders?"

> **"Now, make a deal with my master, the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses—if you can find riders for them."**

This is:

Mockery.

Humiliation.

Psychological warfare.

Rabshakeh essentially says:

Even if we supplied the weapons, you could not supply the men.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:23

Rabshakeh sarcastically offers Judah horses if they can provide enough riders.

Isaiah 31:1

Judah had been warned not to rely upon horses, chariots, and military strength rather than seeking the Lord.

Psalm 20:7

Some trust chariots and horses, but God’s people are called to trust the name of the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

The enemy wants weakness to become:

Shame.

God wants weakness to become:

Dependence.

IX. JUDAH CANNOT MATCH ASSYRIA IN HUMAN STRENGTH

Isaiah 36:9 — The Military Imbalance

> **“How then can you repel one officer of the least of my master’s servants, relying on Egypt for chariots and horsemen?”**

From a purely military standpoint:

The argument sounds strong.

Judah cannot match:

Assyria.

That is precisely why:

Faith matters.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:24

Rabshakeh mocks Judah’s inability to stand against even a lesser Assyrian commander.

Isaiah 30:16

Judah had trusted fast horses and military escape rather than quiet trust in God.

Isaiah 31:3

Egyptians are men, not God, and their horses are flesh, not spirit.

Spiritual Principle

If the battle is measured only by visible resources:

God’s people may look defeated before it begins.

X. RABSHAKEH CLAIMS DIVINE AUTHORIZATION

Isaiah 36:10 — A Dangerous Half-Truth

> **“Furthermore, do you think I have come up against this land to destroy it without the Lord? The Lord Himself told me, ‘Go up against this land and destroy it.’”**

This is one of the chapter’s most subtle claims.

Isaiah had previously said:

Assyria was an instrument of God’s judgment.

But that did not mean:

Rabshakeh possessed prophetic authority.

Assyria understood God’s purposes.

Sennacherib had unlimited permission.

Assyria was exempt from judgment.

In Isaiah 10, Assyria is used:

And then judged for its arrogance.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:25

Rabshakeh repeats his claim that the Lord authorized Assyria’s invasion.

Isaiah 10:5

God calls Assyria the rod of His anger, showing that He can use a nation as an instrument of discipline.

Isaiah 10:6

God sends Assyria against a godless people for a disciplinary purpose, though Assyria’s own motives remain proud and destructive.

Spiritual Principle

Being used within God’s providence does not mean:

God approves your motives.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse being an instrument in God’s hand with being innocent before God.

XI. JUDAH’S OFFICIALS ASK FOR ARAMAIC

Isaiah 36:11 — Keep the Threat from the People

> **“Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to Rabshakeh, ‘Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, since we understand it. Do not speak to us in Hebrew in the hearing of the people on the wall.’”**

The officials understand:

Psychological warfare.

They know Rabshakeh is trying to influence:

The crowd.

So they ask him to use:

Diplomatic language.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:26

The officials request that Rabshakeh speak Aramaic rather than the language understood by Jerusalem’s population.

Nehemiah 13:24

Nehemiah later refers to language differences among neighboring peoples and the importance of understanding speech.

Genesis 42:23

Joseph’s brothers did not realize he understood them because communication was conducted through an interpreter.

Spiritual Principle

Words can become:

Weapons.

XII. RABSHAKEH WANTS THE PEOPLE TO HEAR

Isaiah 36:12 — Fear as a Strategy

> **“But Rabshakeh replied, ‘Has my master sent me only to your master and to you to say these things, and not to the people sitting on the wall—who, like you, will eat their own filth and drink their own urine during the siege?’”**

His purpose is now obvious.

He wants:

Fear.

Disgust.

Panic.

He describes the horrific consequences of:

Siege.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:27

The parallel account records the same threat concerning the desperate conditions siege would create.

Deuteronomy 28:53

Covenant judgment warned that siege conditions could become so severe that ordinary human boundaries would collapse under starvation.

Lamentations 4:10

Jerusalem’s later suffering under siege became so severe that famine produced unspeakable desperation.

Spiritual Principle

Fear often works by forcing the mind to imagine:

The worst possible future.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The enemy wants tomorrow’s imagined suffering to control today’s faith.

XIII. RABSHAKEH SHOUTS IN THE PEOPLE’S LANGUAGE

Isaiah 36:13 — Propaganda Goes Public

> **“Then Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in Hebrew: ‘Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria!’”**

He deliberately increases:

Volume.

Accessibility.

Pressure.

His message is now aimed directly at:

Ordinary citizens.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:28

Rabshakeh loudly addresses the people in their own language.

2 Chronicles 32:18

Assyrian representatives shouted loudly in the language of Judah in order to terrify and demoralize the people.

Jeremiah 22:29

Jeremiah repeatedly cries for the land to hear the Word of the Lord, contrasting true divine proclamation with Assyrian propaganda.

Spiritual Principle

Volume does not determine:

Truth.

XIV. ASSYRIA ATTACKS HEZEKIAH’S CREDIBILITY

Isaiah 36:14 — “He Cannot Deliver You”

> **“This is what the king says: Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he cannot deliver you.”**

Rabshakeh tries to separate:

People.

From:

Leader.

Hezekiah is presented as:

Deceptive.

Powerless.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:29

The Assyrian king warns Jerusalem not to allow Hezekiah to persuade them that deliverance is possible.

2 Chronicles 32:15

Sennacherib tells the people not to let Hezekiah deceive or persuade them to trust God.

Jeremiah 29:8

God warns His people elsewhere not to be deceived by false messages, reminding us that accusations of deception must be tested by truth.

Spiritual Principle

One common tactic of intimidation is to make faithful leadership appear:

Foolish.

XV. ASSYRIA DIRECTLY ATTACKS TRUST IN THE LORD

Isaiah 36:15 — “Do Not Trust God”

> **“Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord when he says, ‘The Lord will surely deliver us; this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.’”**

Now the real target is exposed.

Not:

Hezekiah.

Not:

Egypt.

Not:

Military strategy.

The real target is:

Faith in God.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:30

Rabshakeh tells the people not to believe Hezekiah’s assurance that the Lord will deliver Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 32:11

Assyrian propaganda claims Hezekiah is condemning the people to suffering by telling them to trust God.

Jeremiah 7:4

Jeremiah warns against false confidence in religious slogans, showing that true faith must rest upon God Himself rather than empty religious claims.

Spiritual Principle

The enemy’s deepest objective is often not merely to frighten you.

It is to make you:

Distrust God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When the attack finally reaches:

“Do not trust the Lord,”

the real battle has been exposed.

XVI. ASSYRIA OFFERS COUNTERFEIT PEACE

Isaiah 36:16 — Vines, Fig Trees, and Cisterns

> **“Do not listen to Hezekiah. This is what the king of Assyria says: Make peace with me and come out to me. Then every one of you will eat from his own vine and fig tree and drink water from his own cistern,”**

Assyria promises:

Peace.

Food.

Water.

Ordinary life.

The imagery sounds almost:

Biblical.

That is what makes it effective.

But the promise requires:

Surrender.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:31

The Assyrian king promises apparent peace, food, and security if Jerusalem will surrender.

Micah 4:4

True messianic peace is pictured as people sitting safely beneath their own vines and fig trees without fear.

1 Kings 4:25

During Solomon’s peaceful reign, Judah and Israel lived securely under their own vines and fig trees.

Spiritual Principle

Counterfeit promises often imitate:

Real blessings.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The enemy may borrow the language of peace while demanding the surrender of faith.

XVII. EXILE IS DISGUISED AS OPPORTUNITY

Isaiah 36:17 — “A Land Like Your Own”

> **“Until I come and take you to a land like your own—a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards.”**

Listen carefully.

Rabshakeh admits:

> **“I will take you.”**

This is:

Exile.

Deportation.

Loss of homeland.

Yet he presents it as:

Upgrade.

Opportunity.

A land like your own.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:32

Assyria describes exile as relocation to another prosperous land.

Deuteronomy 8:7

The land God gave Israel was described as abundant with water, crops, and provision.

2 Kings 17:6

Assyria had already deported the people of the northern kingdom and resettled them in foreign lands.

Spiritual Principle

Bondage often markets itself as:

Freedom.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Whenever surrender costs obedience to God, attractive packaging does not make it freedom.

XVIII. ASSYRIA COMPARES THE LORD TO FALSE GODS

Isaiah 36:18 — A Fatal Error

> **“Do not let Hezekiah mislead you by saying, ‘The Lord will deliver us.’ Have any of the gods of the nations delivered their lands from the hand of the king of Assyria?”**

Here Assyria’s reasoning becomes:

Blasphemous.

It assumes:

The Lord is like the gods of defeated nations.

But those gods were:

Idols.

The Lord is:

The living God.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:33

Rabshakeh argues that because other national gods failed to deliver their peoples, Judah’s God will also fail.

2 Chronicles 32:13

Sennacherib boasts that no god of the conquered nations had successfully resisted Assyria.

Isaiah 10:10

Assyria proudly claims superiority over kingdoms whose idols appeared more numerous than those of Jerusalem and Samaria.

Spiritual Principle

Past success can become spiritually dangerous when it convinces someone:

God is no different from defeated idols.

XIX. “WHERE ARE THEIR GODS?”

Isaiah 36:19 — Assyria’s Record of Conquest

> **“Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Have they delivered Samaria from my hand?”**

Rabshakeh presents:

Evidence.

Hamath:

Fallen.

Arpad:

Fallen.

Sepharvaim:

Fallen.

Samaria:

Fallen.

His argument is:

History proves we cannot lose.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:34

The Assyrian official lists defeated cities and their gods as evidence of Assyria’s supposed invincibility.

Isaiah 10:9

Assyria boasts over its victories at cities such as Calno, Carchemish, Hamath, Arpad, Samaria, and Damascus.

Isaiah 37:13

The same conquered nations are later cited again in Assyria’s continuing boast against Jerusalem.

Spiritual Principle

A record of victories does not guarantee victory against:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Yesterday’s success can become tomorrow’s pride.

XX. ASSYRIA CHALLENGES THE LORD DIRECTLY

Isaiah 36:20 — “That the Lord Should Deliver Jerusalem?”

> **“Who among all the gods of these lands has delivered his land from my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?’”**

This is the climax.

The issue is now:

God’s honor.

Assyria’s boast essentially says:

No god has stopped us.

Why should:

The Lord?

The answer will come in:

Isaiah 37.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:35

Rabshakeh openly questions whether the Lord can deliver Jerusalem when other gods failed.

2 Chronicles 32:14

Sennacherib asks what god among the nations could deliver from his ancestors, implying Judah's God is equally powerless.

Isaiah 10:11

Assyria wrongly assumes Jerusalem and her God can be treated the same way as cities dominated by idols.

Spiritual Principle

Pride reaches its most dangerous point when human success becomes:

A challenge against God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Assyria's greatest mistake was not underestimating Jerusalem.

It was:

Underestimating the Lord.

XXI. THE PEOPLE REMAIN SILENT

Isaiah 36:21 — Wisdom in Not Answering

> **"But the people remained silent and did not answer him a word, because the king had commanded, 'Do not answer him.'"**

This is disciplined silence.

They hear:

Mockery.

Threats.

Blasphemy.

Provocation.

But:

Do not answer.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:36

The people remain silent because Hezekiah commanded them not to answer the Assyrian official.

Proverbs 26:4

Wisdom sometimes requires refusing to answer foolish speech according to its own terms, lest we be drawn into the fool’s pattern.

Amos 5:13

There are circumstances so corrupt or dangerous that the prudent person recognizes the wisdom of silence.

Spiritual Principle

Not every challenge deserves:

A debate.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Silence can be faith when answering would only feed intimidation.

XXII. THE OFFICIALS RETURN WITH TORN CLOTHES

Isaiah 36:22 — Grief Before God

> **“Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was over the palace, Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, went to King Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and they told him what Rabshakeh had said.”**

The officials do not pretend:

The words did not hurt.

They tear:

Their clothes.

This expresses:

Grief.

Alarm.

Humiliation.

But they carry the message to:

Hezekiah.

And Isaiah 37 will show:

Hezekiah takes it to God.

Cross References

2 Kings 18:37

The officials return to Hezekiah with torn garments after hearing the Assyrian challenge.

Job 1:20

Job tears his robe in grief after catastrophic loss, showing that genuine faith does not deny sorrow.

Joel 2:13

God calls His people beyond outward torn garments toward genuinely broken and repentant hearts.

Spiritual Principle

Faith does not require pretending:

Threatening words do not hurt.

It requires knowing where to carry them.

XXIII. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 36

1. Faith Is Tested Under Real Pressure

Principle:

Trust becomes visible when circumstances provide reasons to fear.

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2. Human Help Can Be Unreliable

Egypt truly was:

A broken reed.

Principle:

A correct diagnosis of false trust should lead us toward God, not another idol.

---

3. The Enemy Can Twist Truth

Rabshakeh used:

Facts.

Half-truths.

Distortions.

Principle:

Not every statement containing truth is leading toward a truthful conclusion.

---

4. Obedience Can Be Misrepresented

Hezekiah’s reform is portrayed as:

Offending God.

Principle:

Do not let outsiders define your obedience for you.

---

5. God Can Use Evil Powers Without Approving Them

Assyria was:

An instrument.

But remained:

Accountable.

Principle:

Providence does not erase moral responsibility.

---

6. Fear Is a Weapon

Rabshakeh deliberately addresses:

The people.

Principle:

Intimidation often tries to control the imagination before controlling the person.

7. Counterfeit Peace Can Hide Bondage

Assyria promises:

Vines.

Fig trees.

Water.

Then:

Exile.

Principle:

Examine the cost hidden beneath attractive promises.

---

8. God Is Not One Deity Among Many

Principle:

The Lord cannot be measured by the failures of idols.

---

9. Silence Can Be Wisdom

Principle:

Not every accusation needs an immediate response.

---

10. Threats Should Be Carried Toward God

The chapter ends with:

The message delivered.

The next chapter will show:

Prayer.

Principle:

What the enemy says to you should become something you bring before the Lord.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 36 TEACHES ABOUT FAITH

Faith is not tested most deeply when:

Everything works.

It is tested when:

Assyria arrives.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Trust matters most when visible evidence seems to argue against it.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 36 TEACHES ABOUT PROPAGANDA

Rabshakeh uses:

Repetition.

Fear.

Public speech.

Mockery.

Selective facts.

Promises.

Threats.

Spiritual Principle

Propaganda often combines enough truth to sound credible with enough distortion to produce the wrong conclusion.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 36 TEACHES ABOUT HALF-TRUTHS

Rabshakeh is correct:

Egypt is weak.

Judah is militarily inferior.

Assyria has conquered nations.

Assyria has been used in God’s judgment.

But he is wrong:

That God will therefore abandon Jerusalem.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A half-truth becomes dangerous when true facts are arranged to make us doubt God.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 36 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

Fear is deliberately cultivated.

Rabshakeh wants people imagining:

Hunger.

Thirst.

Siege.

Death.

Spiritual Principle

Fear often begins by making an imagined future feel more certain than:

God’s promise.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 36 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY

Assyria says:

God sent us.

Isaiah had said:

God used Assyria.

But Assyria’s arrogance went beyond:

God’s permission.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can sovereignly use what He later righteously judges.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 36 TEACHES ABOUT FALSE PEACE

Assyria offers:

Comfort.

Food.

Water.

But requires:

Surrender.

Spiritual Principle

Peace purchased by abandoning faithfulness to God is not true peace.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 36 TEACHES ABOUT IDOLATRY

Rabshakeh’s fatal theological error is treating:

The Lord.

Like:

An idol.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not a larger version of false gods.

He is categorically different:

Creator rather than creation.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 36 TEACHES ABOUT SILENCE

Silence here is:

Obedient.

Strategic.

Disciplined.

Spiritual Principle

You do not need to answer every person who is determined not to listen.

XXXII. THE QUESTION OF CONFIDENCE

> **“On what are you basing this confidence?”**

This question belongs not only to:

Hezekiah.

But to:

Every believer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A crisis eventually uncovers whatever we were leaning on before the crisis began.

XXXIII. THE BROKEN REED

Egypt cannot bear:

Weight.

Instead it:

Wounds.

Spiritual Principle

False supports often injure the people who depend upon them.

XXXIV. THE REFORM RABSHAKEH MISUNDERSTOOD

Hezekiah removed:

High places.

Assyria assumes:

Less religion means weaker divine support.

But the real issue was:

Purified worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Removing false worship does not weaken faith.

It strengthens it.

XXXV. THE TWO THOUSAND HORSES

Assyria mocks:

Judah’s lack.

Spiritual Principle

The enemy loves to calculate:

What you do not have.

Faith remembers:

Who you have.

XXXVI. “THE LORD TOLD ME”

Spiritual language does not automatically prove:

Spiritual authority.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Test claims made in God’s name by:

God’s revealed Word.

XXXVII. SPEAKING IN HEBREW

Rabshakeh chooses:

The language of the crowd.

He wants fear to spread:

Directly.

Spiritual Principle

The enemy often seeks the widest audience for discouragement.

XXXVIII. THE HORROR OF SIEGE

Rabshakeh paints:

The worst picture possible.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fear magnifies the future until surrender appears reasonable.

XXXIX. “DO NOT LET HEZEKIAH DECEIVE YOU”

He attempts to break:

Trust.

Leadership.

Unity.

Spiritual Principle

Isolation is often part of intimidation.

XL. “DO NOT TRUST THE LORD”

This is the spiritual center of the attack.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Behind many attacks on faith lies one ancient suggestion:

God cannot be trusted.

XLI. THE COUNTERFEIT VINE AND FIG TREE

True peace in Scripture includes:

Vine.

Fig tree.

Safety.

Assyria copies the imagery.

Spiritual Principle

False promises are often most persuasive when they resemble:

Real blessings.

XLII. EXILE WITH GOOD ADVERTISING

Assyria says:

Another good land.

Reality:

Deportation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Bondage rarely introduces itself by saying:

“I am bondage.”

XLIII. THE FAILED GODS OF THE NATIONS

Assyria had defeated:

Idolatrous nations.

Then assumed:

All gods are equal.

Spiritual Principle

Bad theology can turn historical success into catastrophic arrogance.

XLIV. SAMARIA’S FALL

The northern kingdom had:

Fallen.

That fact intensified:

Judah’s fear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Another person’s judgment should produce humility, not the assumption that God cannot preserve whom He chooses.

XLV. ASSYRIA’S FATAL QUESTION

> **“That the Lord should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?”**

This is where:

Mockery.

Becomes:

Challenge against God.

Spiritual Principle

Pride becomes spiritually suicidal when it interprets temporary success as superiority over God.

XLVI. THE PEOPLE DO NOT ANSWER

Imagine:

An army outside.

A public challenge.

A loud voice.

And:

Silence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes the strongest answer to mockery is refusing to let the mocker choose the battlefield.

XLVII. TORN CLOTHES

The officials are:

Grieved.

Spiritual Principle

Courage and sorrow can exist:

Together.

XLVIII. ISAIAH 36 AND ISAIAH 37

Isaiah 36 gives us:

The threat.

Isaiah 37 will give:

The response.

Chapter 36 asks:

Can God deliver?

Chapter 37 answers:

Yes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never stop reading the story at the threat.

XLIX. THE ENEMY’S FIVE ARGUMENTS

Rabshakeh essentially argues:

Judah lacks military power.

Egypt cannot save them.

Hezekiah has supposedly offended God.

Assyria has divine authorization.

No other god has defeated Assyria.

Every argument is designed to reach:

One conclusion.

> **“Do not trust the Lord.”**

Spiritual Principle

Whenever multiple fears all push toward distrust of God, examine the conclusion carefully.

L. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FACT AND INTERPRETATION

Facts:

Assyria is strong.

Judah is weak.

Egypt is unreliable.

Cities have fallen.

Interpretation:

Therefore God cannot save Jerusalem.

That interpretation is:

False.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith does not deny facts.

It refuses to let facts become larger than God.

LI. TRUST UNDER PRESSURE

Trust sounds easy:

Before Assyria arrives.

Spiritual Principle

The value of faith becomes visible when faith becomes costly.

LII. THE ENEMY’S VOICE

Rabshakeh is:

Loud.

Confident.

Detailed.

Persuasive.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Confidence of tone is not evidence of truth.

LIII. GOD’S SILENCE IN ISAIAH 36

God does not visibly intervene:

Yet.

That makes the chapter uncomfortable.

But:

Yet.

Matters.

Spiritual Principle

The absence of immediate intervention does not mean the absence of divine attention.

LIV. WHY DOES GOD ALLOW THE THREAT?

The crisis exposes:

Trust.

False alliances.

Assyrian pride.

Judah’s need.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some crises reveal truths that comfort would have allowed us to avoid.

LV. FAITH AND HUMAN WEAKNESS

Judah is:

Weak.

That is not denied.

Spiritual Principle

Faith is not confidence in:

Our adequacy.

It is confidence in:

God’s sufficiency.

LVI. ASSYRIA’S TRUE WEAKNESS

Assyria possesses:

Army.

Conquests.

Confidence.

But lacks:

True knowledge of God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual ignorance can hide beneath enormous worldly power.

LVII. WHEN THE ENEMY USES THEOLOGY

Rabshakeh does not speak only:

Politics.

He discusses:

God.

Worship.

Providence.

Deliverance.

Spiritual Principle

Not every theological argument is:

Sound theology.

LVIII. TEST EVERYTHING BY GOD’S CHARACTER

Would the true God be:

Equal to idols?

No.

Would faithful reform automatically offend Him?

No.

Would being used as an instrument make Assyria sovereign?

No.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When confusing voices speak, return to what God has already revealed about Himself.

LIX. THE WISDOM OF NOT NEGOTIATING WITH MOCKERY

The people obey:

Hezekiah.

Spiritual Principle

There are moments when entering the argument simply gives:

The enemy more room.

LX. BRING THE WORDS TO THE KING

The officials take the message to:

Hezekiah.

Hezekiah will take it to:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not keep threatening words circulating endlessly in your mind.

Carry them toward:

God.

LXI. EIGHT GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 36

1. Assyrian Strength → Judah’s Weakness

2. Egypt’s Broken Reed → Trust in the Lord

3. Hezekiah’s Reform → Rabshakeh’s Distortion

4. Divine Providence → Assyrian Presumption

5. Fearful Propaganda → Disciplined Silence

6. Counterfeit Peace → Hidden Exile

7. Powerless Idols → The Living God

8. Human Boasting → Coming Divine Answer

Key Truth

The central conflict in Isaiah 36 is not merely between Assyria and Jerusalem, but between Assyria’s claim of invincibility and Judah’s faith in the living God.

LXII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who invaded Judah?

Sennacherib, king of Assyria.

Question 2

What had happened to Judah’s fortified cities?

Many had been captured.

Question 3

Who was sent to Jerusalem?

Rabshakeh, a high-ranking Assyrian official, with a large force.

Question 4

What central question does Rabshakeh ask?

> **“On what are you basing this confidence of yours?”**

Question 5

What human ally does Rabshakeh correctly identify as unreliable?

Egypt.

Question 6

How does he describe Egypt?

As a broken reed that injures those who lean upon it.

Question 7

What does Rabshakeh misunderstand about Hezekiah?

He wrongly treats the removal of corrupt high places as though Hezekiah had attacked true worship.

Question 8

What does Assyria mock about Judah’s military strength?

They supposedly could not even provide enough riders for two thousand horses.

Question 9

What startling claim does Rabshakeh make?

That the Lord told Assyria to attack the land.

Question 10

Had God previously said Assyria would be used as an instrument?

Yes.

Isaiah 10 describes Assyria as a rod of divine discipline.

Question 11

Did that excuse Assyria’s arrogance?

No.

Isaiah also announced judgment against Assyria’s pride.

Question 12

Why do Judah’s officials ask Rabshakeh to speak Aramaic?

So the ordinary people on the wall will not hear his threats.

Question 13

Why does Rabshakeh refuse?

Because frightening the people is part of his strategy.

Question 14

What does he tell the people about Hezekiah?

That Hezekiah cannot deliver them and should not be trusted.

Question 15

What does he say about trusting the Lord?

He directly tells them not to trust God for deliverance.

Question 16

What does Assyria promise if Jerusalem surrenders?

Food, water, peace, and eventually relocation to another fertile land.

Question 17

What is the hidden reality behind that promise?

Exile and deportation.

Question 18

What major theological mistake does Rabshakeh make?

He treats the Lord as though He were merely another national god like the idols of conquered peoples.

Question 19

How do the people respond?

They remain silent.

Question 20

Why do they remain silent?

Hezekiah commanded them not to answer.

Question 21

How do the officials react afterward?

They tear their clothes in grief and report Rabshakeh’s words to Hezekiah.

Question 22

What is the central issue of the chapter?

Whether Judah will continue trusting the Lord when every visible circumstance is being used to argue that faith is foolish.

LXIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 36 asks several searching questions.

What Is My Confidence Based On?

Money?

People?

Government?

Health?

Ability?

Or:

The Lord?

Am I Leaning on a Broken Reed?

What appears:

Strong.

But repeatedly:

Wounds me?

Can I Recognize a Half-Truth?

Do I assume something is true merely because:

Part of it is correct?

Have I Ever Allowed Someone Else to Misinterpret My Obedience?

Do I know what:

God actually said?

Am I Intimidated by What I Lack?

Does the enemy constantly remind me of:

Resources I do not have?

Can I Distinguish God’s Providence from Human Presumption?

Do I allow fearful predictions to control my imagination?

Am I tempted by counterfeit peace?

Would I compromise obedience for:

Comfort?

Security?

Acceptance?

Do I compare the Lord with human limitations?

Do I answer every criticism?

Or can I sometimes:

Remain silent?

Where do I carry threatening words after I hear them?

Into:

Fear?

Arguments?

Sleeplessness?

Or:

Prayer?

LXIV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Enemy’s Loudest Question Is Often: ‘Can You Really Trust God?’”

Rabshakeh talks about:

Egypt.

Horses.

Hezekiah.

Military power.

Exile.

But beneath everything is:

One question.

Can:

The Lord.

Be trusted?

Principle:

Spiritual warfare often turns visible circumstances into arguments against the character of God.

LXV. THE REAL BATTLE

On the surface:

Assyria versus Judah.

Deeper:

Pride versus faith.

Human strength versus divine sovereignty.

Spiritual Principle

The most important battle is sometimes happening:

Inside the heart.

LXVI. THE BROKEN REED WAS REALLY BROKEN

Faith does not require defending:

Egypt.

Isaiah had already condemned reliance on it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Defend God’s truth, not every human strategy associated with God’s people.

LXVII. HEZEKIAH’S REFORM

Removing false altars was:

Faithfulness.

Rabshakeh calls it:

Foolishness.

Spiritual Principle

Obedience may look irrational to people who misunderstand:

God’s Word.

LXVIII. GOD CAN USE ASSYRIA AND STILL JUDGE ASSYRIA

This is a crucial doctrine of:

Providence.

God’s sovereignty does not turn evil motives into:

Good motives.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God remains sovereign without becoming morally responsible for human arrogance and wicked intent.

LXIX. THE ENEMY WANTS THE CROWD

Rabshakeh refuses:

Private diplomacy.

He wants:

Public fear.

Spiritual Principle

Discouragement spreads faster when it is broadcast.

LXX. THE GREAT KING

Assyria repeatedly calls Sennacherib:

The great king.

But Isaiah has already shown who the truly exalted King is:

The Lord.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human rulers often sound largest when compared only with other humans.

LXXI. THE FALSE GOSPEL OF ASSYRIA

Assyria’s message contains:

Fear.

Surrender.

Temporary comfort.

Forced relocation.

It says:

Trust us and live.

Spiritual Principle

Every false salvation asks you to surrender something God told you to keep.

LXXII. “A LAND LIKE YOUR OWN”

The phrase sounds:

Kind.

It means:

You will lose your home.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Always look beneath the wording of a promise to the reality it produces.

LXXIII. THE LORD IS NOT HAMATH’S GOD

Assyria’s theological category is:

Wrong.

Spiritual Principle

If your starting definition of God is wrong, your conclusion about His power will also be wrong.

LXXIV. PAST VICTORIES BECOME PRIDE

Assyria has:

Evidence.

But interprets it:

Arrogantly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Success is spiritually dangerous when it convinces us that we are beyond accountability.

LXXV. SILENCE AT THE WALL

The people do not:

Argue.

Insult.

Panic publicly.

They obey.

Spiritual Principle

Self-control can be an expression of faith.

LXXVI. TORN CLOTHES, UNBROKEN FAITH

The officials grieve.

But the story:

Continues.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You can be deeply shaken emotionally without surrendering spiritually.

LXXVII. THE CHAPTER ENDS BEFORE THE ANSWER

That is deliberate.

Isaiah 36 leaves us:

Under pressure.

The answer comes:

Next.

Spiritual Principle

Faith often lives for a time between:

The threat.

And:

The deliverance.

LXXVIII. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 36

1. Assyria Invades

Judah’s fortified cities fall.

2. Rabshakeh Arrives

The threat reaches Jerusalem.

3. Human Confidence Is Attacked

Egypt, military power, and leadership are mocked.

4. Theology Is Distorted

Hezekiah’s reform and God’s sovereignty are twisted.

5. Fear Is Broadcast

Rabshakeh speaks directly to the people.

6. Counterfeit Peace Is Offered

Surrender is disguised as security.

7. The People Remain Silent

The chapter closes with grief but not surrender.

Key Truth

Isaiah 36 shows that faith is often tested not only by military danger but by arguments designed to make trust in God appear unreasonable.

LXXIX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 36 asks:

What happens when:

Faith gets mocked?

When:

The numbers are against you?

When:

The enemy has evidence?

When:

Cities have already fallen?

When:

The threat sounds logical?

That is where Judah stands.

Sennacherib has:

An empire.

An army.

A record of victory.

Judah has:

A weakened kingdom.

A surrounded city.

A frightened population.

Rabshakeh begins with:

“On what are you basing this confidence?”

That is the question every believer eventually faces.

What is your confidence based on?

If it is based on:

Everything going well—

It will fail when things go badly.

If it is based on:

Human support—

People can fail.

If it is based on:

Money—

Money can disappear.

If it is based on:

Strength—

Strength can weaken.

If it is based on:

God—

Then pressure reveals the foundation.

Rabshakeh is dangerous because he does not speak:

Pure nonsense.

He says:

Egypt is unreliable.

True.

Judah is militarily weak.

True.

Assyria has defeated powerful nations.

True.

God has used Assyria in judgment.

True.

Then comes the lie:

Therefore:

The Lord cannot deliver you.

That is how deception works.

It gathers:

True pieces.

Builds:

A false conclusion.

Be careful when fear interprets facts for you.

Then Rabshakeh says:

Do not trust:

Hezekiah.

Do not trust:

The Lord.

Make peace with:

Assyria.

The enemy always wants:

Transfer of trust.

From:

God.

To:

Something else.

And his offer sounds good:

Vines.

Fig trees.

Water.

Food.

Another fertile land.

But one word gives the truth away:

“Take you.”

They will be:

Exiles.

The promise of comfort conceals:

Bondage.

Then Rabshakeh reaches the height of arrogance:

What god has ever stopped:

Assyria?

Why should:

Your God?

That question sets up the entire next chapter.

Because Assyria has made one catastrophic mistake.

It has placed:

The living God.

In the category of:

Dead idols.

The chapter ends with:

Silence.

Sometimes that is:

Faith.

Not every attack deserves:

Your response.

Some things are better carried:

To God.

The officials tear their clothes.

They are:

Disturbed.

Grieved.

Shaken.

Faith does not require emotional numbness.

You can be:

Afraid.

Hurt.

Shaken.

And still:

Obey.

So when the Rabshakeh voice says:

Your faith is foolish.

Your God cannot help.

Look at the odds.

Look at what happened to everyone else.

Surrender would be easier.

Remember:

The loud voice is not necessarily:

The true voice.

The strong army is not necessarily:

The final authority.

And the chapter is not:

Over.

So:

Do not lean on broken reeds.

Do not accept counterfeit peace.

Do not let half-truths become full despair.

Do not confuse human strength with sovereignty.

Do not argue merely because someone provokes you.

Carry the threat:

Toward God.

And hold firmly to this truth:

Assyria may be outside the wall.

But:

The Lord is still on the throne.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

When voices around us say:

You cannot be trusted.

Strengthen:

Our faith.

When circumstances appear:

Overwhelming.

Remind us:

You are greater than circumstances.

Forgive us for leaning on:

Broken reeds.

Human strength.

Money.

People.

Systems.

Anything that takes the place belonging to:

You.

Father, give us discernment when we hear:

Half-truths.

Help us recognize when true facts are being used to produce:

False conclusions.

Keep us grounded in:

Your Word.

Your character.

Your promises.

Father, when fear paints pictures of:

The worst possible future.

Teach us to remember:

You are already there.

When the enemy mocks what we lack:

Remind us what we have in:

You.

When our obedience is misunderstood:

Give us courage to remain faithful.

When someone claims to speak in Your name:

Give us wisdom to test that claim by Scripture.

Father, protect us from:

Counterfeit peace.

Do not let temporary comfort purchase:

Spiritual compromise.

Give us wisdom to know:

When to speak.

When to answer.

When to remain silent.

And when threatening words reach our ears:

Teach us to carry them:

To You.

Thank You that You are not:

One god among many.

You are:

The living God.

Creator.

Sovereign.

Holy One of Israel.

No army is:

Too strong.

No empire:

Too large.

No boast:

Too loud.

No enemy:

Beyond Your authority.

Keep us faithful between:

The threat.

And:

The answer.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord when he says, 'The Lord will surely deliver us; this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.'" — Isaiah 36:15**

Central Truth

Isaiah 36 reveals how Assyria attempted to destroy Judah's faith through intimidation, military superiority, half-truths, distorted theology, counterfeit promises, and direct attacks upon trust in the Lord; yet the chapter teaches that human strength, propaganda, and past victories cannot determine what the living God is able to do, and His people must refuse to let fear redefine His character.

Isaiah 36 in One Sentence

Isaiah records Sennacherib's attempt to break Jerusalem's faith as Rabshakeh mocks Judah's weakness, exposes Egypt as a broken reed, twists Hezekiah's reforms and God's providence, broadcasts fear to the people, promises counterfeit peace through surrender, and finally challenges the Lord Himself, while Jerusalem responds with disciplined silence and carries the threat toward the king rather than surrendering to Assyria's propaganda.

Isaiah Chapter 37 — Hezekiah's Prayer and God's Deliverance

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 37 gives the answer to the crisis of Isaiah 36.

Chapter 36 ended with:

Threats.

Blasphemy.

Fear.

Torn clothes.

A powerful Assyrian army.

A surrounded Jerusalem.

But Isaiah 37 begins with:

Prayer.

Hezekiah hears Rabshakeh's words.

He does not immediately answer:

Assyria.

He goes to:

The house of the Lord.

That is the great turning point.

The enemy has spoken.

Now:

Hezekiah seeks God.

The chapter teaches us what faith does when:

The threat is real.

The enemy is powerful.

The odds appear impossible.

The first response is not:

Panic.

Compromise.

Pride.

Counter-propaganda.

It is:

Prayer.

Hezekiah also seeks:

The prophet Isaiah.

He understands that this is not merely:

A political crisis.

It is:

A spiritual crisis.

He asks Isaiah to pray for:

The remnant.

Then God sends the first answer:

“Do not be afraid.”

The Assyrians have spoken:

Loudly.

God speaks:

Authoritatively.

He says Sennacherib will:

Hear a report.

Return home.

Fall by the sword.

Yet Sennacherib does not immediately stop threatening Jerusalem.

He sends another message.

The second threat is even more direct:

“Do not let the God you depend on deceive you.”

The attack has now moved from:

Hezekiah.

To:

God Himself.

What does Hezekiah do?

He takes the letter.

Reads it.

Goes into:

The house of the Lord.

Then:

“Spread it out before the Lord.”

That is one of the most memorable acts of faith in Scripture.

Hezekiah does not deny:

The letter exists.

He does not pretend:

The threat is small.

He does not hide:

His fear.

He places the entire matter:

Before God.

Then he prays.

His prayer begins not with:

Assyria.

But with:

God.

“You alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You made heaven and earth.”

That changes the scale of the crisis.

Sennacherib rules:

An empire.

God rules:

All kingdoms.

Sennacherib has conquered:

Cities.

God created:

Heaven and earth.

Hezekiah also admits:

Assyria really has destroyed nations.

Faith does not require:

Denying facts.

But Hezekiah identifies the crucial difference.

The gods Assyria destroyed were:

Wood.

Stone.

Works of human hands.

The Lord is:

The living God.

Then Hezekiah asks for deliverance so that:

All kingdoms may know that the Lord alone is:

God.

His prayer rises above:

Personal survival.

National preservation.

He is concerned for:

God’s glory.

Then comes one of the greatest statements in the chapter:

“Because you have prayed to Me.”

God answers.

Prayer did not make God:

Sovereign.

God was already sovereign.

But prayer was the God-appointed response through which Hezekiah expressed:

Dependence.

Faith.

Submission.

The Lord then exposes Sennacherib’s pride.

Assyria boasts:

I climbed.

I conquered.

I cut down.

I dug wells.

I dried rivers.

God answers:

“Long ago I ordained it.”

Assyria mistook:

Permission.

For:

Autonomy.

Instrumentality.

For:

Sovereignty.

Success.

For:

Self-sufficiency.

Then God tells Sennacherib:

“I know where you stay and when you come and go.”

The king who thinks he knows:

Nations.

Routes.

Armies.

Fortresses.

Is himself fully known by:

God.

Then comes the image of:

The hook.

The bit.

God will turn Assyria around.

The empire that led others away in chains will itself be:

Directed.

Then God gives Hezekiah:

A sign.

Judah will survive.

The remnant will:

Take root below.

Bear fruit above.

This is a beautiful picture of:

Recovery.

Stability.

Future fruitfulness.

And finally:

Assyria will not enter Jerusalem.

The enemy will not:

Shoot an arrow.

Build a siege ramp.

Enter the city.

Why?

God says:

> **“I will defend this city and save it.”**

Then the deliverance comes.

The angel of the Lord strikes:

185,000.

Sennacherib leaves.

Returns to:

Nineveh.

And later he is killed in the temple of:

His own god.

The man who mocked the living God dies while worshiping:

An idol that cannot save him.

The chapter therefore ends with the complete reversal of Isaiah 36.

The king who threatened:

Jerusalem.

Cannot protect:

Himself.

The God whom he mocked:

Keeps His Word.

The central truth of Isaiah 37 is:

When Hezekiah carried Assyria’s threats before the Lord in prayer, God answered by exposing Sennacherib’s pride, declaring His sovereign control over history, preserving Judah’s remnant, defending Jerusalem for His own name’s sake, and bringing down the Assyrian king who had mocked the living God.

I. HEZEKIAH GOES TO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD

Isaiah 37:1 — Trouble Drives the King Toward God

> **“When King Hezekiah heard this, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord.”**

Hezekiah hears:

Blasphemy.

Threat.

Humiliation.

His response is:

Grief.

Humility.

Worship.

He does not first go to:

Egypt.

Military commanders.

Political advisers.

He goes to:

God.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:1

The parallel account records Hezekiah tearing his clothes, covering himself with sackcloth, and entering the Lord’s house after hearing Assyria’s words.

2 Chronicles 32:20

Hezekiah and Isaiah respond to the Assyrian crisis by crying out to heaven in prayer.

Joel 1:13

Priests are called to put on sackcloth, mourn, and cry before God during national calamity.

Spiritual Principle

Crisis reveals:

Where we instinctively go.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When bad news tears your heart, let it drive you toward the house of the Lord rather than away from Him.

II. HEZEKIAH SEEKS ISAIAH

Isaiah 37:2 — Leadership Seeks God’s Word

> **“He sent Eliakim, who was over the palace, Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, all clothed in sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz.”**

Hezekiah seeks:

Prophetic counsel.

The officials go in:

Sackcloth.

This is not:

Routine diplomacy.

It is:

National humiliation.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:2

Hezekiah sends senior officials and priests to Isaiah to seek God’s word concerning the crisis.

2 Chronicles 32:20

Hezekiah and Isaiah join in prayer regarding Sennacherib’s threats.

Jeremiah 21:1

Later Judean kings likewise send officials to a prophet seeking the Lord’s word during military crisis.

Spiritual Principle

Wise leadership knows when:

Political problems require spiritual discernment.

III. “A DAY OF DISTRESS”

Isaiah 37:3 — No Strength to Give Birth

> **“They said to him, ‘This is what Hezekiah says: This is a day of distress, of rebuke, and of disgrace, as when children come to the point of birth but there is no strength to deliver them.’”**

Hezekiah does not minimize:

The situation.

He calls it:

Distress.

Rebuke.

Disgrace.

Then uses a painful picture.

Birth has reached:

The critical moment.

But strength is:

Gone.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:3

Hezekiah uses the same image of a day of distress and children reaching birth without strength for delivery.

Hosea 13:13

A nation under judgment is compared to childbirth where the critical moment arrives but foolish delay creates danger.

Jeremiah 30:6

The prophet uses labor-pain imagery to describe intense national distress.

Spiritual Principle

Faith can honestly say:

“I do not have the strength.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Recognizing weakness is not unbelief when weakness drives us toward God.

IV. PRAY FOR THE REMNANT

Isaiah 37:4 — The Living God Has Been Mocked

> **“It may be that the Lord your God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria has sent to mock the living God, and will rebuke him for the words the Lord your God has heard. Therefore, lift up your prayer for the remnant that is still left.”**

Hezekiah sees that the issue has become:

God’s honor.

Rabshakeh has mocked:

The living God.

Hezekiah asks Isaiah:

Pray.

For:

The remnant.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:4

Hezekiah asks Isaiah to pray because Assyria has mocked the living God.

Zephaniah 2:9

God promises that a remnant of His people will survive judgment and possess what remains.

Isaiah 10:20

Isaiah earlier promised that a remnant of Israel would no longer depend upon the power that struck them but would rely upon the Holy One of Israel.

Spiritual Principle

One praying remnant can still have:

A future.

V. HEZEKIAH’S OFFICIALS COME TO ISAIAH

Isaiah 37:5 — The Message Is Delivered

> **“When King Hezekiah’s officials came to Isaiah,”**

The verse is brief.

But important.

They obey:

The king.

They seek:

The prophet.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:5

The servants of Hezekiah arrive before Isaiah seeking God’s answer.

1 Kings 22:13

Royal messengers often approached prophets seeking or influencing prophetic counsel, though true prophets were obligated to speak God’s Word faithfully.

Jeremiah 37:3

Officials later approached Jeremiah asking him to pray during another national military crisis.

Spiritual Principle

The crisis requires:

A Word from God.

VI. “DO NOT BE AFRAID”

Isaiah 37:6 — God Answers the Threat

> **“Isaiah said to them, ‘Tell your master this is what the Lord says: “Do not be afraid of the words you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me.”’”**

Notice:

> **“Words.”**

Assyria’s weapon in Isaiah 36 was:

Speech.

Threat.

Mockery.

Intimidation.

God says:

Do not fear:

The words.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:6

Isaiah sends Hezekiah a direct message from God telling him not to fear Assyria’s blasphemous words.

Isaiah 51:7

God’s people are told not to fear human reproach or be terrified by insults.

Psalm 118:6

Because the Lord is with him, the psalmist refuses to live controlled by fear of what human beings can do.

Spiritual Principle

Words can frighten.

They cannot overrule:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not give an enemy’s words more authority than God’s Word.

VII. GOD WILL TURN SENNACHERIB BACK

Isaiah 37:7 — The King Will Fall in His Own Land

> **“I am going to put a spirit in him so that when he hears a certain report, he will return to his own land, and there I will cause him to fall by the sword.’”**

God already knows:

How Sennacherib will leave.

Why he will leave.

Where he will die.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:7

God promises that the Assyrian king will hear a report, return home, and die by the sword.

Isaiah 37:38

The chapter later records the fulfillment when Sennacherib is killed by his sons in his own land.

Ezekiel 39:6

God demonstrates His authority by sending judgment even upon distant lands and apparently secure powers.

Spiritual Principle

God knows the exit route of the enemy before the enemy knows he is leaving.

VIII. RABSHAKEH RETURNS TO THE ASSYRIAN KING

Isaiah 37:8 — The Military Situation Changes

> **“Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that he had left Lachish.”**

Assyria appears:

Busy.

Mobile.

Powerful.

Campaigns continue.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:8

Rabshakeh returns and finds Sennacherib fighting against Libnah after leaving Lachish.

Jeremiah 34:7

Lachish and other fortified Judean cities later appear as key military strongholds during siege conditions.

2 Chronicles 32:9

Sennacherib’s campaign around Lachish provides the military background for his threats against Jerusalem.

Spiritual Principle

World events may change rapidly.

God remains:

Unchanged.

IX. TIRHAKAH’S ADVANCE CREATES A NEW PRESSURE

Isaiah 37:9 — Another Report Reaches Sennacherib

> **“Then Sennacherib heard that Tirhakah, king of Cush, was marching out to fight against him. When he heard this, he sent messengers again to Hezekiah, saying:”**

Here is the:

Report.

Sennacherib now faces:

Another military concern.

But instead of humbling himself:

He sends more threats.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:9

The Assyrian king hears that Tirhakah is advancing and sends another message to Hezekiah.

Nahum 3:9

Cush is remembered as a significant regional power capable of supporting military resistance.

2 Chronicles 32:10

Sennacherib continues trying to undermine Jerusalem’s confidence through threatening messages.

Spiritual Principle

Pressure does not automatically:

Humble.

Sometimes pride responds by becoming:

Louder.

X. SENNACHERIB ACCUSES GOD OF DECEPTION

Isaiah 37:10 — “Do Not Let God Deceive You”

> **“Say this to Hezekiah king of Judah: Do not let the God you depend on deceive you when He says, ‘Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.’”**

This is:

Blasphemy.

Sennacherib now directly accuses:

God.

Of:

Deception.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:10

Sennacherib warns Hezekiah not to be deceived by faith in God’s promise.

Isaiah 36:15

Rabshakeh had already warned the people not to trust Hezekiah’s assurance that the Lord would deliver Jerusalem.

Psalm 27:1

In contrast, the psalmist declares that the Lord is light, salvation, and stronghold, leaving no ultimate reason for fear.

Spiritual Principle

The enemy attacks God’s promises by attacking:

God’s character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every temptation to distrust God eventually becomes a question about whether God is truthful.

XI. ASSYRIA APPEALS TO ITS RECORD

Isaiah 37:11 — “Will You Be Delivered?”

> **“Surely you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands, destroying them completely. Will you be delivered?”**

Assyria says:

Look at history.

Look at our record.

Look at everyone else.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:11

Sennacherib cites Assyria’s victories over many lands as evidence that Jerusalem cannot escape.

Isaiah 10:13

Assyria boasts that its own strength and wisdom produced its conquests.

Isaiah 10:14

Assyria compares the nations’ wealth to abandoned eggs gathered without resistance.

Spiritual Principle

Past success can become:

False prophecy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What happened to someone else does not determine what God has appointed for you.

XII. THE GODS OF THE NATIONS FAILED

Isaiah 37:12 — Dead Gods Cannot Save

> **“Did the gods of the nations my fathers destroyed—Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden in Telassar—deliver them?”**

Sennacherib’s logic is:

Their gods failed.

Your God will fail.

But the comparison is:

False.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:12

The Assyrian king names previously conquered peoples whose gods could not save them.

2 Kings 17:6

Assyria had conquered the northern kingdom and relocated many of its people, strengthening its reputation for invincibility.

Ezekiel 27:23

Haran and other cities were known throughout the region and appear in the broader political and commercial world of the ancient Near East.

Spiritual Principle

A dead idol’s failure tells us nothing about:

The living God’s power.

XIII. “WHERE ARE THE KINGS?”

Isaiah 37:13 — Assyria’s Boast Continues

> **“Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, or the kings of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah?”**

These kings are:

Gone.

Assyria wants Hezekiah to see himself as:

Next.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:13

Sennacherib names fallen kings and conquered cities as evidence of Assyria’s superiority.

Isaiah 36:19

Rabshakeh had already asked where the gods of these conquered cities were.

2 Kings 18:34

The same defeated cities are used to intimidate Jerusalem.

Spiritual Principle

Fear says:

“You are next.”

Faith asks:

“What has God said?”

XIV. HEZEKIAH SPREADS THE LETTER BEFORE THE LORD

Isaiah 37:14 — The Threat Becomes a Prayer Matter

> **“Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers, read it, then went up to the house of the Lord and spread it out before the Lord.”**

This may be the most memorable scene in the chapter.

Hezekiah:

Reads.

Goes.

Spreads.

Prays.

He does not deny the letter.

He brings:

The actual threat.

Before:

God.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:14

Hezekiah takes Sennacherib’s letter into the Lord’s house and spreads it before God.

2 Chronicles 32:20

Hezekiah and Isaiah cry out to heaven concerning Assyria.

Nehemiah 9:32

Later believers similarly appeal to the great, mighty, faithful God while acknowledging the distress faced by His people.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer is where:

Threat.

Meets:

Sovereignty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When the letter is too heavy to carry in your heart, spread it before the Lord.

XV. HEZEKIAH PRAYS

Isaiah 37:15 — Crisis Becomes Communion

> **“And Hezekiah prayed to the Lord:”**

Simple.

Direct.

Powerful.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:15

The parallel account introduces Hezekiah’s prayer before God.

James 5:16

The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective when offered in faith.

Psalm 86:1

The psalmist asks the Lord to listen and answer because he is needy and dependent.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer begins when:

We stop merely rehearsing the threat.

And begin:

Addressing God.

XVI. HEZEKIAH BEGINS WITH GOD’S GREATNESS

Isaiah 37:16 — Creator and King

> **“O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, You alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You made heaven and earth.”**

Hezekiah does not begin:

Assyria is strong.

He begins:

God is greater.

He identifies God as:

Lord of hosts.

God of Israel.

Enthroned.

Sovereign over kingdoms.

Creator.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:15

Hezekiah confesses that the Lord alone is God over all kingdoms and Creator of heaven and earth.

Psalm 80:1

God is addressed as the Shepherd of Israel enthroned above the cherubim.

Exodus 25:22

God promised to meet His people above the ark, between the cherubim, in connection with His covenant presence.

Spiritual Principle

Good prayer begins by remembering:

Who God is.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before telling God how big the problem is, remind your own heart how big God is.

XVII. “BEND YOUR EAR AND HEAR”

Isaiah 37:17 — Hezekiah Appeals to the Living God

> **“Bend Your ear, Lord, and hear; open Your eyes, Lord, and see. Listen to all the words Sennacherib has sent to ridicule the living God.”**

Hezekiah is not asking God for:

Information.

He is expressing:

Dependence.

Appeal.

Urgency.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:16

Hezekiah asks God to hear and see the words by which Sennacherib has mocked the living God.

Psalm 17:6

The psalmist calls upon God with confidence that He hears prayer.

Daniel 9:18

Daniel asks God to incline His ear and open His eyes to the desolation of His people.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer brings insult against God:

Back to God.

XVIII. HEZEKIAH ADMITS ASSYRIA'S POWER

Isaiah 37:18 — Faith Does Not Deny Facts

> **"It is true, Lord, that the kings of Assyria have laid waste all these nations and their lands."**

Hezekiah says:

> **"It is true."**

He does not pretend:

Assyria has no victories.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:17

Hezekiah openly acknowledges Assyria's real success against many nations.

2 Chronicles 32:1

Assyria had genuinely invaded Judah and threatened fortified cities.

Isaiah 10:13

The Assyrian king boasts about his conquests, which were historically real even though his interpretation of them was prideful.

Spiritual Principle

Faith does not need:

Fake facts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith can admit the problem is real without admitting the problem is sovereign.

XIX. THE GODS THEY DESTROYED WERE NOT GODS

Isaiah 37:19 — Wood and Stone Cannot Save

> **“They have thrown their gods into the fire and destroyed them, for they were not gods but the work of human hands—wood and stone.”**

Here is the flaw in Sennacherib’s argument.

Those gods were:

Manufactured.

Created.

Dead.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:18

Hezekiah explains that Assyria destroyed the idols because they were not true gods.

Psalm 115:4

The idols of the nations are silver and gold made by human hands.

Jeremiah 10:3

Idols are shaped from created materials by human craftsmanship and possess no divine life.

Spiritual Principle

An idol can be:

Destroyed.

The Creator cannot.

XX. HEZEKIAH PRAYS FOR GOD’S GLORY

Isaiah 37:20 — “So the Kingdoms May Know”

> **“Now, Lord our God, deliver us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, O Lord, are God.”**

This is a mature prayer.

Deliver us.

But why?

Not merely:

For our comfort.

So:

The world may know.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:19

Hezekiah asks for deliverance so all kingdoms may know that the Lord alone is God.

1 Kings 8:60

Solomon prayed that all peoples of the earth would know the Lord is God and there is no other.

Ezekiel 36:23

God promises to vindicate the holiness of His great name before the nations.

Spiritual Principle

The highest prayers connect:

Our need.

With:

God’s glory.

XXI. “BECAUSE YOU HAVE PRAYED”

Isaiah 37:21 — God Answers Hezekiah

> **“Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent this message to Hezekiah: ‘This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: Because you have prayed to Me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria,’”**

What a statement:

> **“Because you have prayed.”**

God acknowledges:

Prayer.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:20

Isaiah tells Hezekiah that God has heard his prayer concerning Sennacherib.

Daniel 9:23

Daniel is told that an answer went out when he began praying because he was greatly loved.

Psalm 65:2

God is praised as the One who hears prayer.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer matters because:

God listens.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never treat prayer as the last resort when Scripture presents it as real participation in dependence upon God.

XXII. ZION WILL MOCK ASSYRIA'S PRIDE

Isaiah 37:22 — The Tables Are Turned

> **"This is the word the Lord has spoken against him: 'The Virgin Daughter of Zion despises you and mocks you. The Daughter of Jerusalem shakes her head at you.'"**

Assyria mocked:

Jerusalem.

Now:

Jerusalem is pictured mocking Assyria.

Why?

Because the supposedly invincible empire is about to:

Fail.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:21

The parallel account describes Zion scorning and shaking her head at the Assyrian king.

Lamentations 2:15

Mocking enemies once shook their heads at Jerusalem; Isaiah now reverses that humiliation.

Psalm 22:7

Head-shaking is a biblical expression of mockery and contempt.

Spiritual Principle

God can reverse:

Humiliation.

XXIII. ASSYRIA HAS MOCKED THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL

Isaiah 37:23 — The True Target of Assyrian Pride

> **“Whom have you mocked and blasphemed? Against whom have you raised your voice and lifted your eyes in pride? Against the Holy One of Israel!”**

God identifies:

The offense.

Sennacherib thought he mocked:

Hezekiah.

Jerusalem.

Judah.

In reality:

The Holy One of Israel.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:22

God exposes Sennacherib’s blasphemy as directed against the Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 5:19

Earlier scoffers arrogantly challenged the Holy One of Israel to act.

Psalm 74:22

God is asked to rise and defend His own cause against those who mock Him.

Spiritual Principle

Pride becomes most serious when it lifts itself:

Against God.

XXIV. ASSYRIA BOASTS IN ITS ACHIEVEMENTS

Isaiah 37:24 — “I Have Climbed”

> **“By your messengers you have ridiculed the Lord. You said, ‘With the multitude of my chariots I have climbed the heights of the mountains, the utmost heights of Lebanon. I have cut down its tallest cedars, the choicest of its junipers. I have reached its remotest heights, the finest of its forests.’”**

Listen to the repeated:

I.

I climbed.

I cut.

I reached.

Pride makes:

Self.

The center of:

History.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:23

Sennacherib’s boasting about mountains, chariots, and forests is repeated in the parallel account.

Isaiah 10:33

God had already warned that He could cut down the lofty and proud like great trees.

Isaiah 14:13

Proud rebellion is pictured with repeated “I will” statements seeking exaltation.

Spiritual Principle

Pride loves the pronoun:

I.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Success becomes dangerous when gratitude disappears and self-exaltation takes its place.

XXV. ASSYRIA BOASTS OF UNLIMITED REACH

Isaiah 37:25 — “I Dug Wells”

> **“I have dug wells in foreign lands and drunk the waters. With the soles of my feet I dried up all the streams of Egypt.”**

Sennacherib portrays himself as:

Unstoppable.

No geography:

Stops him.

No water system:

Restrains him.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:24

The Assyrian boast about digging wells and overcoming rivers appears in the parallel narrative.

Isaiah 19:5

Isaiah had spoken of waters drying up in Egypt under divine judgment.

Isaiah 19:6

Streams and canals wither under God’s authority, showing that the control Sennacherib claims actually belongs ultimately to the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Human boasting often takes credit for:

What God alone controls.

XXVI. GOD REVEALS WHO REALLY PLANNED HISTORY

Isaiah 37:26 — “Long Ago I Ordained It”

> **“Have you not heard? Long ago I ordained it. In days of old I planned it; now I have brought it to pass, that you would turn fortified cities into piles of rubble.”**

Here God corrects:

Assyria’s interpretation of history.

Assyria says:

I accomplished this.

God says:

I ordained.

I planned.

I brought it to pass.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:25

God declares that Assyria’s victories occurred within His long-established purpose.

Isaiah 46:10

God declares the end from the beginning and accomplishes His purpose according to His counsel.

Acts 15:18

God’s works are known within His purpose and are not surprises to Him.

Spiritual Principle

Success does not prove:

Independence from God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Assyria thought it was writing history.

God reveals it had been operating inside a history He already knew and governed.

XXVII. THE CONQUERED NATIONS WERE WEAK UNDER GOD’S PURPOSE

Isaiah 37:27 — Grass on the Housetop

> **“Their people, drained of power, are dismayed and put to shame. They are like plants in the field, like tender green shoots, like grass sprouting on the housetops, scorched before it grows up.”**

Assyria saw:

Easy victories.

God saw:

People permitted to become weak.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:26

The parallel passage compares defeated peoples to fragile plants and grass scorched before maturity.

Isaiah 40:6

Humanity is compared to grass and its glory to a fading flower.

Psalm 90:5

Human life is pictured as grass that flourishes briefly and then withers.

Spiritual Principle

Human power is:

More fragile.

Than empires like to admit.

XXVIII. GOD KNOWS SENNACHERIB COMPLETELY

Isaiah 37:28 — Every Movement Known

> **“But I know where you stay and when you come and go, and how you rage against Me.”**

Sennacherib gathers:

Intelligence.

Counts:

Cities.

Plans:

Routes.

God knows:

Him.

Completely.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:27

God declares complete knowledge of Sennacherib’s movements and rage.

Psalm 139:2

God knows when a person sits and rises and understands thoughts from afar.

Psalm 121:8

The Lord watches over the going out and coming in of His people.

Spiritual Principle

The one who thinks he controls:

Everything.

Is completely known by:

God.

XXIX. GOD PUTS A HOOK IN ASSYRIA

Isaiah 37:29 — The Conqueror Becomes Controlled

> **“Because you rage against Me, and because your insolence has reached My ears, I will put My hook in your nose and My bit in your mouth, and I will make you return by the way you came.’”**

Assyria had led captives:

Away.

Now God uses imagery of:

Controlling an animal.

The ruler becomes:

Ruled.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:28

God promises to turn Assyria back with a hook and bit because of its insolence.

Ezekiel 29:4

God uses hook imagery to describe His authority over proud rulers who imagine themselves powerful.

Ezekiel 38:4

God again pictures Himself controlling hostile powers with hooks and turning them according to His purpose.

Spiritual Principle

The power that drags others away can itself be:

Dragged back.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The empire that put hooks in others discovered that God held the larger hook.

XXX. GOD GIVES HEZEKIAH A SIGN

Isaiah 37:30 — Life Will Return to Normal

> **“This will be the sign for you, Hezekiah: This year you will eat what grows by itself, and the second year what springs from that. But in the third year sow and reap, plant vineyards and eat their fruit.”**

War has disrupted:

Agriculture.

Normal life.

God promises:

Recovery.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:29

The same sign promises spontaneous food followed by restored planting and harvest.

Leviticus 25:20

God had previously taught Israel to trust Him for provision during agricultural interruption.

Exodus 3:12

God sometimes confirms His promises with signs that become evident as His plan unfolds.

Spiritual Principle

Deliverance is not merely:

Surviving tonight.

God has plans for:

Future harvests.

XXXI. THE REMNANT TAKES ROOT AND BEARS FRUIT

Isaiah 37:31 — Roots Below, Fruit Above

> **“Once more a remnant of the kingdom of Judah will take root below and bear fruit above.”**

This is one of Isaiah’s great pictures.

Root:

Below.

Fruit:

Above.

Stability before:

Productivity.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:30

The surviving remnant of Judah will again take root downward and bear fruit upward.

Isaiah 27:6

Jacob will take root, Israel will blossom, and fruitfulness will spread.

Hosea 14:5

God promises restored Israel deep roots and renewed flourishing.

Spiritual Principle

Healthy fruit requires:

Deep roots.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God often rebuilds below the surface before He displays fruit above it.

XXXII. THE ZEAL OF THE LORD WILL ACCOMPLISH IT

Isaiah 37:32 — The Remnant Comes from Zion

> **“For out of Jerusalem will come a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.”**

Who accomplishes:

Restoration?

> **“The zeal of the Lord.”**

Cross References

2 Kings 19:31

The parallel account promises survivors from Zion through the Lord’s zeal.

Isaiah 9:7

The everlasting rule of the promised King is established by the zeal of the Lord Almighty.

Micah 4:7

God promises to make the remnant into a strong people under His reign.

Spiritual Principle

The remnant survives because:

God is committed.

XXXIII. ASSYRIA WILL NOT ENTER THE CITY

Isaiah 37:33 — Not Even an Arrow

> **“Therefore this is what the Lord says concerning the king of Assyria: ‘He will not enter this city or shoot an arrow here. He will not come before it with shield or build a siege ramp against it.’”**

God becomes:

Specific.

No entrance.

No arrow.

No shield.

No siege ramp.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:32

God promises that Sennacherib will not enter Jerusalem, shoot an arrow, or complete a siege against it.

2 Chronicles 32:21

The Lord destroys Assyria’s fighting strength without Jerusalem being conquered.

Isaiah 37:29

God had already declared He would turn Sennacherib back the way he came.

Spiritual Principle

God’s promises can be:

Precise.

XXXIV. SENNACHERIB WILL RETURN THE WAY HE CAME

Isaiah 37:34 — The Threat Turns Around

> **“By the way that he came he will return; he will not enter this city,’ declares the Lord.”**

The path toward:

Jerusalem.

Becomes the path:

Away from Jerusalem.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:33

God repeats that Sennacherib will return by the route he came without entering the city.

Isaiah 10:24

God had earlier told Zion not to remain controlled by fear of Assyria.

Proverbs 16:9

People plan their course, but the Lord ultimately directs their steps.

Spiritual Principle

God can reverse the direction of:

A threat.

XXXV. “I WILL DEFEND THIS CITY”

Isaiah 37:35 — God’s Name and David’s Covenant

> **“‘I will defend this city and save it, for My own sake and for the sake of My servant David.’”**

God’s deliverance rests on:

His own name.

His covenant faithfulness.

Not:

Jerusalem’s military superiority.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:34

God promises to shield and save Jerusalem for His own sake and because of His covenant with David.

Isaiah 38:6

God later repeats His promise to deliver Jerusalem from Assyria.

2 Samuel 7:12

God’s covenant with David promised an enduring royal line and kingdom according to His purpose.

Spiritual Principle

God’s faithfulness rests:

Ultimately.

On:

His own character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The strongest reason God remains faithful is not our strength but His name.

XXXVI. THE ANGEL OF THE LORD STRIKES THE ASSYRIAN CAMP

Isaiah 37:36 — 185,000 Fall

> **“Then the angel of the Lord went out and struck down 185,000 men in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning—there were all the dead bodies!”**

Jerusalem does not:

Charge out.

Win a conventional battle.

God acts.

The number emphasizes:

The scale.

The decisiveness.

Of divine intervention.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:35

The parallel account records 185,000 Assyrians struck in one night by the angel of the Lord.

2 Chronicles 32:21

The Lord sends an angel who destroys Assyria’s warriors and leaders.

Psalm 76:5

Powerful warriors are pictured lying helpless when God intervenes in judgment.

Spiritual Principle

God does not need:

Equal numbers.

To win.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Assyria counted armies.

God determined outcomes.

XXXVII. SENNACHERIB WITHDRAWS

Isaiah 37:37 — The Great King Goes Home

> **“So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp and withdrew. He returned to Nineveh and stayed there.”**

The one who came:

Confidently.

Leaves:

Defeated.

The boastful march:

Stops.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:36

Sennacherib departs and returns to Nineveh after the destruction of his army.

Jonah 1:2

Nineveh is identified as the great Assyrian city to which God later sends Jonah.

Nahum 1:1

Nahum’s prophecy later announces judgment against Nineveh itself.

Spiritual Principle

Every earthly empire eventually has to:

Go home.

XXXVIII. SENNACHERIB DIES IN THE TEMPLE OF HIS GOD

Isaiah 37:38 — The Idol Cannot Save the Worshiper

> **“One day, while he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelek and Sharezer struck him down with the sword, and they escaped to the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son succeeded him as king.”**

The irony is severe.

Sennacherib had mocked:

The living God.

He had claimed:

God could not save Jerusalem.

Then Sennacherib himself dies:

Inside the temple.

Of:

His god.

And Nisroch does not:

Save him.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:37

The parallel account records Sennacherib's assassination by his sons while worshiping Nisroch.

2 Chronicles 32:21

Sennacherib returns in disgrace and is later killed by members of his own family.

Ezra 4:2

Esarhaddon is later named as an Assyrian ruler connected with population movements in the region.

Spiritual Principle

The idol Sennacherib trusted could not protect:

Its own worshiper.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sennacherib asked:

"Can your God save you?"

His own death eventually answered:

"Can your god save you?"

XXXIX. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 37

1. Bring the Threat to God

Principle:

What frightens you should become material for prayer.

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2. Do Not Fear the Enemy's Words More Than God's Word

Principle:

Threatening speech has no authority to overturn divine promise.

---

3. Faith Admits the Facts

Hezekiah says:

> **“It is true.”**

Principle:

Faith does not require denial; it requires placing facts beneath God’s sovereignty.

---

4. Begin Prayer with Who God Is

Principle:

The size of the crisis changes when seen beside the greatness of God.

---

5. Seek Deliverance for God’s Glory

Principle:

The highest prayer asks that God’s name be known through His saving work.

---

6. God Rules History

Principle:

Assyria’s victories existed inside God’s sovereign plan, not outside it.

---

7. Pride Misreads Providence

Principle:

Being permitted to succeed does not mean God has surrendered His authority.

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8. The Remnant Will Survive

Principle:

God can preserve life, roots, fruit, and future even after devastating crisis.

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9. God Can Defend Without Human Strength

Principle:

Jerusalem was saved by divine intervention rather than superior military power.

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10. Idols Cannot Save

Principle:

The living God delivered Jerusalem; Sennacherib's god could not deliver Sennacherib.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 37 TEACHES ABOUT PRAYER

Prayer is:

Not denial.

Not escape.

Not magic.

It is:

Faithful dependence upon the sovereign God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Hezekiah did not throw away the letter.

He prayed over the letter.

XLI. WHAT ISAIAH 37 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

God’s first message is:

> **“Do not be afraid.”**

Why?

Because fear had attached:

Too much authority.

To Assyria’s words.

Spiritual Principle

Fear becomes spiritually dangerous when the enemy’s voice sounds more final than:

God’s voice.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 37 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S WORD

Rabshakeh speaks.

Sennacherib writes.

Isaiah speaks:

God’s Word.

Guess which one stands.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The loudest message is not necessarily the lasting message.

XLIII. WHAT ISAIAH 37 TEACHES ABOUT FACTS

Assyria truly had:

Conquered nations.

Destroyed idols.

Won battles.

Hezekiah never denies it.

Spiritual Principle

Facts are servants of truth.

They are not replacements for:

God.

XLIV. WHAT ISAIAH 37 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S GLORY

Hezekiah wants the world to know:

God alone is Lord.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prayer rises to maturity when God’s glory becomes greater than our comfort.

XLV. WHAT ISAIAH 37 TEACHES ABOUT HISTORY

God says:

> **“Long ago I ordained it.”**

This does not mean Assyria was innocent.

It means:

History was never outside God’s sovereign knowledge and purpose.

Spiritual Principle

Human responsibility and divine sovereignty operate together without making God the author of Assyria’s pride.

XLVI. WHAT ISAIAH 37 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

Sennacherib repeatedly says:

I.

God responds:

I ordained.

I planned.

I know.

I will turn you back.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human pride writes “I” across achievements God has permitted.

XLVII. WHAT ISAIAH 37 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S KNOWLEDGE

God knows:

Where Sennacherib stays.

When he leaves.

When he returns.

How he rages.

Spiritual Principle

Nothing about the enemy is:

Unknown to God.

XLVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 37 TEACHES ABOUT THE REMNANT

Judah’s future appears:

Small.

But not:

Dead.

The remnant will:

Root.

Fruit.

Survive.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can build tomorrow from what looks like only a remnant today.

XLIX. WHAT ISAIAH 37 TEACHES ABOUT DELIVERANCE

God’s rescue is:

Direct.

Decisive.

Unexpected.

Spiritual Principle

God is not limited to the methods we can imagine.

L. SPREAD IT BEFORE THE LORD

A letter.

Medical result.

Financial problem.

Family crisis.

Accusation.

Threat.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Whatever you keep rereading in fear may be something you need to spread before God in prayer.

LI. TORN CLOTHES BECOME PRAYER

Chapter 36 ends:

Garments torn.

Chapter 37 begins:

Hezekiah before God.

Spiritual Principle

Grief can become:

Prayer.

LII. SACKCLOTH BEFORE STRATEGY

Hezekiah humbles himself.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Humility before God is often wiser than frantic action before people.

LIII. THE DAY WITH NO STRENGTH

Hezekiah says:

The child is ready.

There is no strength.

Spiritual Principle

Human inability may become the stage for:

Divine sufficiency.

LIV. PRAY FOR THE REMNANT

Hezekiah does not assume:

Everyone will survive.

He asks for:

The remnant.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When everything cannot be saved, pray faithfully for what God intends to preserve.

LV. “DO NOT BE AFRAID OF THE WORDS”

Words can:

Enter the mind.

Create pictures.

Produce panic.

Spiritual Principle

Filter threatening words through:

God’s truth.

LVI. ANOTHER THREAT ARRIVES

After the first promise:

The enemy sends another message.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A new threat does not cancel an old promise from God.

LVII. “DO NOT LET YOUR GOD DECEIVE YOU”

This is the serpent-like accusation:

God cannot be trusted.

Spiritual Principle

Faith always involves confidence in:

God’s character.

LVIII. HEZEKIAH READS THE LETTER

He does not:

Ignore it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith faces reality before bringing reality before God.

LIX. HE SPREADS IT OUT

The physical act expresses:

Surrender.

Spiritual Principle

Some burdens become clearer when prayer says:

“Lord, here it is.”

LX. HEZEKIAH’S FIRST WORDS ARE ABOUT GOD

Not:

Sennacherib.

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The direction of prayer should move the heart from problem-centered thinking toward God-centered trust.

LXI. “YOU ALONE ARE GOD”

This is:

Theological foundation.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer becomes stronger when built on:

True doctrine.

LXII. CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

Assyria rules:

Land.

God made:

Land.

Heaven.

Everything.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never compare a created king with the Creator as though they occupy the same category.

LXIII. “IT IS TRUE”

Faith can say:

The diagnosis is true.

The debt is real.

The threat exists.

The army is strong.

Spiritual Principle

Faith does not require pretending reality is easier than it is.

LXIV. “THEY WERE NOT GODS”

Here is the difference.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The failure of idols cannot become evidence against the living God.

LXV. “SO ALL KINGDOMS MAY KNOW”

Deliverance becomes:

Witness.

Spiritual Principle

God can make private crisis become public testimony.

LXVI. “BECAUSE YOU HAVE PRAYED”

What a phrase.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God honors prayerful dependence because it acknowledges who He is and who we are.

LXVII. ASSYRIA’S “I”

I climbed.

I cut.

I reached.

I dug.

I dried.

Spiritual Principle

Pride tells the story of success without mentioning:

God.

LXVIII. GOD’S “I”

I ordained.

I planned.

I know.

I will put the hook.

I will turn you back.

I will defend.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The “I” of human pride eventually meets the “I” of divine sovereignty.

LXIX. THE HOOK IN THE NOSE

Assyria thought:

It controlled others.

Spiritual Principle

The controller remains:

Controllable.

Before God.

LXX. ROOT DOWNWARD

Before:

Fruit.

Roots.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not resent hidden seasons when God is strengthening roots.

LXXI. FRUIT UPWARD

Rooting is not:

The final goal.

Fruit:

Follows.

Spiritual Principle

God preserves us not merely to survive, but to become fruitful again.

LXXII. THE ZEAL OF THE LORD

Restoration is not dependent entirely upon:

Human enthusiasm.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s commitment to His purpose is stronger than human weakness.

LXXIII. NOT ONE ARROW

God’s promise becomes:

Specific.

Spiritual Principle

The Lord knows exactly how far the enemy will be permitted to go.

LXXIV. “I WILL DEFEND”

Jerusalem does not have to:

Make God defend it.

God announces:

His decision.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine protection rests in divine purpose.

LXXV. THE ANGEL OF THE LORD

One divine intervention changes:

The military equation.

Spiritual Principle

The balance of power is never accurately calculated if:

God is omitted.

LXXVI. THE MORNING AFTER

At night:

Assyria looks overwhelming.

In the morning:

The camp is devastated.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never assume tonight’s crisis guarantees tomorrow morning’s outcome.

LXXVII. SENNACHERIB GOES HOME

The one who said:

Jerusalem will fall.

Leaves:

Jerusalem standing.

Spiritual Principle

Boasting does not write the ending.

LXXVIII. THE GOD NISROCH COULD NOT SAVE

The irony is:

Complete.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A god that cannot protect its worshiper is not God.

LXXIX. ISAIAH 36 AND 37 TOGETHER

Isaiah 36

The enemy asks:

Can God save?

Isaiah 37

God answers:

Watch Me.

Key Truth

The question of faith in chapter 36 becomes the testimony of deliverance in chapter 37.

LXXX. EIGHT GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 37

1. Assyrian Threat → Hezekiah’s Prayer

2. Fearful Words → “Do Not Be Afraid”

3. Human Kings → Creator of Heaven and Earth

4. Dead Idols → Living God

5. Assyria’s Boasting → God’s Sovereignty

6. Siege → Deliverance

7. Weak Remnant → Rooted and Fruitful Remnant

8. Sennacherib’s Confidence → Sennacherib’s Death

Key Truth

Everything Assyria boasted in is reversed by the living God.

LXXXI. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What does Hezekiah do when he hears Rabshakeh’s words?

He tears his clothes, puts on sackcloth, and goes to the house of the Lord.

Question 2

Who does Hezekiah seek?

The prophet Isaiah.

Question 3

How does Hezekiah describe the day?

As a day of distress, rebuke, and disgrace.

Question 4

What does he ask Isaiah to do?

Pray for the remnant.

Question 5

What is God’s first word to Hezekiah?

> **“Do not be afraid.”**

Question 6

What does God promise concerning Sennacherib?

He will hear a report, return home, and eventually die by the sword.

Question 7

Does Assyria stop threatening immediately?

No.

Another threatening message is sent.

Question 8

What does Sennacherib accuse God of?

Deceiving Hezekiah.

Question 9

What does Hezekiah do with the letter?

He reads it, takes it to the Lord’s house, and spreads it before God.

Question 10

How does Hezekiah begin his prayer?

By declaring God’s sovereignty and creative power.

Question 11

Does Hezekiah deny Assyria’s victories?

No.

He says:

> **“It is true.”**

Question 12

Why were the gods of the conquered nations destroyed?

Because they were not gods but human-made idols of wood and stone.

Question 13

Why does Hezekiah ask for deliverance?

So all kingdoms may know that the Lord alone is God.

Question 14

What words introduce God’s answer?

> **“Because you have prayed to Me.”**

Question 15

What sin of Sennacherib does God particularly confront?

Pride and blasphemy.

Question 16

Who does Sennacherib think produced his victories?

Himself.

Question 17

What does God reveal?

That those events occurred within His sovereign plan.

Question 18

How thoroughly does God know Sennacherib?

He knows where he stays, when he comes and goes, and how he rages.

Question 19

What does God say He will put in Sennacherib’s nose and mouth?

A hook and bit.

Question 20

What will happen to Judah’s remnant?

It will take root below and bear fruit above.

Question 21

Who will accomplish the preservation of the remnant?

The zeal of the Lord Almighty.

Question 22

Will Assyria enter Jerusalem?

No.

Question 23

Why will God defend Jerusalem?

For His own sake and for the sake of His servant David.

Question 24

How many Assyrian soldiers are struck?

185,000.

Question 25

What does Sennacherib do afterward?

He withdraws and returns to Nineveh.

Question 26

How does Sennacherib eventually die?

His sons kill him while he is worshiping in the temple of Nisroch.

Question 27

What great irony closes the chapter?

Sennacherib mocked the living God for supposedly being unable to save Jerusalem, yet Sennacherib’s own god could not save him.

LXXXII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 37 asks several searching questions.

Where Do I Go First When I Hear Bad News?

Toward:

Panic?

People?

Internet searches?

Arguments?

Or:

God?

What Threat Do I Need to Spread Before the Lord?

A letter?

Medical concern?

Financial pressure?

Family problem?

Accusation?

Fear?

Am I Afraid of Someone’s Words?

Have I given their words more authority than:

God’s Word?

Can I Admit:

“It is true”?

Can I face reality without:

Losing faith?

Do My Prayers Begin with:

The problem?

Or:

The greatness of God?

Do I pray only for relief?

Or also:

For God’s glory?

Do I interpret success as proof that I am:

Self-sufficient?

Have I taken credit for things God:

Allowed?

Enabled?

Provided?

Do I remember that God knows exactly where the enemy:

Comes.

Goes.

Stays?

Am I rooted deeply enough to bear fruit after the crisis?

Do I believe God can defend what He has determined to preserve?

LXXXIII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Spread the Letter Before the Lord”

Hezekiah did not:

Burn it.

Hide it.

Obsess over it.

He:

Spread it before God.

Principle:

What you cannot control should become something you consciously place before the One who can.

LXXXIV. CRISIS AS A ROAD TO WORSHIP

Hezekiah hears:

Bad news.

Then goes:

To God.

Spiritual Principle

Trouble can either:

Drive us away.

Or:

Drive us deeper.

LXXXV. GOD HEARS WHAT THE ENEMY SAYS

Hezekiah says:

Listen to what Sennacherib said.

God already:

Heard.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No threat against God’s people occurs outside God’s hearing.

LXXXVI. PRAYER AND REMNANT

Hezekiah’s prayer concerns:

Those still left.

Spiritual Principle

God often does great work through:

What remains.

LXXXVII. THE FIRST ANSWER IS PEACE

Before the military miracle:

> **“Do not be afraid.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes God calms the heart before He changes the circumstances.

LXXXVIII. THE SECOND THREAT

Faith is tested:

Again.

Spiritual Principle

Receiving a promise does not guarantee the enemy will immediately stop talking.

LXXXIX. SPREAD, THEN PRAY

Hezekiah does not merely:

Lay down the letter.

He speaks:

To God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Surrender is not silence toward God.

It is honest prayer before Him.

XC. THEOLOGY IN PRAYER

Hezekiah’s prayer includes:

God’s throne.

God’s covenant identity.

God’s uniqueness.

God’s sovereignty.

God’s creation.

Spiritual Principle

Good theology strengthens:

Good prayer.

XCI. FAITH DOES NOT NEED DENIAL

Hezekiah says:

Assyria really did:

Win.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith is not calling darkness light.

It is believing God remains Lord in the darkness.

XCII. GOD’S GLORY ABOVE PERSONAL COMFORT

Hezekiah’s prayer reaches:

Mission.

Witness.

Spiritual Principle

Deliverance becomes greater when it magnifies:

God.

XCIII. THE GOD WHO HEARS PRAYER

God says:

> **“Because you have prayed.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prayer is not wasted breath before an indifferent God.

XCIV. THE PRIDE OF SENNACHERIB

His entire worldview is:

Self-centered.

Spiritual Principle

Pride forgets:

Source.

Limits.

Accountability.

XCV. GOD’S SOVEREIGN PLAN

God says:

Long ago.

I planned.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

History never catches God:

Off guard.

XCVI. FULLY KNOWN BY GOD

Sennacherib knows:

Maps.

God knows:

Sennacherib.

Spiritual Principle

God knows not only:

Events.

But:

People.

Motives.

Movements.

XCVII. THE HOOK AND BIT

This imagery destroys:

Assyrian arrogance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The king who thought nations were animals to control discovers he also exists under a higher Master.

XCVIII. THE SIGN OF NORMAL LIFE

Sow.

Reap.

Plant.

Eat.

Spiritual Principle

Sometimes one of God’s greatest gifts after crisis is:

Ordinary life restored.

XCIX. ROOTS AND FRUIT

The order remains:

Root.

Then:

Fruit.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Crisis survival should become post-crisis spiritual depth.

C. THE ZEAL THAT ACCOMPLISHES

God’s zeal means:

He is not passive about His promise.

Spiritual Principle

God is more committed to His righteous purposes than we are capable of being.

CI. THE ENEMY’S LIMIT

Not one arrow.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The enemy may approach, but God still determines the boundary.

CII. FOR MY OWN SAKE

God’s name is:

At stake.

Spiritual Principle

The final security of God’s promise rests in:

God.

CIII. ONE NIGHT

Assyria took years to build:

Power.

One night changes:

Everything.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can undo in one moment what human pride spent years constructing.

CIV. THE GREAT KING RETREATS

Isaiah 36 called:

Sennacherib.

The great king.

Isaiah 37 shows:

The greater King.

Spiritual Principle

Human greatness shrinks when God enters the comparison.

CV. DEATH IN THE IDOL TEMPLE

Sennacherib’s final scene is:

Tragic.

Ironic.

The man who mocked:

God.

Dies beside:

An idol.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What we worship reveals where we expect salvation to come from.

CVI. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 37

1. Hezekiah Seeks the Lord

The threat becomes prayer.

2. God Says “Do Not Be Afraid”

Divine promise answers human fear.

3. Assyria Threatens Again

Faith is tested a second time.

4. Hezekiah Spreads the Letter Before God

Fear is converted into prayer.

5. God Exposes Assyria’s Pride

History is revealed as being under divine sovereignty.

6. God Promises a Rooted Remnant

Judah will survive and bear fruit again.

7. God Defeats Sennacherib

The army falls, the king retreats, and his own idol cannot save him.

Key Truth

Isaiah 37 moves from threatened faith to prayer, from prayer to divine answer, from Assyrian boasting to divine sovereignty, and from apparent defeat to miraculous deliverance.

CVII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 37 is a chapter for people who have:

Received the letter.

You know what that means.

Something has arrived that you did not want:

A diagnosis.

A notice.

An accusation.

A financial crisis.

A family problem.

A threat.

Bad news.

A situation that says:

There is no way out.

Hezekiah received:

The letter.

He read it.

Then:

Went to God.

That is the pattern.

Read:

Reality.

Then:

Pray.

Do not pretend:

The letter does not exist.

Do not pretend:

Assyria is weak.

Hezekiah says:

“It is true.”

Assyria really had destroyed:

Nations.

But then Hezekiah remembers the difference.

Their gods were:

Wood.

Stone.

The work of:

Human hands.

But:

The Lord.

Made heaven and earth.

That is faith.

Not denying:

Facts.

But placing facts under:

A greater truth.

Then Hezekiah spreads the letter:

Before the Lord.

Perhaps that is exactly what some burdens need.

Stop spreading them:

Around your mind.

Again.

Again.

Again.

Spread them:

Before God.

Then listen to how Hezekiah prays.

He begins:

Not with Sennacherib.

But:

God.

“You alone are God.”

That is where prayer finds:

Stability.

The crisis may be:

Large.

But:

God is larger.

Then comes God’s answer:

“Because you have prayed to Me.”

Prayer matters.

Not because prayer:

Manipulates God.

But because prayer places us in:

Dependence.

Faith.

Worship.

Then God exposes Sennacherib.

All those:

“I” statements.

I climbed.

I cut.

I reached.

I dug.

God answers:

I planned.

I ordained.

I know.

I will turn you back.

There is the difference between:

Human pride.

Divine sovereignty.

Then God tells Hezekiah:

The remnant will:

Take root below.

Bear fruit above.

Maybe that is where you are.

You survived:

The crisis.

Now God wants:

Roots.

Then:

Fruit.

And finally the impossible happens.

185,000.

Gone.

Sennacherib:

Withdraws.

Jerusalem:

Standing.

The great king:

Returns home.

And eventually dies in the temple of:

His powerless god.

The final irony is unforgettable.

The man who asked:

Can your God save you?

Should have asked:

Can my god save me?

So when the threatening letter arrives:

Do not let it become:

Your god.

Do not let it tell you:

What God can do.

Do not let the enemy define:

The future.

Take it.

Read it.

Spread it.

Pray.

Remember who God is.

Admit what is true.

Reject what is false.

Ask for God’s glory.

Wait for His answer.

And remember:

The God who knew every movement of Sennacherib knows:

Exactly where you are.

Exactly what is coming.

Exactly what He will preserve.

Exactly when He will arise.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

When threatening words arrive:

Teach us to come:

To You.

When our hearts are distressed:

Do not let us run first toward:

Fear.

Panic.

Human strength.

Bring us into:

Your presence.

Father, give us courage to spread every burden:

Before You.

Every letter.

Every fear.

Every crisis.

Every impossible situation.

Help us pray like Hezekiah.

Remind us that:

You alone are God.

You rule all kingdoms.

You created:

Heaven.

Earth.

Everything.

Father, give us faith that can say:

“It is true.”

Without surrendering to:

Despair.

Help us face reality while remembering:

Reality is still under Your authority.

Thank You that You hear:

Prayer.

Thank You that no threat escapes:

Your attention.

Thank You that You know:

Where the enemy stays.

Where he comes.

Where he goes.

Father, expose pride.

Expose every false god.

Teach us not to boast in:

Strength.

Success.

Position.

Achievement.

Help us remember that every ability we possess remains under:

Your sovereignty.

Father, make us like the remnant.

Let us:

Take root below.

Bear fruit above.

After every crisis:

Deepen our roots.

Increase our fruit.

Thank You for defending Your name.

Thank You for keeping Your promises.

Thank You that no Assyria is:

Greater than You.

No army is:

Too numerous.

No situation:

Too complicated.

No threat:

Too loud.

No letter:

Too frightening.

For the God who delivered Jerusalem is still:

Sovereign.

Faithful.

Holy.

Powerful.

Teach us to trust You.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers, read it, then went up to the house of the Lord and spread it out before the Lord.” — Isaiah 37:14**

Central Truth

When Hezekiah received Assyria’s threats, he carried them into God’s presence and prayed; the Lord answered by revealing His sovereign control over history, exposing Sennacherib’s arrogance, preserving Judah’s remnant, defending Jerusalem for His own name’s sake, destroying the Assyrian army, and proving that the living God alone—not human strength or powerless idols—rules the kingdoms of the earth.

Isaiah 37 in One Sentence

Isaiah records Hezekiah responding to Assyria’s renewed threats by seeking the Lord, spreading Sennacherib’s letter before God, and praying for deliverance and God’s glory, after which the Lord exposes Assyria’s pride, declares His sovereign control over its victories, promises that Judah’s remnant will take root and bear fruit, miraculously destroys the Assyrian army, sends Sennacherib back to Nineveh, and ultimately proves the helplessness of the idol in whose temple the boastful king is killed.

Isaiah Chapter 38 — Hezekiah’s Illness, Prayer, and Healing

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 38 moves from:

National crisis.

To:

Personal crisis.

In Isaiah 36 and 37, Hezekiah faced:

Sennacherib.

Assyria.

Military invasion.

Threats against Jerusalem.

Now the enemy is not outside:

The city.

It is inside:

Hezekiah’s own body.

He becomes:

Sick.

And not merely:

Ill.

He is told:

> **“You will die and not live.”**

This is one of the most personal chapters in Isaiah.

The king who had prayed for:

Jerusalem.

Must now pray for:

Himself.

The man who saw God deliver a city must now seek God for:

His own life.

The chapter teaches us that even faithful people experience:

Sickness.

Fear.

Tears.

Questions.

Anguish.

The biblical picture of faith is not emotional numbness.

Hezekiah:

Turns to the wall.

Prays.

Weeps bitterly.

God does not rebuke him for:

Tears.

Instead God says:

> **“I have heard your prayer and seen your tears.”**

That statement is deeply important.

God hears:

Words.

God sees:

Tears.

Then the Lord promises:

Fifteen additional years.

Deliverance from Assyria.

Protection for Jerusalem.

And a sign.

The shadow on the sundial of Ahaz moves:

Backward.

This miraculous sign confirms that the God who controls:

Time.

Light.

Shadow.

History.

Can also fulfill His promise concerning:

Hezekiah’s life.

The middle of the chapter contains Hezekiah’s personal writing after his recovery.

It is not merely:

A medical report.

It is:

A spiritual reflection.

Hezekiah looks back upon:

The nearness of death.

The fragility of life.

The anguish of illness.

The mercy of God.

The forgiveness of sin.

The responsibility of the living to:

Praise.

He says:

> **“Surely it was for my peace that I had such great bitterness.”**

That is one of the chapter’s great paradoxes.

Bitterness became:

Peace.

Suffering became:

Instruction.

Illness became:

Humility.

Tears became:

Testimony.

Then Hezekiah declares:

> **“You have cast all my sins behind Your back.”**

The chapter therefore moves beyond:

Physical healing.

It reaches toward:

Spiritual gratitude.

Forgiveness.

Renewed worship.

Hezekiah understands that added years are not merely:

More time.

They are:

More opportunity to praise God.

The chapter ends with:

A practical treatment.

A poultice of figs.

And:

A confirming sign.

Isaiah 38 therefore beautifully holds together:

Prayer.

Divine intervention.

Human means.

Sign.

Worship.

The central truth of Isaiah 38 is:

When Hezekiah faced death, he turned to the Lord in prayer and tears; God heard him, extended his life, confirmed His promise with a miraculous sign, and transformed a season of bitter suffering into deeper humility, gratitude, praise, and renewed awareness of divine forgiveness.

I. HEZEKIAH BECOMES MORTALLY ILL

Isaiah 38:1 — “Put Your House in Order”

> **“In those days King Hezekiah became sick to the point of death. Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, came to him and said, ‘This is what the Lord says: Put your house in order, for you will die and not live.’”**

The message is:

Direct.

Serious.

Final-sounding.

Hezekiah is told to prepare:

His household.

His affairs.

His heart.

Death has entered:

The palace.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:1

The parallel account records Hezekiah becoming deathly ill and Isaiah telling him to put his house in order because death was near.

2 Chronicles 32:24

Hezekiah became seriously ill and prayed to the Lord, who answered him and gave him a sign.

Ecclesiastes 8:8

No human being has complete control over the day of death or power to hold back mortality by his own strength.

Spiritual Principle

Kings and common people share one unavoidable reality:

Mortality.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Power can organize a kingdom.

It cannot command death to wait.

II. HEZEKIAH TURNS TO THE WALL AND PRAYS

Isaiah 38:2 — Prayer in Private Anguish

> **“Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord.”**

This is intimate.

Hezekiah turns:

Away from people.

Toward:

God.

Perhaps the wall gave him:

Privacy.

Focus.

Space for:

Prayer.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:2

Hezekiah turns his face to the wall and prays when he receives the message concerning his death.

1 Kings 8:22

Solomon stood before the Lord and prayed, showing the long biblical pattern of bringing urgent matters directly before God.

James 5:13

Those who suffer are instructed to pray, making prayer the proper response to distress.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer may begin when there is:

Nothing else to say to people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When you reach the wall, turn it into a place of prayer.

III. HEZEKIAH WEEPS BITTERLY

Isaiah 38:3 — Faithfulness, Memory, and Tears

> **“He said, ‘Remember now, O Lord, I beg You, how I have walked before You faithfully and with a sincere heart, and how I have done what is good in Your sight.’ And Hezekiah wept bitterly.”**

Hezekiah appeals to:

His covenant faithfulness.

His sincerity.

His past walk with God.

This should not be understood as:

Claiming sinless perfection.

Rather, Hezekiah is appealing honestly to the general direction of:

His life.

Then:

He weeps.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:3

The parallel account records Hezekiah reminding God of his faithful walk and then weeping deeply.

Nehemiah 13:14

Nehemiah similarly asks God to remember his faithful service and acts done for God’s house.

Psalm 116:9

The psalmist celebrates walking before the Lord in the land of the living.

Spiritual Principle

Tears are not:

The opposite of faith.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith can weep and still pray.

IV. THE WORD OF THE LORD COMES AGAIN

Isaiah 38:4 — God Is Not Silent

> **“Then the word of the Lord came to Isaiah, saying,”**

The previous word was:

Death.

Now another word comes.

God’s communication continues.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:4

Before Isaiah had gone far, God gave him another message for Hezekiah.

Isaiah 37:6

In the previous crisis, God had also spoken through Isaiah with a direct answer to Hezekiah’s fear.

Jeremiah 1:4

The prophetic pattern repeatedly begins with the Word of the Lord coming to His chosen messenger.

Spiritual Principle

The first word you hear in a crisis may not be:

The last word God speaks.

V. GOD HEARS PRAYER AND SEES TEARS

Isaiah 38:5 — Fifteen More Years

> **“Go and tell Hezekiah, This is what the Lord, the God of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life.”**

What a tender response.

God says:

I heard.

I saw.

Prayer:

Heard.

Tears:

Seen.

Life:

Extended.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:5

God tells Hezekiah that He has heard his prayer, seen his tears, and will heal him.

2 Chronicles 32:24

Hezekiah prayed during his illness, and the Lord answered and gave him a confirming sign.

Psalm 6:9

The psalmist expresses confidence that the Lord has heard his cry for mercy and received his prayer.

Spiritual Principle

God is aware of both:

The prayer you speak.

The grief you cannot fully express.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Tears are silent words God knows how to read.

VI. HEALING AND NATIONAL DELIVERANCE ARE BOTH PROMISED

Isaiah 38:6 — God Defends the King and the City

> **“I will also deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city.”**

God’s promise reaches:

Hezekiah.

Jerusalem.

The personal and national crisis are connected.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:6

God promises to extend Hezekiah’s life and protect Jerusalem from Assyria.

Isaiah 37:35

God had already declared that He would defend and save Jerusalem for His own sake.

2 Kings 19:34

The parallel account records God’s promise to defend Jerusalem according to His covenant purpose.

Spiritual Principle

God can address:

More than one crisis at once.

VII. GOD GIVES A SIGN

Isaiah 38:7 — Confirmation of the Promise

> **“This will be the sign to you from the Lord, that He will do what He has promised:”**

The sign is not:

The promise itself.

It confirms:

The promise.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:8

Hezekiah asks what sign will confirm that the Lord will heal him.

2 Kings 20:9

Isaiah offers a sign involving movement of the shadow.

Judges 6:17

Gideon also asks for a sign to confirm that the Lord has truly spoken.

Spiritual Principle

God sometimes gives confirmation to strengthen:

Weak faith.

VIII. THE SHADOW MOVES BACKWARD

Isaiah 38:8 — God Demonstrates His Power

> **“I will cause the shadow on the sundial of Ahaz to go back ten steps.’ So the sun’s shadow went back ten steps on the dial it had already descended.”**

The sign is:

Extraordinary.

The normal movement of the shadow is:

Reversed.

Whatever precise mechanism God used, the point of the text is:

The sign was miraculous.

And unmistakable to:

Hezekiah.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:9

Hezekiah is offered a sign involving the movement of the shadow.

2 Kings 20:11

Isaiah calls upon the Lord, and the shadow moves backward as confirmation of the divine promise.

Joshua 10:13

Earlier Scripture also records an extraordinary act involving the sun during God’s intervention for Israel.

Spiritual Principle

The God who governs time and creation can confirm:

His Word.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The shadow may move according to ordinary patterns, but the Lord remains Master over the pattern.

IX. HEZEKIAH WRITES AFTER RECOVERY

Isaiah 38:9 — Suffering Becomes Testimony

> **“This is the writing of Hezekiah king of Judah after he had been sick and recovered from his illness:”**

Hezekiah does not merely:

Recover.

He reflects.

He writes.

His suffering becomes:

Testimony.

Cross References

2 Chronicles 32:24

Hezekiah’s illness, prayer, and sign are recorded as major events in his reign.

Psalm 102:1

A sufferer pours out his complaint before the Lord, showing that suffering can become written prayer.

Habakkuk 3:1

Prophetic prayer was preserved in written form so later generations could learn from it.

Spiritual Principle

What God teaches you in suffering may become:

Help for others.

X. HEZEKIAH FEELS DEPRIVED OF HIS YEARS

Isaiah 38:10 — Death in the Prime of Life

> **“I said, In the prime of my life I must go to the gates of the grave; I am deprived of the rest of my years.”**

Hezekiah feels:

Life cut short.

Years taken.

Future lost.

Cross References

Psalm 102:24

The psalmist asks God not to take him away in the middle of his days.

Psalm 88:3

A suffering soul feels close to death and overwhelmed by the grave.

Job 17:16

Job describes hope descending toward the dust and the grave.

Spiritual Principle

Mortality can make:

Future plans.

Feel suddenly fragile.

XI. HEZEKIAH GRIEVES LOSING LIFE AMONG THE LIVING

Isaiah 38:11 — Separation from the Living World

> **“I said, I will not see the Lord in the land of the living; I will look on mankind no more among the inhabitants of the world.”**

Hezekiah’s Old Testament perspective emphasizes:

Life among God’s covenant people.

Public worship.

The visible world.

His concern should not be forced into a complete statement about:

The afterlife.

Rather, he grieves losing his place among:

The living.

Cross References

Psalm 27:13

The psalmist expects to see the Lord’s goodness in the land of the living.

Psalm 116:9

The rescued worshiper rejoices in continuing to walk before the Lord among the living.

Psalm 142:5

God is confessed as refuge and portion in the land of the living.

Spiritual Principle

Life is a gift because it gives opportunity to:

Know.

Serve.

Worship.

XII. LIFE IS LIKE A TENT AND A WEAVER’S WORK

Isaiah 38:12 — Human Life Is Temporary

> **“My dwelling is pulled up and removed from me like a shepherd’s tent. I have rolled up my life like a weaver; He cuts me off from the loom. Day and night You bring me to an end.”**

Two images:

Tent.

Weaving.

A tent can be:

Taken down.

A woven piece can be:

Cut from the loom.

Human life feels:

Fragile.

Temporary.

Cross References

Job 7:6

Job says his days move quickly like a weaver’s shuttle.

2 Corinthians 5:1

Paul later compares the mortal body to an earthly tent that will one day be taken down.

Psalm 90:5

Human life passes quickly like grass that appears and then fades.

Spiritual Principle

Life is not:

Permanent possession.

It is:

Entrusted time.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Live carefully because the tent is temporary.

XIII. HEZEKIAH DESCRIBES THE PAIN OF ILLNESS

Isaiah 38:13 — Bones Broken Like by a Lion

> **“I cried out until morning; like a lion He breaks all my bones. Day and night You bring me to an end.”**

The suffering feels:

Violent.

Relentless.

Overwhelming.

Hezekiah attributes even this painful season ultimately to:

God’s sovereign hand.

Cross References

Psalm 22:14

Severe suffering is described as bones being out of joint and strength melting away.

Lamentations 3:4

The sufferer describes body and bones wasting under affliction.

Job 10:16

Job uses lion imagery to describe the overwhelming severity of suffering under God’s providence.

Spiritual Principle

The Bible does not sanitize:

Pain.

XIV. HEZEKIAH MOANS AND LOOKS UPWARD

Isaiah 38:14 — “Be My Security”

> **“I chirped like a swallow, I moaned like a dove. My eyes grew weak from looking upward. O Lord, I am oppressed—be my security!”**

His prayer becomes:

Simple.

Almost exhausted.

> **“Be my security.”**

Cross References

Psalm 69:3

The sufferer becomes exhausted from crying and waiting for God.

Isaiah 59:11

Mourning is compared to the sound of bears and doves in deep distress.

Psalm 102:7

The afflicted person experiences loneliness and weakness while remaining awake in sorrow.

Spiritual Principle

Sometimes the strongest prayer is:

A short one.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When you cannot explain everything, you can still say:

“Lord, be my security.”

XV. SUFFERING TEACHES HEZEKIAH HUMILITY

Isaiah 38:15 — Walking Humbly After Anguish

> **“What shall I say? He has spoken to me, and He Himself has done this. I will walk humbly all my years because of this anguish of my soul.”**

Hezekiah looks back and sees:

God’s sovereignty.

His response is:

Humility.

Not:

Bitterness.

Cross References

Psalm 39:9

The psalmist submits in silence because he recognizes God’s hand within his experience.

Psalm 119:75

The psalmist acknowledges that God’s judgments are right and that affliction can occur within divine faithfulness.

1 Samuel 3:18

Eli responds to a hard word by acknowledging the Lord’s authority to do what is right in His sight.

Spiritual Principle

Suffering can produce:

Humility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A healed body is good.

A humbled heart may be an even deeper gift.

XVI. GOD RESTORES LIFE

Isaiah 38:16 — Health Restored

> **“Lord, by such things people live, and in all these is the life of my spirit. You restored me to health and let me live.”**

Hezekiah recognizes:

Life comes from God.

His restored health is not merely:

Medical recovery.

It becomes:

Spiritual realization.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 8:3

Human beings do not live by bread alone but by everything proceeding from the Lord.

Psalm 30:2

The psalmist cries to the Lord and praises Him for healing.

Matthew 4:4

Jesus affirms that true life depends ultimately upon the Word of God, not merely material provision.

Spiritual Principle

Life is sustained by more than:

Physical means.

It rests ultimately in:

God.

XVII. BITTERNESS BECOMES PEACE

Isaiah 38:17 — Love Behind Deliverance

> **“Surely it was for my peace that I had such great bitterness; but in love You have delivered my soul from the pit of destruction; for You have cast all my sins behind Your back.”**

This is one of the chapter’s greatest verses.

Hezekiah interprets:

Bitterness.

Through:

Peace.

And:

Love.

Then he celebrates:

Forgiveness.

Cross References

Psalm 103:12

God removes transgressions from His people as far as east is from west.

Micah 7:19

God casts sins into the depths of the sea in a picture of complete forgiveness.

Psalm 30:3

The Lord brings His servant up from the grave and restores life from the brink of death.

Spiritual Principle

God can bring:

Peace.

Through:

Bitterness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some of the bitterest chapters of life may eventually be read through the lens of God’s love.

XVIII. “YOU HAVE CAST ALL MY SINS BEHIND YOUR BACK”

This is beautiful forgiveness imagery.

God places sin:

Behind.

Not:

Before His face.

The verse communicates:

Removal.

Forgiveness.

No longer held against the forgiven person.

Spiritual Principle

Forgiveness does not merely:

Reduce guilt.

It removes guilt before God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God puts forgiven sin behind His back, do not keep dragging it back in front of your face.

XIX. THE GRAVE DOES NOT PRAISE AS THE LIVING DO

Isaiah 38:18 — Hezekiah’s Old Testament Perspective

> **“For the grave cannot praise You, death cannot celebrate You; those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Your truth.”**

Hezekiah emphasizes:

Public praise among the living.

This should not be treated as a denial of all conscious existence beyond death.

The fuller revelation of Scripture develops:

Resurrection.

Presence with God.

Eternal life.

Here Hezekiah is expressing the Old Testament lament that death removes a person from:

Earthly worship.

Public testimony.

Family instruction.

Cross References

Psalm 6:5

The psalmist asks how he can publicly remember and praise God from the grave.

Psalm 115:17

Those who descend into silence no longer participate in earthly public praise.

Ecclesiastes 9:10

People are urged to work faithfully while alive because earthly opportunities end at death.

Spiritual Principle

Life contains opportunities that should not be:

Wasted.

XX. THE LIVING PRAISE GOD

Isaiah 38:19 — Tell the Next Generation

> **“The living, the living—they will praise You, as I do this day; fathers will make Your faithfulness known to their children.”**

Healing creates:

Responsibility.

Hezekiah has more years.

What should he do with them?

Praise.

Teach.

Tell the next generation.

Cross References

Psalm 145:4

One generation is called to praise God’s works to another and declare His mighty acts.

Deuteronomy 6:7

Parents are commanded to teach God’s words diligently to their children throughout daily life.

Psalm 71:18

The psalmist asks for continued life so he can declare God’s strength and power to the next generation.

Spiritual Principle

Extended life should become:

Extended testimony.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If God gives you more days, give those days a purpose.

XXI. THE LORD WAS READY TO SAVE

Isaiah 38:20 — Healing Becomes Worship

> **“The Lord was ready to save me, so we will sing my songs with stringed instruments all the days of our lives in the house of the Lord.”**

Hezekiah’s response to healing is:

Worship.

His added years will include:

Songs.

Temple.

Praise.

Cross References

Psalm 27:4

David longs to dwell in the Lord’s house and gaze upon His beauty.

Psalm 150:4

God is praised with instruments and joyful music.

Psalm 116:19

The psalmist praises the Lord in the courts of His house.

Spiritual Principle

Deliverance should produce:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A healed life should become a praising life.

XXII. THE FIG POULTICE IS APPLIED

Isaiah 38:21 — God Uses Means

> **“Now Isaiah had said, ‘Prepare a poultice of figs, and apply it to the boil, and he will recover.’”**

This is important.

God had promised:

Healing.

Yet He also uses:

A practical treatment.

Prayer and means are not:

Enemies.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:7

Isaiah instructs that a fig poultice be applied, and Hezekiah recovers.

James 5:14

The sick are instructed to seek prayer from church elders with accompanying anointing in the Lord's name.

2 Chronicles 32:24

Hezekiah's illness and recovery remain ultimately connected to God's answer.

Spiritual Principle

Trusting God does not require:

Rejecting ordinary means.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pray to God and use the means He providentially supplies.

XXIII. HEZEKIAH ASKS FOR A SIGN

Isaiah 38:22 — Assurance Concerning Worship

> **"And Hezekiah had asked, 'What is the sign that I will go up to the house of the Lord?'"**

Hezekiah's desired destination after healing is:

The house of the Lord.

He wants:

Confirmation.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:8

Hezekiah asks for a sign that the Lord will heal him and allow him to return to worship.

Judges 6:39

Gideon asks God for additional confirmation during a moment of weakness and uncertainty.

John 20:25

Thomas seeks visible confirmation before believing the report of Christ’s resurrection, illustrating the human struggle for assurance.

Spiritual Principle

The desired outcome of healing should include:

Renewed worship.

XXIV. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 38

1. Mortality Comes Even to the Faithful

Principle:

Faith does not make us immune to sickness or death.

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2. Prayer Is the Right Response to Distress

Principle:

When life closes in, turn toward God.

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3. God Sees Tears

Principle:

Human grief is visible to heaven.

4. God Can Answer Beyond Expectation

Principle:

Hezekiah asked for mercy and received fifteen additional years.

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5. Signs Confirm God’s Word

Principle:

The backward-moving shadow strengthened confidence in the promise.

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6. Suffering Can Produce Humility

Principle:

Hezekiah determined to walk humbly after his anguish.

---

7. Bitterness Can Become Peace

Principle:

God can use painful experiences for deeper spiritual good.

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8. God Forgives Completely

Principle:

Forgiven sins are pictured as cast behind God’s back.

---

9. Life Is for Praise

Principle:

Added years should become added worship.

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10. Faith and Practical Means Can Work Together

Principle:

The Lord promised healing and also used a fig poultice.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 38 TEACHES ABOUT SICKNESS

Sickness can reach:

Kings.

Faithful people.

Praying people.

Spiritual Principle

Illness is not automatic proof of:

Personal unfaithfulness.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 38 TEACHES ABOUT PRAYER

Hezekiah:

Turns.

Prays.

Weeps.

God:

Hears.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prayer is not merely for national crises like Isaiah 37.

It belongs in personal pain too.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 38 TEACHES ABOUT TEARS

God says:

> **“I have seen your tears.”**

Spiritual Principle

Tears do not need:

Translation.

Before God.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 38 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S COMPASSION

God responds to:

Hezekiah’s distress.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who rules nations also notices one sick man’s tears.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 38 TEACHES ABOUT TIME

Hezekiah receives:

Fifteen years.

Time becomes:

Gift.

Spiritual Principle

Every added day should be treated as:

Stewardship.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 38 TEACHES ABOUT SIGNS

The sign serves:

God’s promise.

It does not replace:

God’s Word.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Signs are safest when they confirm revelation rather than become substitutes for revelation.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 38 TEACHES ABOUT SUFFERING

Hezekiah describes:

Anguish.

Pain.

Weakness.

But later sees:

Purpose.

Spiritual Principle

We often understand suffering more clearly:

After.

Than:

During.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 38 TEACHES ABOUT HUMILITY

Hezekiah says:

“I will walk humbly.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A crisis should leave us softer before God, not merely relieved.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 38 TEACHES ABOUT FORGIVENESS

God casts:

Sins.

Behind His back.

Spiritual Principle

Healing of the body is temporary if the soul remains:

Unforgiven.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 38 TEACHES ABOUT PRAISE

Hezekiah wants:

More life.

Then recognizes:

Life is for praise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The right response to spared life is surrendered worship.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 38 TEACHES ABOUT GENERATIONS

Fathers should make:

God’s faithfulness.

Known to:

Children.

Spiritual Principle

Testimony becomes inheritance when passed to the next generation.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 38 TEACHES ABOUT MEDICAL MEANS

The fig poultice is used.

Spiritual Principle

God’s sovereignty and ordinary treatment are compatible.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may heal miraculously, providentially, medically, or through combinations of means He chooses.

XXXVII. “PUT YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER”

This command deserves attention.

Death should produce:

Preparation.

Spiritual Principle

Wise people live prepared to:

Meet God.

Leave responsibilities in order.

Value relationships properly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not wait for a death sentence before putting spiritual and practical matters in order.

XXXVIII. TURNING TO THE WALL

The wall removes:

Distractions.

Spiritual Principle

Sometimes faith needs:

A private place.

XXXIX. THE BITTER WEEPING KING

Hezekiah is not too:

Powerful.

Masculine.

Important.

To:

Cry.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Strong faith does not require pretending pain does not hurt.

XL. “I HAVE HEARD”

Prayer reached:

Heaven.

Spiritual Principle

God’s silence should never automatically be interpreted as:

God not hearing.

XLI. “I HAVE SEEN”

The Lord saw:

Tears.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There are prayers God sees before we can properly say them.

XLII. FIFTEEN YEARS

Specific grace.

Specific time.

Spiritual Principle

God knows the exact number of days:

He gives.

XLIII. THE SHADOW GOES BACK

God gives an unmistakable sign.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Time moves forward for us, but time itself remains under God’s authority.

XLIV. WRITING AFTER SUFFERING

Hezekiah records:

What happened.

Spiritual Principle

Do not waste the lessons of recovery by:

Forgetting them.

XLV. THE PRIME OF LIFE

Hezekiah feels death came:

Too early.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Our timetable and God’s sovereignty do not always feel alike.

XLVI. THE SHEPHERD’S TENT

A tent is:

Useful.

Temporary.

Spiritual Principle

Human life is a dwelling:

For a season.

XLVII. THE WEAVER’S LOOM

Life is:

Woven.

Then:

Cut.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We see threads.

God sees the whole pattern.

XLVIII. THE LION-LIKE PAIN

Hezekiah’s suffering is:

Severe.

Spiritual Principle

Scripture gives believers permission to describe pain:

Honestly.

XLIX. “BE MY SECURITY”

A beautiful short prayer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When everything else feels insecure, ask God not merely for security—but to be your security.

L. “HE HIMSELF HAS DONE THIS”

Hezekiah sees:

God’s sovereignty.

Spiritual Principle

Recognizing God’s sovereignty should lead toward:

Humility.

Not:

Fatalism.

LI. “BY SUCH THINGS PEOPLE LIVE”

Suffering taught:

Life’s dependence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some truths become more vivid when suffering moves them from doctrine into experience.

LII. BITTERNESS FOR PEACE

This is:

Paradox.

Spiritual Principle

God can use what felt against us to accomplish something:

For us.

LIII. “IN LOVE YOU DELIVERED ME”

Hezekiah interprets deliverance through:

Love.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not define God’s love only by whether hardship was prevented.

Sometimes love is revealed in what He brings us through.

LIV. SINS BEHIND GOD’S BACK

What a picture.

Spiritual Principle

Forgiveness means the forgiven person does not stand perpetually beneath:

The old charge.

LV. THE LIVING PRAISE

Hezekiah realizes:

Life equals opportunity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every morning you are alive is another day to make God’s faithfulness known.

LVI. FATHERS TEACH CHILDREN

Personal deliverance becomes:

Family testimony.

Spiritual Principle

Do not let the next generation hear only:

What happened.

Tell them:

What God did.

LVII. SONGS ALL OUR DAYS

Healing ends in:

Music.

Worship.

Temple.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace deserves more than relief.

It deserves praise.

LVIII. PRAYER AND POULTICE

Prayer:

Spiritual dependence.

Poultice:

Practical means.

Both appear in:

The same story.

Spiritual Principle

Faith does not need to choose between:

God.

And:

Proper means God may use.

LIX. THE SIGN AND THE HOUSE OF THE LORD

Hezekiah asks:

Will I worship again?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The best recovery plan includes returning to faithful worship, not merely returning to normal life.

LX. ISAIAH 37 AND ISAIAH 38 TOGETHER

In Isaiah 37:

Hezekiah spreads:

A threatening letter.

In Isaiah 38:

Hezekiah turns:

His face to the wall.

One crisis is:

National.

The other:

Personal.

In both:

He prays.

Key Truth

The God who hears prayer in national crisis also hears prayer in private sickness.

LXI. SEVEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 38

1. Death Sentence → Extended Life

2. Bitter Tears → Heard Prayer

3. Illness → Healing

4. Fear of the Grave → Praise Among the Living

5. Bitterness → Peace

6. Sin → Forgiveness

7. Suffering → Worship

Key Truth

God transforms Hezekiah's season of death, fear, anguish, and bitterness into life, humility, forgiveness, praise, and renewed testimony.

LXII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What happened to Hezekiah?

He became sick to the point of death.

Question 2

What did Isaiah tell him?

To put his house in order because he would die.

Question 3

What did Hezekiah do?

He turned his face to the wall and prayed.

Question 4

What else did Hezekiah do?

He wept bitterly.

Question 5

How did God respond?

He said He had heard Hezekiah’s prayer and seen his tears.

Question 6

How many years were added to Hezekiah’s life?

Fifteen years.

Question 7

What additional promise did God give?

He would defend Hezekiah and Jerusalem from Assyria.

Question 8

What sign did God provide?

The shadow moved backward ten steps on the sundial of Ahaz.

Question 9

What did Hezekiah do after recovering?

He wrote a reflection on his illness and healing.

Question 10

How did Hezekiah describe the nearness of death?

As being deprived of the rest of his years and approaching the gates of the grave.

Question 11

What images did he use for life?

A shepherd’s tent and a weaver’s work.

Question 12

What simple prayer did he make during distress?

> **“O Lord, I am oppressed—be my security!”**

Question 13

What did suffering produce in him?

Humility.

Question 14

How did he interpret his bitterness afterward?

As something God used for his peace.

Question 15

How did he describe God’s forgiveness?

As God casting his sins behind His back.

Question 16

What did Hezekiah say the living should do?

Praise God.

Question 17

What should fathers do?

Tell their children about God’s faithfulness.

Question 18

What practical means was used in his healing?

A poultice of figs.

Question 19

What did Hezekiah ask for?

A sign confirming that he would return to the house of the Lord.

Question 20

What is one central message of the chapter?

Prayerful dependence upon God can transform sickness and suffering into deeper humility, testimony, praise, and awareness of His mercy.

LXIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 38 asks several searching questions.

Is My House in Order?

Spiritually?

Relationally?

Practically?

Where Do I Turn When I Receive Bad News?

Toward:

Panic?

People?

Or:

Prayer?

Am I Willing to Weep Before God?

Or do I think faith requires hiding:

Grief?

Do I believe God sees:

My tears?

If God gave me fifteen more years, how would I use them?

What would change?

What would matter less?

What would matter more?

Has suffering made me:

Bitter?

Or:

Humble?

Can I look back at a bitter season and see anything God used for:

Peace?

Growth?

Wisdom?

Do I believe God has truly forgiven:

My sins?

Or do I keep placing before myself what He has placed:

Behind His back?

Am I using my life to:

Praise?

What am I teaching the next generation about:

God’s faithfulness?

Do I understand that prayer and proper medical means can coexist?

If God restores me, will I return to:

Worship?

Or merely return to:

Routine?

LXIV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Hears the Prayer and Sees the Tears”

Hezekiah:

Prayed.

Wept.

God:

Heard.

Saw.

Principle:

Nothing about sincere suffering is invisible to God—not the words, not the tears, not the fear, and not the faith that turns toward Him.

LXV. THE KING WHO COULD NOT COMMAND HIS OWN LIFE

Hezekiah had:

Authority.

But not over:

Death.

Spiritual Principle

Mortality humbles every title.

LXVI. THE WALL BECOMES AN ALTAR

Hezekiah turns:

To the wall.

And prays.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Any place can become a place of prayer when the heart turns fully toward God.

LXVII. TEARS IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

God does not say:

Stop crying.

He says:

I have seen.

Spiritual Principle

Heaven is not embarrassed by human grief.

LXVIII. THE ANSWER COMES QUICKLY

God sends:

Another word.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who can say “prepare” can also say “I have heard.”

LXIX. MORE YEARS, MORE RESPONSIBILITY

Fifteen years are:

Gift.

But also:

Stewardship.

Spiritual Principle

Longer life should mean deeper faithfulness.

LXX. THE GOD OF DAVID

God identifies Himself with:

Covenant faithfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Personal mercy often rests within God’s larger covenant purposes.

LXXI. SHADOW AND PROMISE

The shadow confirms:

The word.

Spiritual Principle

God never needs a sign to make His promise true.

The sign helps:

Hezekiah trust what is already true because God said it.

LXXII. SUFFERING WORTH WRITING ABOUT

Hezekiah writes:

Afterward.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not rush past recovery so quickly that you fail to learn what suffering taught you.

LXXIII. LIFE IN THE PRIME YEARS

Hezekiah expected:

More time.

Spiritual Principle

We often discover how precious ordinary days are only when they seem:

Numbered.

LXXIV. THE TEMPORARY TENT

Our physical life is:

Real.

Valuable.

Temporary.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Temporary does not mean meaningless.

It means:

Use it wisely.

LXXV. THE WEAVER AND THE THREAD

A life can feel:

Cut short.

Spiritual Principle

God remains Lord over beginnings, middles, and endings.

LXXVI. MOANING LIKE A DOVE

Hezekiah’s prayer is not polished.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not require eloquence from suffering people.

LXXVII. LOOKING UPWARD UNTIL THE EYES GROW WEAK

Hezekiah continues:

Looking.

Spiritual Principle

Weak eyes can still look toward:

A strong God.

LXXVIII. “BE MY SECURITY”

Not:

Give me security.

But:

Be.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The deepest answer to insecurity is not merely changed circumstances but God Himself.

LXXIX. HUMILITY FOR THE REST OF HIS YEARS

Hezekiah wants the experience to change:

His future walk.

Spiritual Principle

A crisis has been spiritually fruitful when it changes how we walk afterward.

LXXX. PEACE THROUGH BITTERNESS

The bitterness was not:

Pleasant.

Yet Hezekiah sees:

Purpose.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can grow peace in soil watered by tears.

LXXXI. LOVE IN DELIVERANCE

Hezekiah says:

> **“In love You have delivered my soul.”**

Spiritual Principle

The final interpretation of God’s rescue is:

Love.

LXXXII. THE FORGIVEN PAST

God casts sins:

Behind.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Forgiveness changes where the past stands in relation to God.

LXXXIII. THE LIVING TELL THE STORY

Hezekiah now has:

A testimony.

Spiritual Principle

Survival becomes meaningful when it turns into:

Witness.

LXXXIV. THE NEXT GENERATION

Faithfulness must be:

Told.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not assume your children know why you trust God.

Tell them.

LXXXV. MUSIC AFTER MOURNING

The chapter moves from:

Weeping.

To:

Songs.

Spiritual Principle

God can put music back into a life that once heard only mourning.

LXXXVI. MEDICINE AND MIRACLE

The shadow:

Miraculous sign.

The figs:

Practical treatment.

Both belong:

Together.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not make unnecessary enemies of prayer, providence, medicine, and miracle.

LXXXVII. THE HOUSE OF THE LORD AS DESTINATION

Hezekiah wants:

To go up to worship.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration finds its proper purpose in renewed fellowship with:

God.

LXXXVIII. EIGHT GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 38

1. Hezekiah Receives a Death Sentence

Mortality confronts the king.

2. Hezekiah Prays and Weeps

Distress becomes prayer.

3. God Hears and Sees

Prayer and tears receive divine attention.

4. Fifteen Years Are Added

Life is extended.

5. The Shadow Goes Backward

God confirms His promise.

6. Hezekiah Reflects on Suffering

Illness becomes theology and testimony.

7. Bitterness Becomes Peace

He recognizes love, humility, and forgiveness.

8. Healing Ends in Worship

The restored king determines to praise God with his remaining days.

Key Truth

Isaiah 38 moves from a sentence of death to answered prayer, from tears to healing, from bitterness to peace, from fear to testimony, and from extended life to renewed worship.

LXXXIX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 38 begins with:

A sentence no one wants to hear.

> **“You will die and not live.”**

Hezekiah had survived:

Assyria.

Now he faces:

Sickness.

That teaches us something important.

One answered prayer does not mean:

No more trials.

One victory does not mean:

No more tears.

Faith does not give:

Immunity.

It gives:

A place to turn.

Hezekiah turns:

Toward the wall.

And:

Prays.

Sometimes life brings us to a place where:

The room feels small.

The options feel gone.

The future feels closed.

Hezekiah teaches:

Turn the wall into:

An altar.

Then:

Cry if you need to cry.

Hezekiah:

Wept bitterly.

God did not say:

A king should not cry.

God said:

> **“I have heard your prayer and seen your tears.”**

That means:

The tears mattered.

Not as currency buying a miracle.

But as the honest expression of a heart:

Before God.

Then God gives:

Fifteen years.

That raises a question:

What would you do if God handed you:

Fifteen more years?

Would you:

Love differently?

Pray differently?

Serve differently?

Forgive faster?

Waste less time?

Worship more?

Hezekiah eventually understood:

Added years are not merely:

More life.

They are:

More opportunity.

Then God gives the shadow sign.

The Lord who controls:

The shadow.

Controls:

The clock.

The Lord who controls:

Time.

Controls:

The days of our lives.

Then Hezekiah writes about:

What happened.

His song is brutally honest.

He felt:

Cut off.

Broken.

Oppressed.

Exhausted.

Yet afterward he says:

“Surely it was for my peace that I had such great bitterness.”

He does not call bitterness:

Sweet.

He calls it:

Bitter.

But he sees that God used it:

For peace.

That is mature faith.

Then perhaps the most comforting line:

“You have cast all my sins behind Your back.”

Maybe sickness made Hezekiah think about:

Death.

Death made him think about:

God.

Thinking about God made him think about:

Sin.

And grace answered:

Forgiveness.

Then he realizes:

Life has purpose.

“The living, the living—they will praise You.”

If you woke up today:

Alive.

There is still something to do.

Praise.

Serve.

Love.

Teach.

Tell.

Worship.

Pass the story:

To the next generation.

And notice the chapter ends with:

Figs.

A treatment.

God gives:

A miraculous sign.

And:

A practical means.

The lesson is:

Pray.

Trust.

Seek proper help.

Use appropriate means.

Give God glory through it all.

Then when the crisis has passed:

Do not simply return to:

Normal.

Return to:

Worship.

Hezekiah wanted to go again to:

The house of the Lord.

That is a good ending.

The goal of healing is not merely:

More time.

It is:

More life with God.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You are Lord over:

Life.

Death.

Time.

Health.

Every day we are given.

Teach us to remember that our lives are:

Gifts.

Help us keep our houses:

In order.

Spiritually.

Relationally.

Practically.

Father, when sickness comes:

Teach us to pray.

When fear comes:

Teach us to turn toward You.

When tears come:

Remind us that You:

See.

Hear.

Know.

Thank You that no tear is hidden from:

Your sight.

Father, if You give us:

More days.

More years.

More opportunities.

Help us use them:

Wisely.

Faithfully.

Humbly.

For Your glory.

When we pass through bitterness:

Do not let bitterness have the final word.

Bring us into:

Peace.

Teach us what suffering can teach.

Soften our hearts.

Deepen our faith.

Make us humble.

Father, thank You for:

Forgiveness.

Thank You that You cast forgiven sin:

Behind Your back.

Help us stop living under guilt You have already removed.

Teach us to walk in:

Grace.

Thank You for every day of life.

Help us use our lives to:

Praise You.

Tell others.

Teach the next generation.

Make Your faithfulness known.

Father, give wisdom concerning:

Medical care.

Practical means.

Prayer.

Trust.

Help us honor You in all of them.

And when You restore us:

Bring us back not merely to:

Routine.

But to:

Worship.

May every added day become:

A song.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life." — Isaiah 38:5**

Central Truth

When Hezekiah faced death, he turned to the Lord with prayer and tears, and God heard him, extended his life, defended Jerusalem, confirmed His promise with a miraculous sign, and used the bitter experience of illness to produce humility, deeper awareness of forgiveness, renewed praise, and a stronger determination to spend the remainder of his life making God's faithfulness known.

Isaiah 38 in One Sentence

Isaiah records Hezekiah's life-threatening illness, tearful prayer, miraculous extension of fifteen years, and confirming sign of the reversed shadow, followed by the king's personal testimony that his bitterness produced humility and peace, God's love rescued him from destruction, his sins were cast behind God's back, and the life restored to him should now be spent praising the Lord and teaching the next generation His faithfulness.

Isaiah Chapter 39 — Hezekiah’s Pride and Babylon’s Future

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 39 is short.

Only:

Eight verses.

Yet it represents one of the great turning points in the book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 37 showed Hezekiah facing:

Assyria.

He prayed.

God delivered.

Isaiah 38 showed Hezekiah facing:

Death.

He prayed.

God healed.

Now Isaiah 39 presents a different kind of test.

Not:

Military crisis.

Not:

Sickness.

But:

Success.

Attention.

Flattery.

Pride.

And this test proves spiritually dangerous.

The chapter begins with:

Babylon.

At this point Assyria remains the dominant imperial threat.

Yet Isaiah suddenly directs attention toward a power that will become enormously important later:

Babylon.

Merodach-Baladan sends:

Letters.

A gift.

Representatives.

Officially, the occasion is Hezekiah’s recovery from:

Illness.

But the visit also has obvious political significance.

Hezekiah is:

Flattered.

Honored.

Interested.

He gladly receives the Babylonian envoys.

Then he shows them:

Silver.

Gold.

Spices.

Precious oil.

Armory.

Treasures.

Everything.

The parallel account in 2 Chronicles connects this episode with:

Hezekiah’s pride.

That is the deeper problem.

The man who had said in Isaiah 38 that suffering taught him to:

Walk humbly.

Is now tempted after recovery to:

Display his greatness.

There is an important warning here.

A person may respond humbly during:

Crisis.

Then become proud during:

Success.

We sometimes think the greatest spiritual danger is:

Pain.

Isaiah 39 reminds us that prosperity can be:

Just as dangerous.

Perhaps more subtle.

In Isaiah 37, Hezekiah spread:

Sennacherib’s letter.

Before:

The Lord.

In Isaiah 39, Hezekiah spreads:

His treasures.

Before:

Babylon.

What a contrast.

In one chapter:

He shows God the threat.

In another:

He shows Babylon the treasure.

Isaiah then arrives and asks:

What did these men say?

Where did they come from?

What did they see?

Hezekiah answers honestly:

They came from Babylon.

They saw:

Everything.

That word becomes ominous.

Everything they saw will one day be:

Carried there.

The treasure Hezekiah proudly displayed becomes the treasure Babylon will eventually:

Take.

Isaiah announces:

Future exile.

Royal descendants will be:

Taken.

The palace wealth will be:

Carried away.

Babylon, which presently arrives with:

Gifts.

Will one day return for:

Spoils.

This is one of the most sobering reversals in Scripture.

Today's:

Friendly visitor.

Can become tomorrow's:

Conqueror.

The chapter also closes with a difficult statement from Hezekiah:

> **“The word of the Lord that you have spoken is good.”**

That part can express proper submission to:

God’s judgment.

But then we are told his thought:

> **“At least there will be peace and security in my days.”**

This reveals a troubling:

Short-term perspective.

The disaster will happen:

Later.

Future generations will suffer.

Hezekiah experiences relief because:

His own lifetime remains peaceful.

The chapter therefore introduces the great theme that will dominate much of the next major section of Isaiah:

Babylon.

Exile.

Comfort.

Restoration.

The people who hear the message of Isaiah 40 and following chapters will need hope because the judgment announced in Isaiah 39 will eventually become:

Historical reality.

The central truth of Isaiah 39 is:

After experiencing miraculous deliverance and healing, Hezekiah became vulnerable to pride and displayed Judah's treasures before Babylon; God then revealed that the very nation admiring those treasures would one day carry them away, warning that prosperity can test faith as seriously as adversity and that our decisions must be considered not merely for present comfort but for their effect upon future generations.

I. BABYLON SENDS ENVOYS TO HEZEKIAH

Isaiah 39:1 — Letters and a Gift

> **"At that time Merodach-Baladan son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a gift to Hezekiah, for he heard that he had been sick and had recovered."**

The chapter begins pleasantly.

Letters.

Gift.

Congratulations.

Friendship.

Nothing immediately appears:

Dangerous.

But spiritual tests do not always arrive looking like:

Enemies.

Sometimes they arrive carrying:

Gifts.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:12

The parallel account records the Babylonian king sending letters and a gift after hearing about Hezekiah’s illness.

2 Chronicles 32:31

The Babylonian envoys came to inquire about the remarkable events associated with Hezekiah, and God allowed the encounter to test what was in his heart.

Genesis 10:10

Babylon has ancient roots within the biblical story and is associated from early Genesis with human civilization, power, and kingdom-building.

Spiritual Principle

Not every spiritual test looks like:

A crisis.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We often recognize danger when an enemy knocks.

We must also remain discerning when admiration knocks.

II. HEZEKIAH GLADLY DISPLAYS EVERYTHING

Isaiah 39:2 — The Treasure House Opened

> **“Hezekiah welcomed them gladly and showed them everything in his treasure house—the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his entire armory, and everything that was found among his treasures. There was nothing in his palace or in all his kingdom that Hezekiah did not show them.”**

Notice the repeated emphasis:

Everything.

His treasures.

His armory.

His kingdom.

Nothing hidden.

The issue was not merely:

Giving visitors a tour.

The broader biblical account exposes:

Pride.

Hezekiah wanted Babylon to see:

What he possessed.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:13

Hezekiah shows the Babylonian envoys his wealth, valuables, weapons, and everything contained in his stores.

2 Chronicles 32:25

After receiving great mercy, Hezekiah did not respond proportionately to the benefit shown him because his heart became proud.

Proverbs 16:18

Pride goes before destruction, and arrogance prepares the way for a fall.

Spiritual Principle

Blessing can become dangerous when:

Gratitude becomes boasting.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never turn what God gave you into evidence of how impressive you are.

III. THE MAN WHO WALKED HUMBLY IS TESTED BY PRIDE

In Isaiah 38, Hezekiah said:

> **“I will walk humbly all my years.”**

Now:

Babylon arrives.

He proudly shows:

Everything.

Spiritual Principle

Yesterday’s humility does not eliminate:

Today’s temptation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A great spiritual experience does not make us permanently immune to pride.

IV. ADVERSITY AND PROSPERITY TEST DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE HEART

Assyria tested:

Fear.

Illness tested:

Faith.

Babylon tests:

Pride.

Spiritual Principle

Hardship asks:

“Will you trust God?”

Prosperity asks:

“Will you remember God?”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some believers survive the battlefield and then stumble at the banquet.

V. ISAIAH QUESTIONS HEZEKIAH

Isaiah 39:3 — “Where Did They Come From?”

> **“Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah and asked him, ‘What did these men say? Where did they come from?’ Hezekiah replied, ‘They came to me from a faraway country—from Babylon.’”**

Isaiah’s questions expose:

The event.

Hezekiah emphasizes:

Faraway.

Perhaps Babylon seemed:

Too distant.

To represent immediate danger.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:14

Isaiah asks where the visitors came from, and Hezekiah identifies Babylon as their distant homeland.

Genesis 16:8

God’s messenger questioned Hagar concerning where she came from and where she was going, demonstrating how questions can expose circumstances and direction.

1 Samuel 15:14

Samuel’s question to Saul about the sound of animals exposes the inconsistency between Saul’s claim and his actual behavior.

Spiritual Principle

A searching question can reveal:

What pride overlooked.

VI. DISTANCE CAN CREATE FALSE SECURITY

Hezekiah says:

> **“A faraway country.”**

Babylon feels:

Distant.

But distance today does not mean:

Safety tomorrow.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never assume something is harmless merely because its consequences seem far away.

VII. “WHAT DID THEY SEE?”

Isaiah 39:4 — The Question That Exposes Everything

> **“Isaiah asked, ‘What did they see in your palace?’ Hezekiah answered, ‘They saw everything in my house. There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them.’”**

Isaiah asks:

What did they see?

Hezekiah says:

Everything.

That answer prepares for:

Judgment.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:15

Hezekiah admits that the Babylonian visitors saw all his treasures.

Joshua 7:20

Achan eventually confesses openly what he had done after his hidden sin was exposed.

Proverbs 25:9

Wisdom cautions against careless disclosure of matters that should be handled discreetly.

Spiritual Principle

Wisdom knows there are things that do not need to be:

Displayed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Transparency is a virtue.

Showmanship is not.

VIII. WHAT DO PEOPLE SEE WHEN THEY VISIT OUR LIVES?

Babylon saw:

Gold.

Silver.

Weapons.

Treasures.

But the chapter does not say Hezekiah showed them:

The house of God.

The Word of God.

The greatness of God.

The testimony of his healing.

This absence is spiritually striking.

Spiritual Principle

Hezekiah had a miraculous testimony.

Yet he displayed:

Possessions.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God has done something great in your life, make sure people leave impressed with God—not merely with your stuff.

IX. ISAIAH SAYS, “HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD”

Isaiah 39:5 — God Interprets the Event

> **“Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, ‘Hear the word of the Lord of hosts:”**

Hezekiah has shown:

His treasures.

Now God reveals:

Their future.

Human perception sees:

Wealth.

God’s Word sees:

Coming exile.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:16

Isaiah calls Hezekiah to hear the Lord’s word concerning the consequences ahead.

Amos 3:1

The prophet summons God’s people to hear the divine word spoken concerning them.

Jeremiah 2:4

Jeremiah likewise calls the house of Jacob to hear the Word of the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

We need God’s Word to interpret:

What our eyes cannot foresee.

X. BABYLON WILL TAKE EVERYTHING

Isaiah 39:6 — The Treasure House Emptied

> **“The time is coming when everything in your house, and everything your ancestors have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the Lord.”**

The repeated word from verse 2 returns:

Everything.

He showed:

Everything.

Babylon will take:

Everything.

The display becomes:

A prophecy of loss.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:17

Isaiah predicts that Judah’s accumulated royal treasures will eventually be taken to Babylon.

2 Kings 24:13

The later Babylonian conquest fulfills the warning as treasures from the Lord’s temple and royal palace are carried away.

Jeremiah 20:5

Jeremiah later predicts that Judah’s wealth, treasures, and valuables will be given into the hands of Babylon.

Spiritual Principle

Earthly wealth is:

Transferable.

Temporary.

Vulnerable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If your treasure can be carried away by another kingdom, it was never secure enough to become the treasure of your heart.

XI. THE TREASURE HE SHOWED BECOMES TREASURE BABYLON TAKES

This is one of the chapter’s most sobering ironies.

Hezekiah says:

Look what we have.

God says:

One day Babylon will say:

Look what we took.

Spiritual Principle

Pride enjoys:

Displaying.

Judgment exposes:

Fragility.

XII. BABYLON REPLACES ASSYRIA AS THE COMING THREAT

Assyria dominated:

Hezekiah’s present.

Babylon will dominate:

Judah’s future.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not become so focused upon yesterday’s enemy that you stop watching tomorrow’s spiritual danger.

XIII. HEZEKIAH’S DESCENDANTS WILL BE TAKEN AWAY

Isaiah 39:7 — Future Generations Pay a Price

> **“And some of your own sons, who will come from you, whom you will father, will be taken away. They will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”**

Now the judgment becomes:

Personal.

Not merely:

Gold.

Not merely:

Weapons.

Not merely:

Buildings.

Descendants.

Future generations.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:18

Isaiah tells Hezekiah that some of his descendants will be carried away and serve in the Babylonian royal court.

Daniel 1:3

After Babylon conquers Jerusalem, members of Israel’s royal family and nobility are taken into the Babylonian system.

2 Kings 24:12

Judah’s king, officials, and leading people are eventually taken captive by Babylon.

Spiritual Principle

Decisions can cast:

Long shadows.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Wisdom asks not only:

“What will this do to me?”

But:

“What could this leave for those who come after me?”

XIV. GENERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Our choices are:

Personal.

But rarely:

Only personal.

Character can influence:

Children.

Churches.

Families.

Institutions.

Future generations.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness today can become:

Protection tomorrow.

Carelessness today can become:

Burden tomorrow.

XV. GOD’S WARNING LOOKS BEYOND ONE GENERATION

Hezekiah is focused on:

His lifetime.

God is looking toward:

Future sons.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s perspective is longer than ours.

XVI. HEZEKIAH ACCEPTS THE WORD

Isaiah 39:8 — “The Word of the Lord Is Good”

> **“Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, ‘The word of the Lord that you have spoken is good.’ For he thought, ‘At least there will be peace and security in my days.’”**

There are two aspects to this response.

First:

He accepts God’s Word.

He does not:

Argue.

Reject.

Attack Isaiah.

That reflects submission.

But the explanation of his thought is troubling:

> **“At least there will be peace and security in my days.”**

His attention turns toward:

Personal short-term peace.

Even though future generations will experience:

Exile.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:19

The parallel account records Hezekiah accepting God’s word while noting that peace and security will remain during his own lifetime.

1 Samuel 3:18

Eli accepts a difficult divine word, acknowledging the Lord’s right to do what seems good to Him.

Job 2:10

Job recognizes that human beings must receive both pleasant and difficult providences without accusing God of wrongdoing.

Spiritual Principle

Submission to God’s Word is good.

Indifference toward future consequences is not.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not let “peace in my days” become an excuse for leaving trouble to the next generation.

XVII. THE DANGER OF SHORT-TERM THINKING

Hezekiah thinks:

At least:

My days.

But biblical faith should also ask:

What about:

Their days?

Spiritual Principle

Self-centered thinking measures consequences by:

Personal lifetime.

Faithful stewardship thinks:

Generationally.

XVIII. “AT LEAST”

Those words reveal:

Relief.

But also possibly:

Narrowness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Be careful with any peace that satisfies you simply because someone else will pay the price later.

XIX. ISAIAH 38 AND ISAIAH 39 FORM A POWERFUL CONTRAST

Isaiah 38

Hezekiah:

Weeps.

Prays.

Walks humbly.

Celebrates forgiveness.

Promises praise.

Isaiah 39

Hezekiah:

Receives admiration.

Shows treasures.

Is confronted over pride.

Key Truth

A person can emerge from suffering spiritually humbled and still later be tempted by success.

XX. ISAIAH 37 AND ISAIAH 39 FORM ANOTHER CONTRAST

Isaiah 37

A foreign king sends:

A threatening letter.

Hezekiah takes it:

To God.

Isaiah 39

A foreign king sends:

A friendly letter.

Hezekiah welcomes:

The envoys.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The friendly letter may require as much prayer as the threatening letter.

XXI. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

Pride does not always say:

“I am greater than God.”

Sometimes pride simply says:

“Look what I have.”

Spiritual Principle

Boasting can be:

Quiet.

Socially acceptable.

Politely disguised.

XXII. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT SUCCESS

Hezekiah had:

Survived Assyria.

Recovered from sickness.

Received additional years.

Now:

Success tests him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Answered prayer can become a new spiritual test if blessing turns our attention from the Giver toward the gift.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT FLATTERY

Hezekiah is honored by:

An international delegation.

That can feel:

Important.

Spiritual Principle

Admiration can lower:

Defenses.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Beware of showing people more than wisdom permits merely because their interest feels flattering.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT TREASURE

Silver.

Gold.

Oil.

Weapons.

Stored wealth.

All eventually:

Carried away.

Spiritual Principle

Earthly treasure has:

No permanent address.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT SECURITY

The palace looked:

Secure.

The treasures looked:

Protected.

Babylon looked:

Far away.

But:

Everything changed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Security built on distance, wealth, or political conditions is temporary.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT GENERATIONAL THINKING

God speaks beyond:

Hezekiah’s lifetime.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical stewardship asks:

What am I preparing for people I may never live long enough to see?

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT PROPHECY

The Babylonian exile has not yet happened.

God announces it:

In advance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prophecy proves that God sees history farther down the road than human leaders do.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT CONSEQUENCES

The chapter should not be simplified to mean Hezekiah’s single display alone mechanically caused the entire Babylonian exile.

The broader biblical story connects Judah’s exile with:

Long-standing covenant rebellion.

Idolatry.

Injustice.

Persistent sin.

But Hezekiah’s pride becomes:

A revealing sign.

And Isaiah uses the Babylonian visit to announce:

The future judgment.

Spiritual Principle

One episode can expose a heart and become part of a much larger divine warning.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S PATIENCE

Judgment is announced:

Long before it arrives.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A warning about future judgment is itself an act of mercy because God speaks before consequences arrive.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT LEADERSHIP

Hezekiah’s behavior does not remain:

Private.

Royal decisions have:

National implications.

Spiritual Principle

The greater the influence, the wider the potential consequences of:

Character.

XXXI. THE ENVOYS CAME WITH A GIFT

Gifts can create:

Warmth.

Obligation.

Trust.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never let a gift purchase access that wisdom would otherwise deny.

XXXII. BABYLON WANTED TO SEE

And Hezekiah wanted:

To show.

That combination became:

Dangerous.

Spiritual Principle

Pride finds satisfaction when curiosity meets self-display.

XXXIII. “THERE WAS NOTHING HE DID NOT SHOW THEM”

No restraint.

No boundaries.

No discretion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Wisdom knows that having nothing to hide does not mean having everything to display.

XXXIV. THE ARMORY

Hezekiah even shows:

Military resources.

The visitors receive a picture of:

Judah’s defenses.

Spiritual Principle

Pride can cause people to reveal:

What prudence would protect.

XXXV. WHAT DID THESE MEN SAY?

Isaiah begins with:

Words.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before being impressed by attention, ask what purpose may be behind it.

XXXVI. WHERE DID THEY COME FROM?

Origin matters.

Babylon is:

Far away.

But not:

Spiritually irrelevant.

Spiritual Principle

Something distant can still shape:

The future.

XXXVII. WHAT DID THEY SEE?

Perhaps the most important question.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When people encounter your life, what do they see first:

God’s grace?

Or:

Your achievements?

XXXVIII. THEY SAW EVERYTHING

Hezekiah confesses:

Fully.

Spiritual Principle

Honest admission is better than:

Defensive denial.

XXXIX. HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD

The flattering visit must now be interpreted by:

Revelation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never judge an event only by how it feels.

Ask what God’s Word says about the heart behind it.

XL. EVERYTHING WILL BE CARRIED OFF

Everything displayed becomes:

Everything removed.

Spiritual Principle

Possessions cannot carry us.

Someone else may one day carry:

Them.

XLI. NOTHING WILL BE LEFT

This destroys the illusion of:

Permanent wealth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not attach eternal identity to something God says can disappear.

XLII. THE SONS WILL BE TAKEN

The consequences become:

Generational.

Spiritual Principle

The cost of poor stewardship may become visible:

Later.

XLIII. DANIEL AND BABYLON

Isaiah’s prophecy creates background for the later story of:

Daniel.

Young men from Judah’s royal and noble families will live in:

Babylon.

Even within judgment, however, God will later preserve:

Faithful witnesses.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s people may experience the consequences of national judgment without God abandoning His purpose for them.

XLIV. PEACE IN MY DAYS

This is one of the chapter’s most uncomfortable statements.

Spiritual Principle

Personal peace is not the highest good if:

Future generations inherit ruin.

XLV. TRUE GENERATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Faithful leadership asks:

What kind of:

Church.

Family.

Nation.

Ministry.

Legacy.

Am I leaving behind?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A good leader does not merely finish well personally.

He prepares others to continue faithfully after he is gone.

XLVI. THE DANGER AFTER DELIVERANCE

Sometimes we pray intensely:

During the crisis.

Then relax spiritually:

Afterward.

Spiritual Principle

Deliverance should increase vigilance:

Not reduce it.

XLVII. THE DANGER AFTER HEALING

Hezekiah had just received:

Fifteen years.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

More time is not automatically better unless we use that time faithfully.

XLVIII. MIRACLES DO NOT REMOVE HUMAN WEAKNESS

Hezekiah had seen:

Assyrian deliverance.

Healing.

A miraculous sign.

Still:

Pride appears.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual experiences do not replace the need for:

Daily humility.

XLIX. PRIDE AFTER PRAYER

One of the saddest possibilities:

A person can sincerely pray in one chapter and proudly display himself in the next.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Yesterday’s prayer life cannot substitute for today’s humility.

L. THE TREASURE AND THE TESTIMONY

Hezekiah possessed:

Both.

Treasure.

Testimony.

What did Babylon see?

Treasure.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest thing about your life should never be:

What you own.

But:

What God has done.

LI. SHOW THEM THE GOD WHO HEALED YOU

Babylon came because Hezekiah had:

Recovered.

Imagine the opportunity.

He could testify:

I nearly died.

I prayed.

God heard.

God added years.

God gave a sign.

Instead the text emphasizes:

Treasures.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not let an opportunity to display God become an opportunity to display yourself.

LII. PROSPERITY AND MEMORY

Pride often grows when people forget:

Where blessing came from.

Spiritual Principle

Gratitude is one of the strongest protections against:

Pride.

LIII. PRIDE AND SECRECY

This chapter is not teaching:

Paranoia.

It teaches:

Discretion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Wisdom can be hospitable without being careless.

LIV. EARTHLY TREASURE IS TEMPORARY

Gold can:

Change owners.

Silver can:

Cross borders.

Weapons can:

Be captured.

Spiritual Principle

Store deepest treasure where:

Conquerors cannot carry it away.

LV. BABYLON’S FUTURE

At this moment:

Babylon is a visitor.

Later:

Babylon becomes conqueror.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Today's alliance should never be trusted more deeply than tomorrow's God.

LVI. THE FUTURE EXILE

Isaiah 39 prepares us for:

Isaiah 40.

Judgment is now announced.

Soon the prophetic message will increasingly address people who need:

Comfort.

Hope.

Restoration.

Spiritual Principle

God announces exile.

But exile will not be:

The end of the book.

LVII. ISAIAH’S BOOK TURNS A CORNER

Isaiah 1–39 heavily emphasizes:

Judgment.

Assyria.

Warning.

Trust.

Chapters following Isaiah 39 increasingly emphasize:

Comfort.

Babylon.

Return.

Servant.

Redemption.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The announcement of coming judgment prepares the stage for an even greater revelation of God’s redeeming grace.

LVIII. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 39

1. Pride Can Follow Great Deliverance

Principle:

Past spiritual victories do not eliminate present spiritual danger.

---

2. Prosperity Can Test Us as Severely as Adversity

Principle:

We must seek God when praised as faithfully as when threatened.

---

3. Earthly Treasure Is Temporary

Principle:

What can be carried away should never carry the weight of our identity.

---

4. Discretion Is Wisdom

Principle:

Not everything we possess needs to be displayed.

---

5. Testimony Is Greater Than Treasure

Principle:

Point people toward the God who blessed you rather than merely toward the blessings.

---

6. Choices Have Generational Consequences

Principle:

Faithful stewardship considers those who will live after us.

---

7. God's Word Sees Farther Than Human Eyes

Principle:

Babylon looked like a distant visitor; God saw the future exile.

---

8. Present Peace Must Not Produce Future Neglect

Principle:

“Peace in my days” is too small a vision for generational faithfulness.

LIX. NINE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 39

1. Assyria’s Threat → Babylon’s Flattery

2. Prayer Under Pressure → Pride Under Prosperity

3. God’s Glory → Hezekiah’s Treasures

4. Humility → Self-Display

5. Babylonian Gift → Babylonian Plunder

6. Treasure House Full → Treasure House Empty

7. Present Peace → Future Exile

8. Hezekiah’s Lifetime → Future Generations

9. Short-Term Security → Long-Term Consequences

Key Truth

Hezekiah resisted the intimidation of Assyria but became vulnerable to the admiration of Babylon, showing that the heart must remain dependent upon God in both adversity and prosperity.

LX. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who sent representatives to Hezekiah?

Merodach-Baladan, king of Babylon.

Question 2

Why did they come?

They had heard about Hezekiah’s sickness and recovery.

Question 3

How did Hezekiah receive them?

Gladly.

Question 4

What did Hezekiah show them?

His silver, gold, spices, oil, armory, treasures, palace resources, and virtually everything in his kingdom.

Question 5

What spiritual issue does the parallel biblical account connect with this episode?

Hezekiah’s pride.

Question 6

What had Hezekiah said in the previous chapter about his future walk?

That he would walk humbly because of his suffering.

Question 7

What does this teach us?

A previous commitment to humility must be renewed continually.

Question 8

Who came to confront Hezekiah?

Isaiah.

Question 9

Where had the envoys come from?

Babylon.

Question 10

How did Hezekiah describe Babylon geographically?

As a faraway country.

Question 11

What did Isaiah ask about the palace?

> **“What did they see?”**

Question 12

What was Hezekiah’s answer?

They saw everything.

Question 13

What judgment did Isaiah announce?

All the royal treasures would eventually be carried to Babylon.

Question 14

Would only material treasures be taken?

No.

Some of Hezekiah’s descendants would also be taken.

Question 15

Where would they serve?

In the palace of the king of Babylon.

Question 16

What later biblical book demonstrates Judean royal and noble youths living under Babylonian rule?

Daniel.

Question 17

How did Hezekiah respond to Isaiah’s message?

He said the Word of the Lord was good.

Question 18

What did Hezekiah think about the timing?

He was relieved that peace and security would continue during his own days.

Question 19

Why is that response troubling?

Because the announced suffering would affect future generations.

Question 20

What major lesson does the chapter teach?

Spiritual vigilance is necessary after success and blessing because pride can become as dangerous as fear.

LXI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 39 asks several searching questions.

How Do I Respond to Compliments?

Do they produce:

Gratitude?

Or:

Pride?

What Do I Want People to See?

My:

Achievements?

Possessions?

Books?

Ministry?

Success?

Or:

God’s faithfulness?

Am I More Prayerful When Threatened Than When Admired?

Have I Survived a Crisis Only to Become Spiritually Careless afterward?

Am I Displaying Something Wisdom Says I should protect?

Do I understand that earthly treasure is:

Temporary?

What am I storing that cannot be carried away?

Am I thinking only about:

My days?

Or also:

The next generation?

What spiritual legacy am I leaving:

Children?

Grandchildren?

Church?

Ministry?

Community?

Am I willing to sacrifice future faithfulness for:

Present peace?

When God blesses me, do people hear more about:

The blessing?

Or:

The God who blessed?

LXII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Friendly Visitor Can Test Your Heart More Than the Hostile Army”

Hezekiah handled:

Threat.

Through prayer.

But admiration exposed:

Pride.

Principle:

Do not assume you are safest spiritually when circumstances become easier.

LXIII. THE LETTERS OF ISAIAH 37 AND 39

Isaiah 37:

Assyria sends:

A threatening message.

Hezekiah takes it to:

God.

Isaiah 39:

Babylon sends:

A friendly message.

Hezekiah welcomes it:

Gladly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We often pray harder over threatening letters than flattering ones, even though both can test the heart.

LXIV. THE GIFT FROM BABYLON

A gift appears:

Harmless.

Spiritual Principle

Discernment is necessary even when the circumstances feel:

Positive.

LXV. HEZEKIAH’S TREASURE TOUR

He wants them to know:

What Judah possesses.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride turns stewardship into exhibition.

LXVI. SILVER AND GOLD

Precious.

Valuable.

Temporary.

Spiritual Principle

What shines brightly can still:

Disappear.

LXVII. THE ARMORY

Hezekiah displays:

Strength.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes boasting exposes the very vulnerabilities we are trying to make impressive.

LXVIII. NOTHING HIDDEN

Everything shown.

Spiritual Principle

Discernment understands the difference between:

Honesty.

And:

Indiscretion.

LXIX. ISAIAH’S QUESTIONS

Questions uncover:

Motives.

Events.

Consequences.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A spiritually mature question can reveal more than a long accusation.

LXX. THE FARAWAY COUNTRY

Babylon seemed:

Remote.

Spiritual Principle

Future danger often looks harmless because it has not arrived yet.

LXXI. THE WORD THAT REFRAMES THE VISIT

What Hezekiah viewed as:

Honor.

God’s Word reveals as a moment connected with:

Future judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Ask Scripture to interpret success before success interprets itself.

LXXII. THE FULL TREASURE HOUSE

Today:

Full.

Tomorrow:

Empty.

Spiritual Principle

Possession is never the same as:

Permanence.

LXXIII. ANCESTRAL WEALTH

The treasures were not all:

Hezekiah’s achievement.

They included what:

Ancestors accumulated.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride often boasts in things it did not create.

LXXIV. THE TAKEN SONS

Future descendants live with:

Consequences.

Spiritual Principle

We are temporary stewards in a story larger than:

Our own lifespan.

LXXV. BABYLON’S PALACE

Judah’s royal descendants will serve:

Another king.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What pride refuses to submit to God may eventually become subject to another master.

LXXVI. “THE WORD IS GOOD”

Hezekiah does not accuse:

God.

That part is commendable.

Spiritual Principle

We should acknowledge God’s righteousness even when His Word is:

Difficult.

LXXVII. “PEACE AND SECURITY IN MY DAYS”

The problem is:

Scope.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A faithful leader should care about a future he personally will never live to see.

LXXVIII. LEGACY THINKING

Ask:

What am I leaving?

Not merely:

What am I enjoying?

Spiritual Principle

Legacy is tomorrow experiencing the effects of today’s character.

LXXIX. BLESSINGS CAN BECOME TESTS

Health restored.

Life extended.

Treasures preserved.

International respect.

All blessings.

All potential:

Tests.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every blessing asks whether we will worship the Giver or become impressed with the gift.

LXXX. HEZEKIAH WAS STILL HUMAN

He had:

Great faith.

And:

Real weakness.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical heroes should be learned from, not idealized as flawless.

LXXXI. ONE CHAPTER AFTER “I WILL WALK HUMBLY”

This should sober:

Every believer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Humility is not a promise you make once.

It is a posture you practice daily.

LXXXII. GOD TESTS WHAT IS IN THE HEART

The parallel account tells us this visit became a:

Test.

Spiritual Principle

God may allow situations that reveal to us:

What He already knows is in us.

LXXXIII. WHAT SUCCESS REVEALS

Adversity reveals:

Whether we trust God.

Success reveals:

Whether we remember Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Trouble tests dependence.

Prosperity tests gratitude.

LXXXIV. THE GREATER TREASURE

Hezekiah had something greater than:

Gold.

He had experienced:

God’s deliverance.

God’s healing.

God’s forgiveness.

Spiritual Principle

Your testimony may be worth more than everything in your treasure house.

LXXXV. BABYLON WILL NOT HAVE THE FINAL WORD

Isaiah 39 ends with:

Exile announced.

But Isaiah does not end:

Here.

The next chapter begins:

Comfort.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can announce discipline without surrendering His redemptive purpose.

LXXXVI. ISAIAH 39 AS THE BRIDGE TO ISAIAH 40

Chapter 39 says:

Babylon is coming.

Chapter 40 will say:

> **“Comfort, comfort My people.”**

That is one of the book’s great transitions.

Spiritual Principle

God sees beyond:

Exile.

Toward:

Restoration.

LXXXVII. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 39

1. Babylon Sends a Friendly Delegation

The test arrives through admiration rather than intimidation.

2. Hezekiah Displays His Treasures

Pride replaces discretion.

3. Isaiah Questions the King

The hidden spiritual issue is exposed.

4. God Announces Future Loss

Everything shown will eventually be carried away.

5. Future Generations Are Included

Hezekiah’s descendants will experience Babylonian captivity.

6. Hezekiah Accepts God’s Word

He recognizes the Lord’s pronouncement.

7. His Response Reveals Short-Term Thinking

He is relieved peace will remain in his own days.

Key Truth

Isaiah 39 moves from admiration to pride, from pride to prophetic warning, and from present prosperity to the announcement of future Babylonian exile.

LXXXVIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 39 is only:

Eight verses.

But it contains a warning every believer needs.

The chapter before it ended with:

Healing.

Praise.

Forgiveness.

More life.

Now:

Babylon knocks.

And Babylon does not arrive with:

An army.

Not yet.

It arrives with:

Letters.

A gift.

Congratulations.

Interest.

That may be the most dangerous part.

Hezekiah knew what to do when:

Assyria threatened.

He prayed.

He knew what to do when:

Death threatened.

He prayed.

But when people admired him:

He showed them everything.

That tells us something.

We often prepare ourselves for:

Hardship.

We do not always prepare ourselves for:

Success.

The threatening voice makes us:

Pray.

The flattering voice can make us:

Relax.

Hezekiah had just said:

> **“I will walk humbly all my years.”**

Then:

Pride appears.

That should make all of us:

Humble.

Never say:

“I defeated that temptation permanently.”

Never assume:

“One spiritual victory means I can stop watching my heart.”

Then Isaiah asks:

“What did they see?”

That is a powerful question.

What do people see when they look at:

Your life?

Your ministry?

Your home?

Your work?

Your achievements?

Do they see mostly:

You?

Or:

God’s grace?

Hezekiah had an extraordinary testimony.

He could have told Babylon:

I was dying.

I prayed.

The living God heard me.

He gave me fifteen more years.

He moved the shadow backward.

He delivered Jerusalem from Assyria.

Instead the chapter emphasizes:

Gold.

Silver.

Spices.

Oil.

Weapons.

Treasure.

Do not waste your testimony by replacing:

“Look what God did.”

With:

“Look what I have.”

Then God says:

Everything will be:

Taken.

There is the lesson of earthly possessions.

You may:

Own them.

Guard them.

Count them.

Display them.

But you cannot make them:

Permanent.

Babylon will one day carry away the same things Babylon once:

Admired.

Then the warning becomes:

Generational.

Your sons.

Future descendants.

They will experience:

Exile.

That forces us to think beyond:

Our own lives.

It is not enough to say:

My life is comfortable.

My finances are fine.

My ministry is working.

My church is okay.

My family is peaceful.

Faithfulness asks:

What am I leaving behind?

What kind of spiritual world will:

My children.

Grandchildren.

Future believers.

Inherit from my decisions?

Hezekiah says:

At least there will be peace in:

My days.

That is too small a vision.

Godly stewardship should say:

Lord, make me faithful in my days so those after me are better prepared for:

Their days.

Isaiah 39 closes with:

Babylon.

Judgment.

Exile.

But the book is not finished.

The next chapter will announce:

Comfort.

That is important.

Human pride can have:

Consequences.

God still has:

A redemptive purpose.

So:

Watch your heart after victory.

Pray when people praise you.

Stay humble after God answers prayer.

Value testimony above treasure.

Practice discretion.

Think generationally.

And never forget:

The greatest thing you can show another person is not what:

You possess.

It is what:

God has done.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Protect us from:

Pride.

Especially the pride that comes after:

Victory.

Healing.

Success.

Answered prayer.

Blessing.

Teach us to seek You not only when:

Enemies threaten.

But also when:

Friends flatter.

Father, thank You for every blessing You have given us.

Help us remember:

We are stewards.

Not owners.

Keep us from turning Your gifts into:

Objects of boasting.

Give us wisdom about:

What to show.

What to protect.

What to share.

What to keep private.

Father, when people look at our lives:

May they see more than:

Our accomplishments.

Our possessions.

Our abilities.

Our success.

Let them see:

Your grace.

Your mercy.

Your faithfulness.

Your saving power.

Help us tell the story of:

What You have done.

Father, teach us to think beyond:

Our days.

Give us hearts for:

Our children.

Our grandchildren.

Future generations.

The church that follows us.

The people who will live after us.

Do not let us be satisfied merely because:

We have peace now.

Help us leave a legacy of:

Faith.

Truth.

Humility.

Obedience.

Wisdom.

Father, remind us that:

Earthly treasures fade.

Silver can be taken.

Gold can be carried away.

Kingdoms change.

Empires rise.

Empires fall.

But:

You remain.

Make You:

Our greatest treasure.

And when pride rises within us:

Expose it.

Correct it.

Forgive it.

Replace it with:

Gratitude.

Humility.

Worship.

Prepare us for every season:

Adversity.

Prosperity.

Threat.

Praise.

Loss.

Success.

May we remain faithful through them all.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"Hezekiah welcomed them gladly and showed them everything in his treasure house—the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his entire armory, and everything that was found among his treasures." — Isaiah 39:2**

Central Truth

After receiving extraordinary deliverance and healing, Hezekiah became vulnerable to pride and displayed Judah's wealth before Babylon; God then revealed that those temporary treasures would one day be carried away and future generations would experience exile, teaching that believers must remain humble after blessing, value testimony above possessions, practice wise stewardship, and live with responsibility for those who come after them.

Isaiah 39 in One Sentence

Isaiah records Babylonian envoys visiting the recovered Hezekiah, the king proudly displaying all his treasures and military resources, Isaiah announcing that Babylon would one day carry those treasures and royal descendants into exile, and Hezekiah responding with submission to God's Word yet troubling relief that peace would remain during his own lifetime, thereby warning that prosperity, pride, and short-term thinking can threaten faith even after great deliverance.

Isaiah Chapter 40 — Comfort for God's People

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 40 marks one of the great turning points in the book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 39 ended with:

Babylon.

Exile.

Loss.

Future judgment.

Isaiah 40 opens with:

Comfort.

The very first words are:

“Comfort, comfort My people.”

That repeated word sets the tone.

God’s people will experience:

Discipline.

Exile.

Weariness.

Fear.

But judgment will not have:

The final word.

The Lord speaks of:

Forgiveness.

Restoration.

Preparation.

Revelation.

The enduring Word.

The coming of God.

His shepherd care.

His incomparable greatness.

His power over nations.

His rule over kings.

His knowledge of the stars.

His strength for the weary.

The chapter moves from:

A hurting people.

To:

A glorious God.

That movement matters.

Israel’s problem is not merely:

Exile.

Its deeper problem is that suffering has distorted how the people see:

God.

They begin to think:

My way is hidden.

My cause is forgotten.

God does not see.

God does not care.

Isaiah answers that despair by reminding them:

Who God is.

He is:

Everlasting.

Creator.

Never weary.

Unsearchable in understanding.

The One who gives strength.

The One who calls every star by name.

The One before whom nations are like:

A drop in a bucket.

Dust on scales.

The One to whom no idol can compare.

The One who rules kings.

The One whose Word stands forever.

The chapter also contains one of the clearest prophetic connections to:

John the Baptist.

The voice cries:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord.”

The New Testament applies this directly to:

John.

His ministry prepared people for:

Jesus Christ.

This means Isaiah’s comfort is ultimately connected with:

The coming of the Lord.

God does not merely send:

A message.

He comes.

And when He comes, He is pictured in two remarkable ways.

First:

Powerful King.

Second:

Tender Shepherd.

Verse 10:

“The Lord God comes with power.”

Verse 11:

“He will feed His flock like a shepherd.”

The same God who rules:

Nations.

Carries:

Lambs.

The same arm that exercises:

Power.

Also gathers the weak:

Close to His heart.

The chapter then exposes:

Idolatry.

How can anyone compare God to:

Metal.

Wood.

Craftsmanship.

An object that must be made.

An object that must be stabilized so it does not:

Topple.

The Creator needs:

No support.

Then the final verses bring the message personally home.

Even:

Young people.

Strong people.

Healthy people.

Grow tired.

But:

God does not.

Therefore the hope of the believer is not:

Human stamina.

It is:

Divine strength.

The great promise comes:

> **“Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.”**

They will:

Soar.

Run.

Walk.

Not because they become:

Naturally inexhaustible.

But because they continually draw strength from:

The everlasting God.

The central truth of Isaiah 40 is:

God comforts His disciplined people by announcing pardon and restoration, preparing the way for the revelation of His glory, contrasting frail humanity with His eternal Word, revealing Himself as both mighty King and tender Shepherd, exposing the emptiness of idols, and promising renewed strength to all who wait upon the everlasting Creator.

I. “COMFORT, COMFORT MY PEOPLE”

Isaiah 40:1 — The God Who Still Calls Them His People

> **“‘Comfort, comfort My people,’ says your God.”**

Notice the relationship.

After:

Discipline.

Warning.

Coming exile.

God still says:

> **“My people.”**

And:

> **“Your God.”**

Judgment has not erased:

Covenant relationship.

Cross References

2 Corinthians 1:4

God comforts His people in trouble so that they can become instruments of comfort to others.

Isaiah 61:2

God’s saving work includes comfort for those who mourn and hope for those crushed by grief.

Psalm 85:8

The psalmist listens for God’s message because the Lord speaks peace to His people when they return faithfully to Him.

Spiritual Principle

God’s discipline does not mean:

God has stopped loving His people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who corrects His people is still the God who says:

“They are Mine.”

II. SPEAK TENDERLY TO JERUSALEM

Isaiah 40:2 — Hard Service Finished

> **“Speak kindly to Jerusalem, and tell her that her hard service is finished, her sins are forgiven, and she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.”**

The message is:

Tender.

Personal.

Restorative.

Three announcements appear:

Hard service:

Finished.

Sin:

Forgiven.

Discipline:

Completed.

The language of “double” should be understood as emphasizing:

Full measure.

Complete dealing.

Not as though God punished unjustly beyond what was deserved.

Cross References

Lamentations 4:22

Jerusalem is told that her punishment will not continue indefinitely and that exile will come to an end.

Isaiah 61:7

Instead of shame, God’s people will receive abundant restoration and lasting joy.

Romans 5:1

Those justified by faith have peace with God through Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Principle

God’s comfort is rooted in:

Sin dealt with.

Not merely feelings improved.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True comfort goes deeper than circumstances.

It begins where guilt is answered.

III. PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD

Isaiah 40:3 — The Voice in the Wilderness

> **“A voice cries out: ‘In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.’”**

Ancient kings were often preceded by:

Road preparation.

Isaiah uses this imagery for:

The coming Lord.

The New Testament directly identifies this voice with:

John the Baptist.

John prepared people by calling them to:

Repentance.

Readiness.

Faith.

Cross References

Matthew 3:3

Matthew identifies John the Baptist as the voice Isaiah foretold, preparing the way for the Lord.

Mark 1:3

Mark applies this prophecy to John’s ministry announcing and preparing for the coming of Jesus.

John 1:23

John the Baptist personally identifies himself as the voice crying in the wilderness to make straight the Lord’s way.

Spiritual Principle

The way of the Lord is prepared in:

Repentant hearts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before the King’s glory is welcomed, the road of the heart must be made ready.

IV. VALLEYS LIFTED, MOUNTAINS LOWERED

Isaiah 40:4 — Every Obstacle Removed

> **“Every valley shall be lifted up, every mountain and hill made low; the crooked places will be made straight, and the rough ground smooth.”**

The imagery is:

Road-building.

Obstacles removed.

Low places raised.

High places lowered.

Crooked places straightened.

Rough places smoothed.

Cross References

Luke 3:5

Luke quotes Isaiah’s imagery when describing the preparation for the Messiah’s coming.

Isaiah 45:2

God promises to go before His servant, flatten obstacles, and break barriers.

Zechariah 4:7

A great mountain becomes level ground before God’s appointed work.

Spiritual Principle

God can remove:

What appears impassable.

V. THE GLORY OF THE LORD WILL BE REVEALED

Isaiah 40:5 — All Flesh Will See

> **“The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people together will see it. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”**

The certainty rests on:

God’s mouth.

Not human probability.

Cross References

Luke 3:6

Luke continues Isaiah’s prophecy by declaring that all flesh will see God’s salvation.

Habakkuk 2:14

The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord’s glory as waters cover the sea.

Numbers 14:21

God swears that His glory will ultimately fill the earth.

Spiritual Principle

God’s glory is not:

Permanent hiddenness.

It will be:

Revealed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God speaks, fulfillment does not depend upon human permission.

VI. HUMANITY IS LIKE GRASS

Isaiah 40:6 — Human Beauty Fades

> **“A voice said, ‘Cry out!’ And I asked, ‘What shall I cry?’ ‘All people are like grass, and all their beauty is like the flowers of the field.’”**

Human life is:

Real.

Beautiful.

Fragile.

Temporary.

Cross References

1 Peter 1:24

Peter quotes this passage to emphasize the temporary nature of human glory compared with God’s enduring Word.

Psalm 90:6

Human life is compared to grass that flourishes briefly and then fades.

James 1:10

Human prosperity and status are compared to a flower that passes away.

Spiritual Principle

Human glory has:

An expiration date.

VII. THE FLOWER FADES

Isaiah 40:7 — Human Frailty Before God

> **“The grass withers, the flower fades, because the breath of the Lord blows on them. Surely the people are grass.”**

Isaiah repeats the point because:

People forget it.

Strength.

Beauty.

Youth.

Power.

All fade.

Cross References

Psalm 103:15

Human days are like grass and flowers flourishing briefly in the field.

James 1:11

The rising sun scorches the flower, and its beauty disappears, illustrating human frailty.

Job 14:2

Humanity blooms like a flower and quickly withers.

Spiritual Principle

Mortality should produce:

Humility.

VIII. GOD’S WORD STANDS FOREVER

Isaiah 40:8 — The Great Contrast

> **“The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.”**

People:

Fade.

God’s Word:

Stands.

Empires:

Pass.

God’s promise:

Remains.

Cross References

1 Peter 1:25

Peter quotes Isaiah and declares that the Word of the Lord remains forever.

Matthew 24:35

Jesus says heaven and earth will pass away, but His words will never pass away.

Psalm 119:89

God’s Word stands forever, established in heaven.

Spiritual Principle

Build your life on:

What survives you.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Everything human eventually withers.

The Word of God does not.

IX. “BEHOLD YOUR GOD!”

Isaiah 40:9 — Good News from Zion

> **“O Zion, messenger of good news, go up on a high mountain. O Jerusalem, bringer of good news, lift up your voice with strength; lift it up, do not be afraid. Say to the towns of Judah, ‘Behold your God!’”**

The message is not merely:

Better circumstances are coming.

It is:

> **“Behold your God!”**

Cross References

Isaiah 52:7

The messenger bringing good news announces peace, salvation, and the reign of God.

Nahum 1:15

The arrival of good news is celebrated because oppression is being broken.

Romans 10:15

Paul quotes prophetic good-news imagery in connection with those who proclaim the gospel.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest good news is:

God Himself.

X. THE LORD COMES WITH POWER

Isaiah 40:10 — The Mighty Arm

> **“See, the Lord God comes with power, and He rules with a mighty arm. His reward is with Him, and His recompense goes before Him.”**

The coming Lord is:

King.

Judge.

Ruler.

Cross References

Revelation 22:12

Christ declares that He is coming with recompense to repay according to deeds.

Isaiah 62:11

Zion is told that her salvation comes and that the Lord’s reward accompanies Him.

Psalm 62:12

The Lord possesses steadfast love and repays people according to their deeds.

Spiritual Principle

God’s coming brings both:

Reward.

Justice.

XI. THE MIGHTY KING IS ALSO THE SHEPHERD

Isaiah 40:11 — Lambs in His Arms

> **“He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs in His arms, carry them close to His heart, and gently lead those that are with young.”**

What a contrast.

Verse 10:

Mighty arm.

Verse 11:

Tender arms.

The same God who rules nations:

Carries lambs.

Cross References

John 10:11

Jesus identifies Himself as the Good Shepherd who gives His life for the sheep.

Ezekiel 34:23

God promises one shepherd from David’s line who will care for His people.

Psalm 23:1

The Lord is the Shepherd who provides, leads, protects, and restores.

Spiritual Principle

God’s strength does not make Him:

Harsh.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The arm strong enough to rule the universe is gentle enough to carry a lamb.

XII. GOD HOLDS THE WATERS IN HIS HAND

Isaiah 40:12 — Creation Displays His Greatness

> **“Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, or marked off the heavens with the span of His hand? Who has weighed the mountains on scales, and the hills in a balance?”**

Isaiah stretches human imagination.

Oceans:

In His hand.

Heavens:

Measured.

Mountains:

Weighed.

Cross References

Job 38:4

God asks Job where he was when the foundations of the earth were laid.

Proverbs 30:4

The question is asked who has gathered wind, bound waters, and established the earth.

Job 26:10

God establishes boundaries and order over the created world.

Spiritual Principle

Creation is enormous to us.

It is not enormous to:

God.

XIII. NO ONE COUNSELS THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD

Isaiah 40:13 — God Needs No Adviser

> **“Who can measure the Spirit of the Lord, or who has been His counselor?”**

The implied answer:

No one.

Cross References

Romans 11:34

Paul quotes this verse while celebrating God’s unsearchable wisdom.

1 Corinthians 2:16

No one possesses the mind of the Lord so as to instruct Him, though believers receive spiritual understanding through Christ.

Job 15:8

No human has access to God’s council in a way that makes him God’s teacher.

Spiritual Principle

God does not need:

Advice.

XIV. WHO TAUGHT GOD?

Isaiah 40:14 — Divine Wisdom Is Self-Sufficient

> **“With whom did He consult to gain understanding? Who taught Him the right way, or showed Him knowledge, or gave Him understanding?”**

Again:

No one.

God never:

Learns.

Improves.

Receives correction.

Cross References

Job 21:22

No one can teach knowledge to God, who judges the highest beings.

Jeremiah 23:18

Humans are challenged regarding who truly stands in the Lord’s council and hears His Word.

1 Corinthians 1:25

Even what humans might foolishly regard as God’s weakness is stronger than human strength and His wisdom exceeds human wisdom.

Spiritual Principle

God never faces a situation and says:

“I did not think of that.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You can trust God’s wisdom even when you cannot understand His plan.

XV. NATIONS ARE LIKE A DROP

Isaiah 40:15 — Human Greatness Reduced

> **“Look, the nations are like a drop in a bucket, and are regarded as dust on the scales.**
> **He lifts up the islands like fine dust.”**

Nations feel:

Huge.

Powerful.

Permanent.

Before God:

A drop.

Dust.

Cross References

Psalm 62:9

Humanity, whether low or high, is ultimately lighter than breath when weighed apart from God.

Micah 7:16

Nations will be humbled and silenced before God’s saving power.

Job 26:14

Even the mighty works humanity observes are only the outer edges of God’s ways.

Spiritual Principle

Do not fear a nation as though it were:

God-sized.

XVI. LEBANON CANNOT PROVIDE ENOUGH

Isaiah 40:16 — God’s Worth Exceeds Every Offering

> **“Lebanon is not sufficient for firewood, nor are its animals enough for a burnt offering.”**

Lebanon was known for:

Forests.

Wildlife.

Yet even all of it would be:

Insufficient.

To match:

God’s greatness.

Cross References

Psalm 50:10

Every animal belongs already to God.

Malachi 1:10

God rejects empty offerings and calls for worship that truly honors His name.

Micah 6:7

No quantity of sacrifice can purchase righteousness or equal God’s moral demands.

Spiritual Principle

God cannot be:

Bought.

XVII. ALL NATIONS ARE NOTHING BEFORE HIM

Isaiah 40:17 — God Alone Is Ultimate

> **“All the nations are nothing before Him; He regards them as worthless, less than nothing.”**

This is not saying human beings have:

No value.

The comparison is about:

Power.

Magnitude.

Sovereignty.

Beside God:

National greatness is:

Nothing.

Cross References

Daniel 4:35

The inhabitants of earth are as nothing before the sovereign God who acts according to His will.

Psalm 39:5

Human life is brief and insubstantial when compared to God’s eternity.

1 Corinthians 1:28

God chooses things regarded as nothing to humble what the world considers significant.

Spiritual Principle

No earthly power belongs in:

God’s category.

XVIII. WHO CAN BE COMPARED WITH GOD?

Isaiah 40:18 — The Incomparable One

> **“To whom, then, will you compare God? What likeness will you set beside Him?”**

This question exposes:

Idolatry.

There is:

No adequate comparison.

Cross References

Isaiah 46:5

God asks whom anyone could compare or liken to Him.

Acts 17:29

Paul argues that the divine nature should not be imagined as gold, silver, or stone shaped by human design.

Psalm 89:6

No heavenly or earthly being is comparable to the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Anything small enough to represent God fully is:

Too small to be God.

XIX. THE IDOL HAS TO BE MADE

Isaiah 40:19 — The Craftsman Creates the “God”

> **“An idol? A craftsman casts it, a goldsmith overlays it with gold and fashions silver chains for it.”**

The irony is deliberate.

The worshiper:

Makes.

The object he then:

Worships.

Cross References

Isaiah 44:12

Isaiah later mocks the craftsman who expends strength to manufacture an idol.

Isaiah 46:6

People pour out wealth, hire craftsmen, and create an image before bowing to it.

Jeremiah 10:9

Idols are decorated with precious metals and made through human craftsmanship.

Spiritual Principle

A created object cannot become:

Creator.

XX. THE IDOL NEEDS HELP TO STAND

Isaiah 40:20 — A God That Must Not Topple

> **“A poor man selects wood that will not rot, and seeks out a skilled craftsman to set up an idol that will not topple.”**

The absurdity is clear.

The idol needs:

Good wood.

Good craftsmanship.

Stable support.

God needs:

None.

Cross References

Isaiah 44:9

Those who make idols produce objects that cannot truly see, know, or save.

Jeremiah 10:3

A craftsman cuts wood and shapes what people later treat as sacred.

Habakkuk 2:18

A carved image teaches lies because its maker trusts something he himself created.

Spiritual Principle

If your god needs you to keep him standing, he cannot keep:

You.

Standing.

XXI. “DO YOU NOT KNOW?”

Isaiah 40:21 — Creation Has Always Testified

> **“Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood since the earth was founded?”**

Isaiah appeals to:

Revelation.

History.

Creation.

The evidence concerning God has not been:

Absent.

Cross References

Isaiah 40:28

The same questions return when Isaiah reminds Israel that the Lord is the everlasting Creator.

Romans 1:20

God’s invisible attributes are made evident through what He has created.

Psalm 19:1

The heavens continually declare God’s glory.

Spiritual Principle

Creation itself argues against:

Idolatry.

XXII. GOD SITS ABOVE THE CIRCLE OF THE EARTH

Isaiah 40:22 — The Enthroned Creator

> **“He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers.**
> **He stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to live in.”**

This is poetic imagery of:

Majesty.

Scale.

Sovereignty.

The earth does not:

Contain God.

God rules above:

It.

Cross References

Job 26:7

God stretches out the heavens and suspends the earth according to His power.

Psalm 103:19

The Lord establishes His throne in heaven and His kingdom rules over all.

Numbers 13:33

Grasshopper imagery is used to emphasize overwhelming difference in apparent scale.

Spiritual Principle

Human beings look enormous to one another.

Before the Creator:

We are small.

XXIII. GOD BRINGS PRINCES TO NOTHING

Isaiah 40:23 — Rulers Are Temporary

> **“He brings princes to nothing and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness.”**

Kings:

Rise.

Rule.

Fall.

God:

Remains.

Cross References

Psalm 107:40

God humbles princes and causes human greatness to wander in helplessness.

Job 12:21

God pours contempt upon nobles and weakens the strength of the mighty.

Daniel 2:21

God changes times and seasons, removes kings, and establishes kings.

Spiritual Principle

No ruler is:

Permanent.

XXIV. HUMAN POWER WITHERS QUICKLY

Isaiah 40:24 — A Whirlwind Sweeps Them Away

> **“Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely do they take root in the ground, when He blows on them and they wither, and a whirlwind sweeps them away like stubble.”**

Human rule can appear:

Established.

Yet be:

Brief.

Cross References

Job 14:2

Humanity blossoms and withers like a flower.

Psalm 103:16

The wind passes over the flower and it is gone.

Nahum 1:4

God rebukes waters and causes flourishing places to wither.

Spiritual Principle

Do not confuse:

Recent establishment.

With:

Eternal permanence.

XXV. “WHO IS MY EQUAL?”

Isaiah 40:25 — The Holy One Has No Rival

> **“‘To whom will you compare Me? Or who is My equal?’ says the Holy One.”**

The answer:

No one.

Cross References

Job 40:9

God challenges human beings regarding whether they possess strength or voice comparable to His.

Psalm 71:19

God’s righteousness reaches the heavens, and none can compare with His great works.

Exodus 15:11

Moses asks who among all supposed gods is like the Lord, glorious in holiness and mighty in wonders.

Spiritual Principle

God has:

No equal.

XXVI. LIFT UP YOUR EYES

Isaiah 40:26 — God Names the Stars

> **“Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created all these? He brings out their starry host one by one and calls them each by name. Because of His great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.”**

Look:

Up.

The stars testify.

Countless to us.

Named by:

God.

Cross References

Psalm 147:4

God counts the stars and calls them all by name.

Genesis 1:16

God created the heavenly lights, including the stars.

Psalm 8:3

The heavens, moon, and stars display the work of God’s fingers.

Spiritual Principle

The God who knows every star is not likely to have:

Forgotten you.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If God does not lose one star, do not assume He has lost track of one of His children.

XXVII. “MY WAY IS HIDDEN”

Isaiah 40:27 — Israel’s Complaint

> **“Why do you complain, Jacob? Why do you say, Israel, ‘My way is hidden from the Lord; my cause is disregarded by my God’?”**

This is the emotional center of the chapter.

Israel feels:

Unseen.

Ignored.

Forgotten.

Cross References

Isaiah 49:14

Zion later says the Lord has forsaken and forgotten her.

Job 23:3

Job longs to find God in the midst of suffering and apparent divine silence.

Lamentations 3:44

The sufferer feels as though prayer cannot penetrate the cloud of trouble.

Spiritual Principle

Feeling forgotten is not proof of:

Being forgotten.

XXVIII. THE LORD NEVER GROWS WEARY

Isaiah 40:28 — The Everlasting Creator

> **“Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not grow tired or weary; His understanding no one can fathom.”**

This verse answers:

Verse 27.

Your way is not hidden because:

God never becomes:

Too tired to notice.

Too distracted to care.

Too limited to understand.

Cross References

Psalm 121:4

The One who watches over Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Romans 11:33

God’s wisdom and knowledge are immeasurably deep and His ways beyond complete human tracing.

Genesis 21:33

Abraham calls upon the name of the Lord, the everlasting God.

Spiritual Principle

God’s strength is:

Inexhaustible.

His understanding:

Unfathomable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You may become too tired to understand your situation.

God never does.

XXIX. GOD GIVES STRENGTH TO THE WEARY

Isaiah 40:29 — Strength for the Weak

> **“He gives strength to the weary and increases power to the weak.”**

God does not merely:

Possess strength.

He:

Gives it.

Cross References

2 Corinthians 12:9

God’s grace is sufficient, and divine power is displayed most clearly in human weakness.

Psalm 68:35

God gives strength and power to His people.

Ephesians 3:16

Paul prays that believers would be strengthened with power through God’s Spirit in the inner person.

Spiritual Principle

Weakness can become:

The place of divine supply.

XXX. EVEN THE YOUNG GROW TIRED

Isaiah 40:30 — Human Strength Has Limits

> **“Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall;”**

Isaiah chooses:

Youth.

The symbol of:

Energy.

Strength.

Endurance.

Even they:

Fail.

Cross References

Psalm 89:48

No human being escapes mortality or possesses unlimited strength.

Ecclesiastes 9:11

The race does not always belong to the swift nor victory simply to the strong.

Psalm 90:10

Even a long life is marked by toil, weakness, and rapid passing.

Spiritual Principle

Natural strength eventually reaches:

Its limit.

XXXI. THOSE WHO WAIT ON THE LORD RENEW THEIR STRENGTH

Isaiah 40:31 — Eagles, Running, Walking

> **“But those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not faint.”**

This is one of Isaiah’s great promises.

Waiting means:

Trusting.

Hoping.

Depending.

Remaining expectant toward:

God.

The promise is not that believers never:

Feel tired.

It is that divine strength is continually:

Renewed.

Notice the three pictures:

Soar.

Run.

Walk.

Sometimes faith:

Soars.

Sometimes faith:

Runs.

Sometimes the greatest victory is simply:

Keep walking.

Cross References

Psalm 103:5

God renews strength so that His people are pictured with vigor like the eagle.

Lamentations 3:25

The Lord is good to those who wait for Him and seek Him.

Galatians 6:9

Believers are told not to grow weary in doing good because a harvest will come in due time if they do not give up.

Spiritual Principle

Waiting on God is not:

Passive resignation.

It is:

Active dependence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes God gives wings.

Sometimes He gives running strength.

Sometimes He simply gives enough grace to take the next step.

XXXII. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 40

1. God Comforts His People

Principle:

Judgment is not the final chapter for those whom God redeems.

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2. Forgiveness Is Central to Comfort

Principle:

The deepest burden is guilt, and true comfort addresses sin.

---

3. The Lord Himself Is Coming

Principle:

Salvation is ultimately centered in the presence of God.

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4. John the Baptist Prepared the Way for Christ

Principle:

Isaiah’s prophecy points directly toward the coming of Jesus.

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5. Human Life Is Temporary

Principle:

Grass fades, flowers fall, and human glory passes.

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6. God’s Word Is Eternal

Principle:

Build upon what does not wither.

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7. God Is Both King and Shepherd

Principle:

Infinite power and tender care meet perfectly in Him.

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8. God Needs No Counselor

Principle:

His wisdom is original, complete, and perfect.

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9. Nations Are Small Before God

Principle:

No empire deserves the fear that belongs only to God.

---

10. Idols Are Absurd Substitutes

Principle:

The Creator cannot be replaced by something the creature manufactured.

---

11. God Has Not Forgotten His People

Principle:

Feeling hidden does not mean being unseen.

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12. God Renews the Strength of Those Who Wait

Principle:

Human strength fails, but divine supply does not.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 40 TEACHES ABOUT COMFORT

Comfort is not merely:

Kind words.

It rests on:

Forgiveness.

Restoration.

God’s presence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Biblical comfort tells the truth about sin and then tells the greater truth about God’s grace.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 40 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

John the Baptist fulfills:

The wilderness voice.

Jesus reveals:

The glory.

Jesus is:

The Shepherd.

The New Testament therefore reads Isaiah 40 as part of the great announcement that:

The Lord has come.

Spiritual Principle

The comfort of Isaiah ultimately moves toward:

Christ.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 40 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S WORD

Everything else:

Fades.

The Word:

Stands.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Anchor temporary lives in eternal truth.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 40 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S GREATNESS

Waters.

Heavens.

Mountains.

Nations.

Islands.

Stars.

All reveal:

His greatness.

Spiritual Principle

Worship grows when our vision of God:

Expands.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 40 TEACHES ABOUT IDOLATRY

Idols are:

Made.

Carried.

Supported.

Stabilized.

God:

Makes.

Carries.

Supports.

Sustains.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never worship what depends upon you for existence.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 40 TEACHES ABOUT GOVERNMENT

Princes and rulers:

Rise.

Fall.

God remains:

King.

Spiritual Principle

Political power is temporary stewardship, not ultimate sovereignty.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 40 TEACHES ABOUT WEARINESS

Weariness is not necessarily:

Spiritual failure.

Even youths:

Grow tired.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Being weary means you are human.

Staying disconnected from the Source of strength is the greater danger.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 40 TEACHES ABOUT WAITING

Waiting means:

Trust.

Expectation.

Dependence.

Patience.

Spiritual Principle

Waiting on God is faith refusing to run ahead without Him.

XLI. THE DOUBLE “COMFORT”

God repeats:

Comfort.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes wounded hearts need the promise repeated.

XLII. “MY PEOPLE”

Even after:

Failure.

God claims:

His people.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant mercy speaks identity before restoration is complete.

XLIII. “YOUR GOD”

Not:

A distant deity.

But:

Your God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Comfort becomes personal when theology becomes relationship.

XLIV. THE WILDERNESS ROAD

The wilderness becomes:

A highway.

Spiritual Principle

God can turn the place of exile into the road of return.

XLV. THE MOUNTAIN MADE LOW

Pride.

Obstacle.

Barrier.

All come under:

God’s leveling work.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No mountain is too high for the Lord’s arrival.

XLVI. THE VALLEY LIFTED

What is:

Low.

Can be:

Raised.

Spiritual Principle

God’s coming transforms both high places and low places.

XLVII. “THE MOUTH OF THE LORD HAS SPOKEN”

This guarantees:

Fulfillment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s promise is certain because God’s character is reliable.

XLVIII. PEOPLE ARE GRASS

This humbles:

Pride.

Spiritual Principle

We are valuable because God gives value, not because we are permanent.

XLIX. THE FLOWER OF HUMAN GLORY

Beauty:

Fades.

Reputation:

Fades.

Fame:

Fades.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never sacrifice eternal faithfulness to protect temporary applause.

L. THE WORD THAT OUTLIVES US

Generations:

Come.

Go.

Scripture:

Remains.

Spiritual Principle

Read what your grandchildren will still need after you are gone.

LI. THE GOOD NEWS IS “BEHOLD YOUR GOD”

Not:

Behold your prosperity.

Behold your nation.

Behold your strength.

But:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The gospel ultimately points beyond gifts to the Giver.

LII. POWERFUL ARM, TENDER ARMS

Verse 10:

Mighty arm.

Verse 11:

Carries lambs.

Spiritual Principle

God’s power and tenderness do not compete.

LIII. THE SHEPHERD CARRIES THE LAMBS

Lambs are:

Weak.

Small.

Vulnerable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Weakness attracts the Shepherd’s care; it does not repel Him.

LIV. GENTLY LEADING THOSE WITH YOUNG

God adjusts:

His pace.

Spiritual Principle

The Shepherd does not drive every sheep at identical speed.

LV. OCEANS IN HIS HAND

What overwhelms us:

Fits in His hand.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never measure God by the size of the thing frightening you.

LVI. NO COUNSELOR

God never attends:

A meeting.

To discover what He should do.

Spiritual Principle

His plan does not improve through outside advice.

LVII. DUST ON THE SCALES

The nations barely move:

The balance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What looks enormous on earth can look very small from heaven’s perspective.

LVIII. LEBANON IS NOT ENOUGH

All the timber.

All the animals.

Still:

Insufficient.

Spiritual Principle

God’s worth exceeds every sacrifice creation could offer.

LIX. THE IDOL OVERLAID WITH GOLD

Expensive:

Does not equal divine.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Cost cannot transform a created thing into God.

LX. THE IDOL THAT MUST NOT TOPPLE

It needs:

Support.

Spiritual Principle

A god that can fall over cannot uphold the universe.

LXI. GOD SITS ENTHRONED

Human rulers sit on:

Temporary thrones.

God sits:

Above the earth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The ultimate throne never faces an election, invasion, succession crisis, or overthrow.

LXII. PRINCES BECOME NOTHING

Power is:

Brief.

Spiritual Principle

Never fear a temporary ruler more than the eternal King.

LXIII. LIFT UP YOUR EYES

Israel’s eyes had fallen toward:

Circumstances.

Isaiah says:

Look up.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes renewed faith begins with changing where we are looking.

LXIV. HE CALLS THE STARS BY NAME

Billions of lights.

None:

Anonymous to God.

Spiritual Principle

Infinite greatness does not prevent:

Detailed knowledge.

LXV. “NOT ONE IS MISSING”

Stars:

Not missing.

People:

Not forgotten.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who tracks the heavens is fully capable of tracking your life.

LXVI. “MY WAY IS HIDDEN”

This is what suffering:

Feels like.

Spiritual Principle

Emotional experience should be acknowledged without being allowed to redefine divine reality.

LXVII. EVERLASTING GOD

He has:

No beginning.

No ending.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Temporary problems exist inside the rule of an eternal God.

LXVIII. CREATOR OF THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

There is no place:

Outside His reach.

Spiritual Principle

Exile cannot take God’s people beyond:

God.

LXIX. HE DOES NOT GROW TIRED

God never says:

I am too exhausted to help.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine compassion has no fatigue limit.

LXX. HIS UNDERSTANDING CANNOT BE FATHOMED

We cannot:

Fully trace His plan.

Spiritual Principle

Mystery is not the same as:

Mistake.

LXXI. HE GIVES STRENGTH

God’s greatness becomes:

Personal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Creator’s power is not merely something to admire.

It is strength He gives.

LXXII. YOUTHS FALL

Natural strength:

Fails.

Spiritual Principle

Youth is an advantage.

Not:

Infinity.

LXXIII. WAITING RENEWS STRENGTH

The Hebrew idea carries the sense of:

Hopeful dependence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Waiting is where human weakness is exchanged for continued dependence upon divine strength.

LXXIV. SOARING LIKE EAGLES

There are seasons of:

Lift.

Spiritual Principle

God can raise His people above circumstances that once overwhelmed them.

LXXV. RUNNING WITHOUT WEARINESS

There are seasons of:

Intensity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God calls you to run, He can supply endurance for the assignment.

LXXVI. WALKING WITHOUT FAINTING

This may be:

The most practical promise.

Walking is:

Daily.

Ordinary.

Long-term.

Spiritual Principle

Most faithfulness is not soaring.

It is:

Walking.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not despise walking grace while waiting for eagle-wing moments.

LXXVII. ISAIAH 39 AND ISAIAH 40

Isaiah 39

Babylonian exile announced.

Isaiah 40

Comfort announced.

Key Truth

God announces discipline before exile, but He also announces comfort before the exile even arrives.

LXXVIII. ISAIAH 35 AND ISAIAH 40

Both chapters speak of:

Wilderness.

Highway.

God coming.

Glory revealed.

Restoration.

Spiritual Principle

Isaiah repeatedly connects salvation with:

God making a way where there appeared to be no way.

LXXIX. CHRIST IN ISAIAH 40

The New Testament gives direct warrant for seeing:

John the Baptist.

The Lord’s coming.

The gospel.

The Shepherd.

In connection with:

Jesus Christ.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah’s comfort is not abstract optimism.

It ultimately takes flesh in the coming of Christ.

LXXX. TEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 40

1. Judgment → Comfort

2. Exile → Highway Home

3. Human Frailty → Eternal Word

4. Fear → Good News

5. Mighty King → Tender Shepherd

6. Nations → Drop in a Bucket

7. Idols → Incomparable Creator

8. Earthly Rulers → Eternal King

9. Feeling Forgotten → God’s Complete Knowledge

10. Human Weariness → Renewed Strength

Key Truth

Everything unstable in human life is contrasted with the stability, greatness, tenderness, wisdom, and strength of the everlasting God.

LXXXI. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What is the first message of Isaiah 40?

> **“Comfort, comfort My people.”**

Question 2

What three things are announced to Jerusalem in verse 2?

Her hard service is finished, her sin is forgiven, and her discipline has reached its full measure.

Question 3

Who fulfills the voice crying in the wilderness in the New Testament?

John the Baptist.

Question 4

Whose way does John prepare?

The way of the Lord, fulfilled in the coming of Jesus Christ.

Question 5

What happens to valleys, mountains, crooked places, and rough ground?

They are transformed to prepare the highway.

Question 6

What will be revealed?

The glory of the Lord.

Question 7

What is human life compared with?

Grass and flowers.

Question 8

What stands forever?

The Word of our God.

Question 9

What message should Zion proclaim?

> **“Behold your God!”**

Question 10

How does the Lord come in verse 10?

With power and sovereign rule.

Question 11

How is He described in verse 11?

As a Shepherd who feeds, gathers, carries, and gently leads His flock.

Question 12

Who taught God wisdom?

No one.

Question 13

How are nations described before God?

Like a drop in a bucket and dust on scales.

Question 14

Can anything be adequately compared with God?

No.

Question 15

What is ironic about idols?

Human beings make and stabilize them, then worship them.

Question 16

Where does God sit?

Enthroned above the earth.

Question 17

What does God do to rulers?

He can bring them to nothing.

Question 18

What does God do with the stars?

He brings them out and calls each by name.

Question 19

What complaint does Israel make?

That its way is hidden and its cause ignored by God.

Question 20

Why is that complaint mistaken?

Because the everlasting Creator never grows tired, never loses understanding, and does not forget His people.

Question 21

To whom does God give strength?

The weary and weak.

Question 22

Who eventually grows tired?

Even youths and young men.

Question 23

Who renews strength?

Those who wait upon the Lord.

Question 24

What three pictures describe renewed strength?

Soaring like eagles, running without weariness, and walking without fainting.

LXXXII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 40 asks several searching questions.

Do I Need God’s Comfort?

Am I trying to:

Hide grief?

Carry guilt?

Manage weariness alone?

Have I Received God’s Forgiveness?

Or am I looking for comfort without dealing with:

Sin?

Is the Road of My Heart Prepared for the Lord?

What needs to be:

Straightened?

Lowered?

Raised?

Smoothed?

Am I Building My Life on Grass?

Money?

Appearance?

Reputation?

Political power?

Human approval?

Or on the Word that stands forever?

When I share good news, do I ultimately say:

“Behold your God”?

Do I believe God is both:

Powerful enough to rule.

Gentle enough to carry me?

Have I made something created into an idol?

Am I afraid of nations, rulers, or circumstances as though they were:

God-sized?

Have I been saying:

“My way is hidden from the Lord”?

Do I believe the God who names stars also knows:

My name?

My way?

My burden?

Am I trying to live on:

Natural strength?

Do I know how to:

Wait?

Right now, do I need:

Eagle strength?

Running strength?

Or simply enough grace to:

Keep walking?

LXXXIII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The God Who Names the Stars Has Not Forgotten Your Name”

Israel says:

My way is hidden.

Isaiah says:

Look up.

The stars are:

Countless.

Yet God calls:

Each one.

Principle:

God’s greatness never makes Him too large to notice you; His greatness is the reason He is fully able to know you.

LXXXIV. COMFORT AFTER JUDGMENT

Isaiah does not remove:

The reality of discipline.

He announces:

What comes after it.

Spiritual Principle

God’s correction has:

Purpose.

Not merely pain.

LXXXV. PARDON BEFORE PEACE

Verse 2 links comfort with:

Forgiveness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The deepest peace begins where sin is reconciled.

LXXXVI. THE VOICE IN THE DESERT

God often begins new work in places that look:

Empty.

Spiritual Principle

A wilderness can become:

A pulpit.

LXXXVII. THE ROAD FOR THE KING

The highway is not primarily:

For Israel’s convenience.

It is prepared for:

God’s coming.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True revival is not merely asking God to improve our lives.

It is preparing our lives for His rule.

LXXXVIII. ALL FLESH SHALL SEE

The vision is:

Global.

Spiritual Principle

God’s saving glory is too great to remain a local secret.

LXXXIX. HUMANITY WITHERS

Every generation has:

Famous people.

Powerful leaders.

Beautiful faces.

Strong bodies.

They fade.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not spend eternity’s resources chasing grass.

XC. THE ETERNAL WORD

The Word stands:

After us.

Spiritual Principle

Scripture belongs to every generation because its Author does not age.

XCI. GOOD NEWS REQUIRES COURAGE

Zion is told:

Lift your voice.

Do not fear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The message “Behold your God” should not be whispered apologetically.

XCII. THE KING COMES

God does not remain:

Distant.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical hope is rooted in:

The coming of the Lord.

XCIII. THE SHEPHERD GATHERS

He sees:

Lambs.

Mothers.

Different needs.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Shepherd’s care is personal enough to distinguish weakness from weakness.

XCIV. THE GOD WHO MEASURES OCEANS

Imagine:

All the seas.

In:

His hand.

Spiritual Principle

What feels immeasurable to us remains measured by Him.

XCV. THE GOD WHO MEASURES HEAVENS

The universe does not overwhelm:

Its Maker.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never tell the Creator your problem is too big without remembering what He created.

XCVI. THE COUNSELOR WHO DOES NOT EXIST

No one advises:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer is not informing God of options He failed to consider.

XCVII. THE NATIONS AS DUST

Human empires love:

Scale.

God has:

A different scale.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Keep national power in proper proportion before divine sovereignty.

XCVIII. THE IDOL THAT NEEDS A CARPENTER

False religion reverses:

Reality.

The maker becomes:

Worshiper.

The object becomes:

“God.”

Spiritual Principle

Idolatry always shrinks God and enlarges creation.

XCIX. THE EARTH UNDER HIS THRONE

The world can feel:

Chaotic.

God remains:

Enthroned.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Chaos on earth does not imply vacancy in heaven.

C. THE PRINCES WHO BARELY TAKE ROOT

Rulers appear:

Permanent.

God sees:

Stubble.

Spiritual Principle

Never make a temporary ruler your ultimate hope or ultimate fear.

CI. THE HOLY ONE

The incomparable God is not merely:

Powerful.

He is:

Holy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s greatness is morally perfect greatness.

CII. LOOK AT THE STARS

Isaiah commands:

Lift your eyes.

Spiritual Principle

Creation can become a classroom for:

Trust.

CIII. THE COMPLAINT OF THE WEARY

“My cause is disregarded.”

That complaint may be:

Emotionally honest.

But:

Theologically false.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Bring the complaint to God, but do not let the complaint become your creed.

CIV. EVERLASTING, CREATOR, UNWEARY

Three truths answer:

Despair.

Everlasting:

He outlasts the crisis.

Creator:

He outranks the crisis.

Unweary:

He has strength for the crisis.

Spiritual Principle

The theology of verse 28 becomes the strength of verse 29.

CV. STRENGTH FOR THE WEARY

God does not shame:

Weariness.

He supplies:

Strength.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Bring God your weakness instead of pretending you are strong enough without Him.

CVI. YOUTHFUL STRENGTH FAILS

The strongest human category still:

Falls.

Spiritual Principle

Self-reliance has an expiration date.

CVII. WAITING IS NOT WASTING

Waiting on God can feel:

Slow.

But it is not:

Pointless.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Time spent depending on God is not lost time.

CVIII. SOAR, RUN, WALK

Three speeds.

One source:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness does not always look dramatic.

CIX. WALKING MAY BE THE GREATEST MIRACLE

Some days:

No wings.

No sprint.

Just:

One step.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not despise the grace that simply keeps you from fainting.

CX. ELEVEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 40

1. Exile → Comfort

2. Guilt → Forgiveness

3. Wilderness → Highway

4. Hidden Glory → Revealed Glory

5. Grass → Eternal Word

6. Human Fear → “Behold Your God”

7. Mighty Ruler → Tender Shepherd

8. Nations → Dust

9. Manufactured Idols → Creator

10. Forgotten Feeling → Perfect Divine Knowledge

11. Human Exhaustion → Renewed Strength

Key Truth

Isaiah 40 dismantles every reason for despair by repeatedly contrasting human frailty with the permanence, greatness, tenderness, wisdom, and strength of God.

CXI. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 40

1. God Announces Comfort

Jerusalem’s discipline will not last forever.

2. The Way of the Lord Is Prepared

The coming King is announced.

3. God’s Word Is Declared Eternal

Humanity fades, but revelation stands.

4. Zion Announces Good News

> **“Behold your God!”**

5. God Is Revealed as King and Shepherd

Power and tenderness meet.

6. God’s Incomparable Greatness Is Proclaimed

Nations, rulers, idols, and stars are all placed in proper perspective.

7. Strength Is Given to the Weary

Those who wait upon the Lord are renewed.

Key Truth

The chapter moves from comfort to revelation, from revelation to worship, from worship to confidence, and from weariness to renewed strength.

CXII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 40 begins with:

People who need:

Comfort.

Why?

Because Isaiah 39 just announced:

Babylon.

Exile.

Loss.

That means God gives:

Comfort.

Before some of the people who will need it are even:

Born.

Think about that.

God prepares:

Grace.

Before the crisis arrives.

The first words are:

> **“Comfort, comfort My people.”**

Not:

They failed too much.

Not:

I am finished with them.

But:

My people.

Then:

> **“Speak kindly to Jerusalem.”**

God knows wounded people sometimes need truth delivered:

Tenderly.

Then comes:

A voice.

Prepare:

The way.

The New Testament tells us that voice is:

John the Baptist.

He points toward:

Jesus.

That means the ultimate comfort of Isaiah 40 is not simply:

Coming home from Babylon.

It is:

God coming to His people.

Then Isaiah says:

People are grass.

That sounds almost:

Discouraging.

Until we see the contrast:

“The word of our God will stand forever.”

You are not asked to find security in:

Your own permanence.

You are asked to find security in:

God’s permanence.

Then comes:

“Behold your God!”

Maybe that is the command we need when life gets:

Too complicated.

Look at:

God.

Not only:

The crisis.

Not only:

The future.

Not only:

The enemy.

Behold:

Your God.

Look how Isaiah describes Him.

He comes with:

Power.

Then carries lambs:

Close to His heart.

He measures:

Oceans.

Yet gently leads:

The vulnerable.

He rules:

Nations.

Yet notices:

The weary.

He names:

Stars.

Yet hears:

Jacob complain.

He never:

Tires.

Never:

Forgets.

Never:

Needs counsel.

Never:

Learns something new.

Never:

Loses a star.

Never:

Misplaces one of His people.

Then Israel says:

“My way is hidden from the Lord.”

No.

Isaiah says:

Look up.

Do you see those stars?

He knows:

Every one.

If He knows them:

He knows you.

Then the chapter reaches its famous ending.

Young people:

Get tired.

Strong people:

Fall.

That means the Christian life cannot be sustained merely by:

Youth.

Personality.

Willpower.

Energy.

Natural talent.

We need:

Renewed strength.

And that strength belongs to those who:

Wait upon the Lord.

Sometimes He gives:

Eagle wings.

You rise above:

The storm.

Sometimes He gives:

Running strength.

The assignment is intense.

You keep:

Going.

And sometimes:

You walk.

One step.

Then another.

No dramatic breakthrough.

No soaring.

No sprint.

Just:

Faithful walking.

Do not think that is:

Less spiritual.

Sometimes walking without fainting is:

The miracle.

So when you are tired:

Wait.

When you feel forgotten:

Look up.

When rulers frighten you:

Remember they are grass.

When idols attract you:

Remember they need craftsmen.

When the future feels uncertain:

Remember His Word stands forever.

When the wilderness looks empty:

Prepare the highway.

When your heart needs comfort:

Behold your God.

The everlasting God.

The Creator.

The Shepherd.

The Holy One.

The One who never grows weary.

And the One who gives:

Strength.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for speaking:

Comfort.

To Your people.

Thank You that discipline is not:

The final word.

Thank You for:

Forgiveness.

Restoration.

Grace.

Father, prepare:

Our hearts.

Remove every:

Crooked place.

Proud mountain.

Deep valley.

Rough path.

Make us ready for:

Your presence.

Thank You for Jesus Christ.

Thank You for John the Baptist who prepared:

The way.

Thank You that in Christ:

Your glory has been revealed.

Father, remind us that:

We are grass.

Our beauty fades.

Our strength weakens.

Our days pass.

But:

Your Word stands forever.

Help us build our lives on:

What lasts.

Father, teach us to say:

“Behold your God!”

Lift our eyes above:

Fear.

Politics.

Nations.

Human power.

Earthly rulers.

Remind us that all nations are:

Small.

Before You.

You need:

No counselor.

No adviser.

No teacher.

You are:

Perfect in wisdom.

Father, destroy every idol in our hearts.

Anything created that has taken the place of:

The Creator.

Help us worship:

You alone.

Thank You that You are:

Mighty King.

Tender Shepherd.

Gather the weak.

Carry the lambs.

Lead gently.

Father, when we say:

“My way is hidden,”

Remind us:

You call every star by name.

You have not:

Forgotten us.

When we are:

Weary.

Give:

Strength.

When we are:

Weak.

Increase:

Power.

Teach us to wait upon:

You.

When we need:

Wings.

Lift us.

When we need:

Running strength.

Sustain us.

And when all we can do is:

Walk.

Keep us from:

Fainting.

May our lives proclaim:

You are the everlasting God.

The Creator of the ends of the earth.

The God who never grows tired.

The God who never forgets.

The God who strengthens His people.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"But those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not faint." — Isaiah 40:31**

Central Truth

The everlasting God comforts and forgives His people, prepares the way for the revelation of His glory in the coming Lord, declares His Word eternal while humanity fades, reveals Himself as incomparable Creator, mighty King, and tender Shepherd, assures His people that they are neither hidden nor forgotten, and renews the strength of all who wait upon Him.

Isaiah 40 in One Sentence

Isaiah announces comfort and forgiveness to God's people, foretells the wilderness voice preparing the way for the Lord, contrasts fading humanity with God's eternal Word, calls Zion to proclaim "Behold your God," reveals the Lord as both sovereign Creator and tender

Shepherd, exposes the emptiness of idols and earthly rulers, and promises that those who wait upon the everlasting God will receive renewed strength to soar, run, and walk without fainting.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 41 — Fear Not, for I Am With You

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 41 continues the message of comfort that began in:

Isaiah 40.

But now the comfort is set against a courtroom scene.

The Lord summons:

Coastlands.

Nations.

Peoples.

Rulers.

Idols.

To appear before Him.

The question is:

Who really governs history?

Who raises rulers?

Who directs nations?

Who knows the future?

Who can predict what is coming?

Who can truly save?

The nations respond to fear by:

Gathering together.

Strengthening one another.

Building idols.

Fastening them with:

Nails.

So they will not:

Fall over.

The contrast is almost humorous.

The nations are afraid.

They tell one another:

“Be strong!”

Then they manufacture gods that need to be:

Strengthened.

Stabilized.

Nailed down.

Israel, however, has something very different.

Israel does not have a god that must be:

Carried.

Built.

Supported.

Israel has:

The living God.

And the Lord says:

“You are My servant.”

“I have chosen you.”

“I have not rejected you.”

Then comes one of the greatest promises in all of Isaiah:

“Do not fear, for I am with you.”

The answer to fear is not:

Israel’s size.

Israel’s military power.

Israel’s political influence.

The answer is:

God’s presence.

Then the promise expands:

> **“I will strengthen you.”**
>
> **“I will help you.”**
>
> **“I will uphold you.”**

The Lord does not merely command:

Do not fear.

He gives reasons:

I am with you.

I am your God.

I will strengthen.

I will help.

I will uphold.

Later He says:

> **“I, the Lord your God, take hold of your right hand.”**

This is intensely personal.

The God who governs:

Generations.

Nations.

Kings.

History.

Also takes:

His servant by the hand.

Isaiah 41 also presents God as:

Redeemer.

The Holy One of Israel.

The helpless “worm Jacob” will become:

A sharp threshing instrument.

The weak will overcome:

Mountains.

The poor and needy will receive:

Water.

The wilderness will receive:

Rivers.

Pools.

Trees.

Life.

Why?

So people will know:

“The hand of the Lord has done this.”

The chapter then returns to the courtroom.

God challenges:

The idols.

Predict the future.

Explain history.

Do something.

Anything.

Good.

Bad.

Show that you are:

Gods.

They cannot.

They are:

Nothing.

Their works:

Worthless.

Their idols:

Wind.

Confusion.

God, however, can announce beforehand:

What He will do.

The ruler raised in the chapter is best understood in the larger context of Isaiah as anticipating the coming conqueror whom Isaiah will later name explicitly:

Cyrus.

Isaiah 41 introduces the idea.

Isaiah 44 and 45 will make the identification unmistakable.

The chapter’s central contrast is therefore:

Living God versus dead idols.

Divine sovereignty versus human fear.

Chosen servant versus frightened nations.

God’s presence versus apparent weakness.

True prophecy versus empty claims.

The central truth of Isaiah 41 is:

The Lord alone governs history, raises rulers, foretells what is coming, strengthens His chosen people, defeats their enemies, provides for the poor and needy, and proves every idol powerless; therefore Israel need not fear, because the Redeemer and Holy One of Israel is personally present to strengthen, help, uphold, and guide His people.

I. THE NATIONS ARE SUMMONED BEFORE GOD

Isaiah 41:1 — Silence in the Divine Courtroom

> **“Be silent before Me, O coastlands, and let the peoples renew their strength. Let them come near, then let them speak; let us come together for judgment.”**

The picture is:

Courtroom.

The nations are summoned.

Before speaking:

Silence.

They must:

Listen.

Then:

Present their case.

Cross References

Habakkuk 2:20

The Lord is in His holy temple, and all the earth is called to silence before Him.

Zechariah 2:13

All people are told to be silent before the Lord because He is rising to act from His holy dwelling.

Job 40:4

Job recognizes his smallness before God and places his hand over his mouth rather than continuing to argue.

Spiritual Principle

Human wisdom must first learn:

Silence.

Before divine wisdom.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The courtroom belongs to God.

The nations appear before Him—not He before them.

II. GOD RAISES A CONQUEROR FROM THE EAST

Isaiah 41:2 — History Moves Under Divine Direction

> **“Who has stirred up one from the east, whom He calls in righteousness to His service? He gives nations into his hand and subdues kings before him. He turns them to dust with his sword, to driven stubble with his bow.”**

A ruler is:

Raised.

Summoned.

Used.

Nations fall before him.

Within the larger context of Isaiah, this figure anticipates:

Cyrus.

He will later be explicitly named.

Cross References

Genesis 12:1

God called Abraham from the east and directed him according to divine purpose, showing God’s long-standing sovereignty in calling individuals from distant lands.

Isaiah 45:13

God later says He has raised up Cyrus in righteousness and will direct his ways for the restoration of Jerusalem.

Romans 4:12

Abraham becomes an example of faith for those who walk in the footsteps of trusting God.

Spiritual Principle

World history is not:

Uncontrolled motion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can raise a ruler before that ruler understands the role he will play.

III. THE CONQUEROR MOVES FORWARD

Isaiah 41:3 — Paths Previously Unknown

> **“He pursues them and passes safely, by paths his feet have never traveled.”**

The military advance appears:

Remarkable.

Unexpected.

Successful.

Cross References

Genesis 14:15

Abraham pursued enemy kings and overcame forces stronger than himself.

Judges 7:22

God caused enemy armies to turn against one another, producing victory beyond Israel’s natural strength.

Joshua 10:9

Joshua advanced unexpectedly after traveling through the night, showing how sudden movement could alter battle conditions.

Spiritual Principle

God can open paths:

Before His instruments arrive.

IV. THE FIRST AND THE LAST

Isaiah 41:4 — God Calls the Generations

> **“Who has done this and carried it out, calling forth the generations from the beginning? I, the Lord—the First, and with the Last—I am He.”**

The answer to:

Who controls history?

God.

He is:

First.

With the last.

Before every generation.

Present through every generation.

After every generation.

Cross References

Revelation 1:8

God declares Himself the One who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.

Revelation 22:13

Christ identifies Himself as the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

Isaiah 44:6

The Lord later declares Himself Israel’s King and Redeemer, the First and the Last, with no God besides Him.

Spiritual Principle

God does not merely:

Observe generations.

He calls them forth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

History has a beginning before God and an ending under God.

V. THE NATIONS TREMBLE

Isaiah 41:5 — Fear Spreads

> **“The coastlands saw it and were afraid; the ends of the earth trembled. They drew near and came together.”**

When people see:

Political upheaval.

Changing powers.

Rising conquerors.

They fear.

Their solution is:

Band together.

Cross References

Psalm 67:7

God’s blessing and rule should lead the ends of the earth to reverence Him.

Psalm 65:8

People at earth’s farthest reaches stand in awe of God’s signs and works.

Micah 7:16

Nations are humbled before God and become ashamed of their own strength.

Spiritual Principle

Global fear does not prove:

God has lost control.

VI. PEOPLE ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER

Isaiah 41:6 — “Be Strong!”

> **“Each one helps his neighbor and says to his brother, ‘Be strong!’”**

On the surface:

This sounds good.

Encouragement is often:

Good.

But here the context leads directly into:

Idol-making.

They strengthen one another in:

False security.

Cross References

1 Samuel 30:6

David strengthened himself in the Lord his God during deep distress.

Deuteronomy 3:28

Joshua is to be strengthened and encouraged for the task God gives him.

Hebrews 10:24

Believers are called to stir one another toward love and good works.

Spiritual Principle

Encouragement is only as good as:

The direction it sends us.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

“Be strong” is not enough.

The deeper question is:

Strong in what?

VII. IDOLS NEED NAILS TO STAND

Isaiah 41:7 — Human Hands Strengthen Human Gods

> **“The craftsman strengthens the goldsmith, and the one who smooths with the hammer encourages the one who strikes the anvil. He says, ‘It is ready for soldering,’ and they fasten it with nails so it will not topple.”**

The irony is powerful.

People are afraid.

So:

They make a god.

Then:

The god needs nails.

So it does not:

Fall over.

Cross References

Isaiah 40:19

Isaiah already described craftsmen constructing and decorating idols.

Isaiah 44:12

A craftsman uses his own strength to shape an idol from created material.

Jeremiah 10:4

Idols are decorated and then secured with nails and hammers so they will not move.

Spiritual Principle

A god that needs:

Support.

Cannot be:

Your support.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If you must nail your god down, do not expect it to hold you up.

VIII. “YOU, ISRAEL, MY SERVANT”

Isaiah 41:8 — Chosen Through Abraham

> **“But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, My friend—”**

The contrast is immediate.

The nations:

Build idols.

Israel:

Is chosen by God.

Israel’s identity rests in:

God’s call.

Cross References

James 2:23

Abraham believed God and is called God’s friend.

Genesis 18:17

God speaks of sharing His purpose concerning Sodom with Abraham, reflecting the special covenant relationship.

2 Chronicles 20:7

Abraham is described as God’s friend, and Israel as his descendants.

Spiritual Principle

God’s servant identity begins with:

God’s choice.

Not:

Human impressiveness.

IX. GOD HAS NOT REJECTED HIS SERVANT

Isaiah 41:9 — Called from the Ends of the Earth

> **“You whom I took from the ends of the earth and called from its farthest corners—I said to you, ‘You are My servant; I have chosen you and not rejected you.’”**

Exile could make Israel feel:

Rejected.

God says:

No.

Chosen.

Called.

Not rejected.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 7:6

Israel is described as a people set apart to the Lord and chosen for covenant relationship.

Deuteronomy 7:7

God’s choice of Israel was not based on numerical greatness but on His covenant love and faithfulness.

Romans 11:1

Paul explicitly rejects the idea that God has simply cast away His people.

Spiritual Principle

Discipline is not the same as:

Rejection.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A difficult season does not cancel a calling God has not revoked.

X. “FEAR NOT, FOR I AM WITH YOU”

Isaiah 41:10 — Strength, Help, and Upholding

> **“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”**

This is the heart of the chapter.

Five great truths:

Do not fear.

I am with you.

I am your God.

I will strengthen you.

I will help you.

I will uphold you.

Cross References

Joshua 1:9

Joshua is told to be strong and courageous because the Lord his God is with him wherever he goes.

Deuteronomy 31:6

Israel is told not to fear because the Lord goes with them and will not abandon them.

Matthew 28:20

Jesus promises His disciples that He is with them always, even to the end of the age.

Spiritual Principle

God does not merely command:

Fearlessness.

He gives:

Presence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The strongest answer to fear is not:

“I can handle this.”

It is:

“God is with me.”

XI. GOD’S ENEMIES WILL BE AS NOTHING

Isaiah 41:11 — Opposition Will Not Last Forever

> **“Behold, all who are angry with you will be ashamed and disgraced; those who oppose you will be as nothing and perish.”**

Enemies appear:

Strong.

God sees their:

End.

Cross References

Psalm 35:4

Those seeking the destruction of God’s servant are asked to be put to shame and confusion.

Psalm 129:5

Those who hate Zion are pictured being turned back in disgrace.

Isaiah 54:17

No weapon ultimately formed against God’s servants will accomplish final victory over His purpose.

Spiritual Principle

Present opposition does not equal:

Permanent victory.

XII. THE ENEMY WILL DISAPPEAR

Isaiah 41:12 — Searching and Not Finding

> **“Though you search for your enemies, you will not find them. Those who wage war against you will be as nothing at all.”**

The threat that once filled:

The horizon.

Will disappear.

Cross References

Psalm 37:10

The wicked may flourish briefly, but soon they are gone and their place cannot be found.

Job 20:7

Human pride can disappear so completely that people ask where the person has gone.

Psalm 59:13

The psalmist asks God to consume violent enemies so His sovereignty becomes known.

Spiritual Principle

The thing you fear today may not exist:

Forever.

XIII. GOD TAKES ISRAEL BY THE HAND

Isaiah 41:13 — “I Will Help You”

> **“For I, the Lord your God, take hold of your right hand and say to you, ‘Do not fear; I will help you.’”**

This is one of Isaiah’s most personal pictures.

God does not merely:

Stand far away.

He takes:

The hand.

Cross References

Psalm 73:23

The psalmist says he is continually with God and that the Lord holds his right hand.

Psalm 63:8

The faithful person clings to God while God’s right hand upholds him.

Isaiah 42:6

The Lord promises to take His servant by the hand and keep him for divine purpose.

Spiritual Principle

The God who controls nations also:

Holds hands.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes God does not remove the road immediately.

He takes your hand and walks it with you.

XIV. “DO NOT BE AFRAID, O WORM JACOB”

Isaiah 41:14 — Weakness Meets the Redeemer

> **“Do not be afraid, O worm Jacob, O little Israel; for I Myself will help you, declares the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.”**

“Worm Jacob” emphasizes:

Smallness.

Weakness.

Vulnerability.

It is not meant to erase:

Human dignity.

It magnifies:

God’s help.

Israel is:

Small.

God is:

Redeemer.

Holy One.

Cross References

Job 25:6

Human beings are described with worm imagery to emphasize smallness before divine majesty.

Psalm 22:6

The suffering figure uses worm imagery to express humiliation and weakness.

Judges 6:15

Gideon describes his clan and himself as weak and insignificant, yet God still calls him.

Spiritual Principle

God does not need His servant to appear:

Impressive.

Before He can help.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Your weakness does not embarrass your Redeemer.

It gives Him room to show His strength.

XV. GOD TURNS WEAK JACOB INTO A THRESHING TOOL

Isaiah 41:15 — Mountains Become Chaff

> **“See, I will make you into a new, sharp threshing tool with teeth. You will thresh the mountains and crush them, and reduce the hills to chaff.”**

What a transformation.

Verse 14:

Worm.

Verse 15:

Threshing instrument.

God transforms:

Weakness.

Into:

Effectiveness.

The mountains symbolize:

Massive opposition.

Cross References

Micah 4:13

Zion is told to rise and thresh as God gives strength to overcome hostile nations.

Amos 1:3

Threshing imagery is associated with severe crushing and judgment.

Habakkuk 3:12

God is pictured marching through the earth and threshing nations in judgment.

Spiritual Principle

God can make:

The weak.

Effective against:

The massive.

XVI. THE WIND CARRIES THE OPPOSITION AWAY

Isaiah 41:16 — Rejoicing in the Lord

> **“You will winnow them, the wind will carry them away, a whirlwind will scatter them. But you will rejoice in the Lord and glory in the Holy One of Israel.”**

The end is not:

Self-congratulation.

Israel’s victory produces:

Rejoicing in God.

Cross References

Psalm 1:4

The wicked are like chaff driven away by the wind.

Psalm 35:5

Enemies are pictured like chaff before the wind under divine judgment.

Habakkuk 3:18

Even amid loss, the prophet chooses to rejoice in the Lord and take joy in the God of salvation.

Spiritual Principle

True victory should end in:

Worship.

XVII. THE POOR AND NEEDY SEARCH FOR WATER

Isaiah 41:17 — God Will Not Forsake Them

> **“The poor and needy search for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. But I, the Lord, will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.”**

The people are:

Desperate.

Thirsty.

Without resources.

Then:

God answers.

Cross References

Psalm 40:17

The poor and needy confess their dependence upon the Lord as Helper and Deliverer.

Psalm 34:6

A poor man cries out, and the Lord hears and delivers him from trouble.

John 7:37

Jesus invites the thirsty to come to Him and drink.

Spiritual Principle

Need does not:

Repel God.

It becomes the setting for:

Divine provision.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The empty cup is not a problem for the God who creates rivers.

XVIII. RIVERS APPEAR ON BARREN HEIGHTS

Isaiah 41:18 — Desert Becomes Watered

> **“I will open rivers on the barren heights and springs in the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water and the dry land into fountains.”**

God supplies water where:

No natural source exists.

Cross References

Isaiah 35:6

Waters break out in the wilderness and streams flow in the desert under God’s restoration.

Isaiah 35:7

Burning sand becomes a pool and thirsty ground becomes springs.

John 4:14

Jesus speaks of the water He gives becoming a spring of life within the recipient.

Spiritual Principle

God is not limited by:

The landscape.

XIX. GOD PLANTS TREES IN THE DESERT

Isaiah 41:19 — Life Where There Was Wasteland

> **“I will put in the desert the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive tree. I will set in the wasteland the cypress, the plane tree, and the pine together,”**

The transformation becomes:

Abundant.

Not one tree.

Many.

Variety.

Life.

Shade.

Fruitfulness.

Cross References

Isaiah 55:13

Thorns and briers are replaced by fruitful trees as a sign of God’s lasting restoration.

Isaiah 60:13

The glory of Lebanon’s trees is associated with the beautifying of God’s restored dwelling.

Zechariah 1:8

Myrtle trees appear in Zechariah’s vision as part of imagery connected with God’s watchful restoration.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration is often:

More abundant than mere survival.

XX. EVERYONE WILL KNOW THE LORD DID IT

Isaiah 41:20 — “The Hand of the Lord Has Done This”

> **“So that people may see and know, may consider and understand, that the hand of the Lord has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it.”**

The purpose is:

Recognition.

See.

Know.

Consider.

Understand.

Who did it?

The Lord.

Cross References

Job 12:9

Creation itself teaches that the hand of the Lord has made what exists.

Psalm 109:27

The psalmist asks that people recognize that deliverance came from the Lord’s hand.

1 Kings 8:60

God’s works are intended to make all peoples know that the Lord alone is God.

Spiritual Principle

God’s provision is also:

Revelation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The blessing is complete when people see the gift and recognize the Giver.

XXI. GOD CHALLENGES THE IDOLS

Isaiah 41:21 — “Present Your Case”

> **“‘Present your case,’ says the Lord. ‘Bring forward your arguments,’ says the King of Jacob.”**

The courtroom scene returns.

God says:

Prove it.

Bring:

Evidence.

Arguments.

Cross References

Isaiah 43:9

The nations are summoned to present witnesses and prove their claims.

Micah 6:1

God summons His people to hear and respond to His covenant case.

Job 13:3

Job longs to reason his case before God, reflecting legal language of argument and defense.

Spiritual Principle

False gods fail when asked for:

Evidence.

XXII. CAN THE IDOLS EXPLAIN HISTORY?

Isaiah 41:22 — Tell Us What Has Happened and What Will Happen

> **“Let them bring them in and tell us what will happen. Tell us what the former things were, so that we may consider them and know their outcome. Or declare to us the things to come.”**

God demands:

Explanation.

Prediction.

Knowledge.

The idols remain:

Silent.

Cross References

Isaiah 44:7

God challenges false gods to announce events and prove knowledge of future history.

Isaiah 45:21

The Lord declares that no other god foretells and saves as He does.

Deuteronomy 18:22

False prophecy is exposed when supposed divine predictions fail to come true.

Spiritual Principle

The true God is not:

Trapped inside time.

XXIII. “TELL US THE FUTURE”

Isaiah 41:23 — Do Something

> **“Tell us what the future holds, so that we may know you are gods. Do something, either good or bad, so that we may be dismayed and filled with fear.”**

The tone is almost:

Mocking.

Do:

Anything.

Show:

Power.

Reveal:

Knowledge.

The idols cannot.

Cross References

Jeremiah 10:5

Idols cannot speak, walk, harm, or help and must be carried.

Deuteronomy 13:1

Even supernatural-looking claims must be tested against loyalty to the true God.

1 Corinthians 8:5

People may speak of many so-called gods and lords, but such claims do not create real deity.

Spiritual Principle

Claims to divinity must answer to:

Reality.

XXIV. IDOLS ARE LESS THAN NOTHING

Isaiah 41:24 — Worthless Works

> **“But you are less than nothing, and your works are utterly worthless; whoever chooses you is detestable.”**

God’s verdict:

Nothing.

Worthless.

An abomination to choose.

Cross References

Isaiah 44:9

Those who make idols are themselves exposed to shame because the objects they value cannot truly see or know.

Psalm 115:8

Those who make and trust idols become like the lifeless things they worship.

Jeremiah 10:14

Human beings become foolish when they place trust in manufactured idols.

Spiritual Principle

Idolatry degrades:

The worshiper.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You become spiritually smaller when you worship something smaller than the God who made you.

XXV. GOD STIRS UP A RULER

Isaiah 41:25 — Rulers Like Clay

> **“I have stirred up one from the north, and he comes—from the rising of the sun he calls on My name. He tramples rulers as if they were clay, as a potter treads the clay.”**

This continues the chapter’s historical prophecy.

Within Isaiah’s developing message, the ruler points toward:

Cyrus.

His empire approaches Babylon from:

The east/northeast.

God later names him:

Directly.

Cross References

Isaiah 45:1

Cyrus is later explicitly identified as God’s anointed instrument for conquering nations and accomplishing divine purpose.

Isaiah 45:13

God says He raised Cyrus in righteousness and will make his way straight.

Ezra 1:1

Cyrus later issues the decree allowing Jewish exiles to return and rebuild the Lord’s house.

Spiritual Principle

God can prepare deliverance before His people see:

Any sign of it.

XXVI. ONLY GOD FORETELLS ACCURATELY

Isaiah 41:26 — “Who Told This from the Beginning?”

> **“Who told of this from the beginning, so we could know? Or beforehand, so we could say, ‘He was right’? No one foretold it, no one declared it, no one heard any words from you.”**

The idols have:

No prediction.

No revelation.

No voice.

Cross References

Isaiah 43:9

False gods and nations are challenged to produce witnesses confirming predictive claims.

Isaiah 46:10

God declares the end from the beginning and announces what has not yet occurred.

Amos 3:7

God reveals His purposes to His prophets according to His sovereign will.

Spiritual Principle

Predictive prophecy demonstrates:

God’s sovereignty over history.

XXVII. GOOD NEWS COMES TO ZION

Isaiah 41:27 — The Messenger Arrives

> **“I was the first to say to Zion, ‘Look, here they are!’ I gave to Jerusalem a messenger of good news.”**

God announces:

Deliverance.

Before others can.

Cross References

Isaiah 52:7

Beautiful are the feet of the messenger announcing peace, good news, salvation, and God’s reign.

Isaiah 40:9

Zion is told to proclaim good news and announce:

> **“Behold your God!”**

Nahum 1:15

The messenger of good news announces deliverance from oppression.

Spiritual Principle

God is not only:

Judge.

He is also the One who announces:

Good news.

XXVIII. THE IDOLS HAVE NO COUNSELOR

Isaiah 41:28 — No One Can Answer

> **“I looked, but there was no one—no counselor among them—who, when I asked, could give an answer.”**

God searches the false religious system.

No:

Answer.

No:

Counsel.

No:

Truth.

Cross References

Isaiah 63:5

God sees that no one is able to provide the needed help, so His own arm brings salvation.

Ezekiel 22:30

God looked for someone to stand in the gap, yet found no one faithful enough for the role.

Psalm 142:4

The psalmist looks for human help and finds no one able to provide refuge.

Spiritual Principle

False gods cannot supply:

Counsel.

XXIX. THE FINAL VERDICT ON IDOLS

Isaiah 41:29 — Wind and Confusion

> **“See, they are all false; their deeds are nothing; their idols are but wind and confusion.”**

The chapter ends with:

Verdict.

False.

Nothing.

Wind.

Confusion.

Cross References

Jeremiah 10:14

Idol makers are exposed as foolish because their images contain no life or truth.

1 Corinthians 8:4

Paul declares that an idol has no real divine existence and that there is only one true God.

Psalm 135:15

The idols of the nations are merely silver and gold shaped by human hands.

Spiritual Principle

False worship ends in:

Emptiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

An idol promises substance and leaves you holding wind.

XXX. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 41

1. God Rules History

Principle:

Rulers rise within divine sovereignty, not outside it.

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2. God’s People Are Chosen

Principle:

Israel’s calling rests on God’s covenant purpose.

---

3. God Has Not Rejected His Servant

Principle:

Discipline does not mean abandonment.

---

4. Fear Is Answered by God’s Presence

Principle:

“I am with you” is stronger than “You are strong enough.”

---

5. God Strengthens the Weak

Principle:

Jacob the worm becomes a sharp threshing instrument.

---

6. God Provides for the Needy

Principle:

Dry places do not limit the Creator of rivers.

---

7. God’s Blessings Reveal His Hand

Principle:

Provision should lead to recognition and worship.

---

8. Idols Cannot Predict

Principle:

False gods are trapped in silence because they possess neither knowledge nor sovereignty.

---

9. God Announces the Future

Principle:

Prophecy reveals that history is known and governed by Him.

---

10. True Hope Is in the Redeemer

Principle:

The Holy One of Israel alone can help, uphold, provide, redeem, and save.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 41 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

Fear is addressed repeatedly.

Verse 10:

> **“Do not fear.”**

Verse 13:

> **“Do not fear.”**

Verse 14:

> **“Do not be afraid.”**

God knows:

His people fear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not shame frightened people.

He gives frightened people reasons to trust.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 41 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S PRESENCE

The foundational promise is:

> **“I am with you.”**

Spiritual Principle

God’s presence does not guarantee:

No difficulty.

It guarantees:

No abandonment.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 41 TEACHES ABOUT STRENGTH

The nations say:

> **“Be strong!”**

God says:

> **“I will strengthen you.”**

There is the difference.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Self-generated courage says:

“Find strength.”

Grace says:

“Receive strength.”

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 41 TEACHES ABOUT HELP

God repeats:

I will help.

Spiritual Principle

Divine help is not:

An abstract doctrine.

It is a promise from:

A personal God.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 41 TEACHES ABOUT IDENTITY

Israel is called:

Servant.

Chosen.

Offspring of Abraham.

Not rejected.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fear loses some of its power when you remember:

Who you are.

And:

Whose you are.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 41 TEACHES ABOUT THE REDEEMER

God identifies Himself as:

> **“Your Redeemer.”**

Redemption means:

Rescue.

Recovery.

Claim.

Deliverance.

Spiritual Principle

The One who helps Israel is not:

A stranger.

He is their Redeemer.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 41 TEACHES ABOUT WEAKNESS

“Worm Jacob.”

“Little Israel.”

Yet:

God helps.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can do large things through people who feel small.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 41 TEACHES ABOUT PROVISION

Poor.

Needy.

Thirsty.

No water.

Then:

Rivers.

Springs.

Pools.

Fountains.

Spiritual Principle

God’s provision can exceed:

The need.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 41 TEACHES ABOUT RESTORATION

The desert receives:

Water.

Trees.

Life.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely rescue people from dying in the desert.

He can change the desert.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 41 TEACHES ABOUT PROPHECY

God can:

Announce beforehand.

Explain afterward.

Fulfill precisely.

Spiritual Principle

The Lord stands above:

Time.

XLI. WHAT ISAIAH 41 TEACHES ABOUT IDOLATRY

Idols need:

Craftsmen.

Tools.

Metal.

Wood.

Nails.

God needs:

None.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The idol is the product of human hands.

Human hands are the product of God.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 41 TEACHES ABOUT CYRUS

The chapter does not yet name:

Cyrus.

But the larger sequence of Isaiah develops toward:

Him.

The conqueror from:

East.

North.

Will later be explicitly identified.

Spiritual Principle

God can announce an instrument of deliverance long before that person arrives on history’s stage.

XLIII. THE NATIONS SAY “BE STRONG”

They strengthen:

One another.

Then strengthen:

Their idol.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human courage built on a false god is only organized fear.

XLIV. GOD SAYS “I WILL STRENGTHEN YOU”

Israel’s strength source is:

Different.

Spiritual Principle

God does not ask His people to manufacture what He promises to supply.

XLV. CHOSEN, NOT REJECTED

Exile can feel:

Rejected.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never let present circumstances rewrite a covenant promise God has not revoked.

XLVI. “I AM YOUR GOD”

More personal than:

I am God.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant relationship turns:

Theology.

Into:

Assurance.

XLVII. THE RIGHTEOUS RIGHT HAND

God upholds with:

Power.

And:

Righteousness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s power is never separated from God’s character.

XLVIII. ENEMIES BECOME NOTHING

Their apparent greatness is:

Temporary.

Spiritual Principle

Opposition has:

An expiration date.

XLIX. THE HAND-HOLDING GOD

God says:

I take your right hand.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God above history is not too exalted to come near one frightened servant.

L. THE REDEEMER OF WORM JACOB

Weak Jacob has:

A strong Redeemer.

Spiritual Principle

The effectiveness of redemption depends on:

The Redeemer.

Not:

The size of the redeemed.

LI. FROM WORM TO THRESHING TOOL

A dramatic reversal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can transform identity shaped by weakness into usefulness shaped by His power.

LII. MOUNTAINS BECOME CHAFF

What appears:

Immovable.

Becomes:

Blown away.

Spiritual Principle

Do not measure the obstacle before considering the God who can reduce it.

LIII. REJOICE IN THE LORD

The victory belongs to:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If the breakthrough makes you proud instead of worshipful, you have misunderstood the source.

LIV. THE THIRSTY TONGUE

Need becomes:

Extreme.

Spiritual Principle

God does not wait for His people to appear strong before answering.

LV. “I WILL NOT FORSAKE THEM”

This is the covenant heart of provision.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes the greatest provision is not water first.

It is the promise:

“I have not left you.”

LVI. RIVERS ON BARREN HEIGHTS

Rivers usually flow:

Low.

God says:

Barren heights.

Spiritual Principle

God is not limited by natural expectations.

LVII. SPRINGS IN THE VALLEYS

High.

Low.

Both:

Provided for.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is no elevation of life where God cannot supply what is needed.

LVIII. TREES IN THE WASTELAND

Trees represent:

Stability.

Shade.

Beauty.

Life.

Spiritual Principle

God can plant permanence in places marked by desolation.

LIX. “SEE AND KNOW”

God wants people to:

Notice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not receive restoration so casually that you fail to recognize whose hand produced it.

LX. THE IDOLS ENTER COURT

God challenges:

Predict.

Explain.

Act.

Spiritual Principle

False religion collapses under:

Serious examination.

LXI. “DO SOMETHING”

The idol cannot:

Move.

Speak.

Save.

Predict.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never entrust your life to something that cannot answer God’s challenge.

LXII. LESS THAN NOTHING

Isaiah’s language is:

Strong.

Because idolatry is:

Serious.

Spiritual Principle

Replacing God with anything created is spiritually destructive.

LXIII. GOD STIRS UP CYRUS

The future ruler appears before:

Israel sees him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may already be preparing the answer while His people are still praying about the problem.

LXIV. GOD SAYS IT FIRST

> **“I was the first to say to Zion.”**

Spiritual Principle

God’s revelation precedes:

Human discovery.

LXV. GOOD NEWS AFTER FEAR

The chapter begins:

Nations trembling.

It moves toward:

Good news.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fear does not get the final announcement.

God does.

LXVI. NO COUNSELOR AMONG THE IDOLS

They have:

No answer.

Spiritual Principle

A silent idol cannot guide a confused life.

LXVII. WIND AND CONFUSION

The idols end as:

Wind.

Nothing to hold.

Confusion.

Nothing to trust.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every substitute for God eventually proves lighter than the promises made for it.

LXVIII. ISAIAH 40 AND ISAIAH 41

Isaiah 40

God says:

Wait upon Me.

I will renew your strength.

Isaiah 41

God says:

Do not fear.

I will strengthen you.

Key Truth

The strength promised at the end of Isaiah 40 becomes the personal assurance of Isaiah 41.

LXIX. ISAIAH 41 AND THE SERVANT THEME

Israel is called:

God’s servant.

This theme will become increasingly important.

Isaiah will speak of:

Israel as servant.

And later:

A distinct Servant whose mission reaches beyond Israel and brings salvation.

Spiritual Principle

The servant theme develops progressively through Isaiah and should be read carefully in its immediate context before later passages are connected.

LXX. TEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 41

1. Frightened Nations → Sovereign God

2. Manufactured Idols → Living Lord

3. Idol Supported by Nails → Israel Upheld by God

4. Rejected Feeling → Chosen Servant

5. Fear → Divine Presence

6. Weak Jacob → Sharp Threshing Tool

7. Thirsty Desert → Rivers and Springs

8. Wasteland → Forest

9. Silent Idols → Prophetic God

10. Confusion → Good News

Key Truth

Isaiah 41 repeatedly contrasts what humans must support with the God who supports His people.

LXXI. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who does God summon at the beginning of the chapter?

The coastlands and peoples of the nations.

Question 2

What are they told to do first?

Be silent before God.

Question 3

Who raises rulers and directs history?

The Lord.

Question 4

How does God describe Himself in verse 4?

As the First and the One who remains with the last.

Question 5

How do the nations respond to fear?

They gather, encourage one another, and make idols.

Question 6

Why is the idol picture ironic?

The supposed god must be fastened with nails so it does not fall.

Question 7

What does God call Israel?

His servant.

Question 8

Whose offspring are they?

Abraham’s.

Question 9

What does God say about rejection?

> **“I have chosen you and not rejected you.”**

Question 10

What is the great promise of verse 10?

God is with His people, strengthens them, helps them, and upholds them.

Question 11

What will happen to Israel’s enemies?

They will be disgraced and eventually become as nothing.

Question 12

What does God do in verse 13?

He takes Israel by the right hand.

Question 13

How is Jacob described in verse 14?

As a worm and little Israel, emphasizing weakness.

Question 14

How does God identify Himself?

As Israel’s Redeemer and the Holy One of Israel.

Question 15

What does weak Jacob become?

A sharp threshing instrument.

Question 16

What do the poor and needy lack?

Water.

Question 17

What does God promise?

To answer them and not forsake them.

Question 18

What does He put in the desert?

Rivers, springs, pools, fountains, and many kinds of trees.

Question 19

Why does God do these things?

So people will see and understand that the Lord’s hand has done it.

Question 20

What challenge does God give the idols?

Explain history, predict the future, or do something demonstrating divine power.

Question 21

Can the idols answer?

No.

Question 22

What verdict does God give concerning them?

They are less than nothing and their works are worthless.

Question 23

What future ruler does the chapter anticipate?

The conqueror later identified explicitly as Cyrus.

Question 24

Who first announces good news to Zion?

The Lord.

Question 25

How does the chapter describe idols at the end?

As false, empty, wind, and confusion.

LXXII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 41 asks several searching questions.

What Am I Afraid Of?

Does that fear feel:

Larger than God?

What Has God Said to Fearful People?

> **“I am with you.”**

Am I Trying to Generate Strength by Myself?

Or receiving strength from:

God?

What Idol Have I Nailed Down?

Money?

Control?

Reputation?

Politics?

Possessions?

Career?

A relationship?

Anything I expect to hold me up that actually needs:

Me.

To hold it up?

Do I remember that I am:

Chosen.

Called.

Not rejected?

Am I allowing a difficult season to make me believe:

God abandoned me?

Do I believe God is actually willing to:

Help?

Is there a mountain before me that I assume:

Cannot move?

Where am I thirsty?

Emotionally?

Spiritually?

Relationally?

Do I believe God can create rivers where there are no natural sources?

When God provides, do I recognize:

His hand?

What do I trust for knowledge of the future?

God’s Word?

Or:

Fear?

Speculation?

False spiritual claims?

Is my hope in:

The Redeemer?

Or:

An idol that cannot answer?

LXXIII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Fear—The God Who Holds History Also Holds Your Hand”

Isaiah 41 begins with:

Generations.

Nations.

Kings.

It moves to:

One frightened servant.

And God says:

> **“I take hold of your right hand.”**

Principle:

The God who is sovereign over the largest movements of history is personally present in the smallest moments of your fear.

LXXIV. SILENCE BEFORE GOD

The nations are told:

Be quiet.

Spiritual Principle

Before we explain the world to God, perhaps we should first:

Listen.

LXXV. THE GOD OF GENERATIONS

He calls:

Generation after generation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No century is outside divine sovereignty.

LXXVI. THE FIRST AND THE LAST

Every ruler appears:

Between.

God stands:

Before and after.

Spiritual Principle

Human history is surrounded by:

God.

LXXVII. FEARFUL PEOPLE BUILDING GODS

They tremble.

Then:

Manufacture security.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fear often creates idols because frightened people want something visible to control.

LXXVIII. THE IDOL NEEDS A HAMMER

A tool makes:

The god.

Spiritual Principle

What human craftsmanship produces cannot become the ultimate source of human existence.

LXXIX. GOD CHOSE ISRAEL

Not because:

Israel was strongest.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace begins with God’s purpose, not human superiority.

LXXX. ABRAHAM, GOD’S FRIEND

Israel’s identity is rooted in:

Covenant history.

Spiritual Principle

God’s faithfulness stretches across:

Generations.

LXXXI. “NOT REJECTED”

Words for:

Exiles.

Discouraged people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never let discipline convince you of something God explicitly denies.

LXXXII. THREE “I WILL” PROMISES

I will:

Strengthen.

Help.

Uphold.

Spiritual Principle

God answers fear with:

Commitment.

LXXXIII. THE RIGHT HAND OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

His hand is:

Strong.

Right.

Faithful.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God never uses His strength unrighteously.

LXXXIV. SEARCHING FOR ENEMIES AND NOT FINDING THEM

A complete reversal.

Spiritual Principle

The enemy can feel permanent while it is present.

It is not necessarily permanent.

LXXXV. GOD TAKES THE RIGHT HAND

There is comfort in:

Contact.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Theology becomes especially precious when it feels like God is holding your hand through it.

LXXXVI. “I MYSELF WILL HELP YOU”

Not merely:

Angels.

Nations.

Circumstances.

But:

I Myself.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest help is:

God Himself.

LXXXVII. THE HOLY ONE IS ALSO REDEEMER

Holiness does not prevent:

Mercy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God too holy to tolerate sin is also the God willing to redeem sinners.

LXXXVIII. MOUNTAIN-THRESHING GRACE

Jacob begins:

Weak.

Ends:

Effective.

Spiritual Principle

God’s calling can exceed:

Natural capacity.

LXXXIX. WINNOWING THE MOUNTAINS

Mountains become:

Chaff.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not assume a problem’s size determines its permanence.

XC. JOY AFTER THE BATTLE

Israel rejoices in:

The Lord.

Spiritual Principle

God is both:

Source.

And:

Goal.

Of victory.

XCI. THE POOR SEARCH FOR WATER

They actively:

Search.

But find:

None.

Spiritual Principle

Human effort can reach the end of available resources.

XCII. “I WILL ANSWER”

At the point of:

No water.

God speaks.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The absence of visible supply is not evidence of absent Provider.

XCIII. THE DESERT DOES NOT STAY DESERT

God transforms:

Environment.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption reaches beyond survival into:

Renewal.

XCIV. THE FOREST IN THE WASTELAND

One day:

Nothing.

Another day:

Trees.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can create evidence of life where people previously saw evidence only of loss.

XCV. SO PEOPLE WILL KNOW

God’s works point toward:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Miracle without recognition misses the larger purpose.

XCVI. THE COURTROOM CHALLENGE

God says:

Bring evidence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Truth does not fear examination.

XCVII. IDOLS CANNOT EXPLAIN THE PAST

They have:

No memory.

No mind.

Spiritual Principle

A false god cannot interpret history.

XCVIII. IDOLS CANNOT PREDICT THE FUTURE

They have:

No foreknowledge.

Spiritual Principle

Only the sovereign God can declare what He knows and govern what He declares.

XCIX. IDOLS CANNOT DO GOOD OR BAD

They possess:

No real agency.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not fear what cannot act and do not worship what cannot save.

C. CYRUS BEFORE CYRUS

Isaiah announces:

The ruler.

Before naming:

The ruler.

Spiritual Principle

God’s plan can be real long before it is visible.

CI. THE POTTER AND THE CLAY

Rulers become:

Clay.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Those who treat nations like clay remain clay themselves before the true Potter.

CII. GOD DECLARES IT FIRST

Prediction validates:

Sovereignty.

Spiritual Principle

The future surprises us.

It does not surprise:

God.

CIII. GOOD NEWS FOR ZION

The chapter is not merely:

Courtroom condemnation.

It includes:

Hope.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s sovereignty is frightening to idols and comforting to His people.

CIV. NO ANSWER FROM FALSE GODS

Silence.

Nothing.

Spiritual Principle

False gods sound impressive until they are required to answer.

CV. WIND AND CONFUSION

What remains after idolatry?

Wind.

Confusion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Anything replacing God eventually creates less stability than it promised.

CVI. TWELVE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 41

1. Nations Trembling → God Unmoved

2. Humans Strengthening Idols → God Strengthening His People

3. Idol Nailed Down → Israel Upheld

4. Fear → Presence

5. Rejection Fear → Chosen Identity

6. Worm Jacob → Threshing Instrument

7. Mountains → Chaff

8. Thirst → Rivers

9. Desert → Forest

10. Idol Silence → Divine Prophecy

11. Human Confusion → Divine Good News

12. Dead Idols → Living Redeemer

Key Truth

The chapter’s deepest contrast is between gods humans must hold up and the God who holds His people up.

CVII. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 41

1. God Summons the Nations

The whole world answers to Him.

2. God Reveals His Control of History

Rulers rise within His purpose.

3. The Nations Build Idols

Fear produces false security.

4. God Reassures Israel

Chosen.

Not rejected.

Strengthened.

Helped.

Upheld.

5. God Transforms Weakness

Jacob becomes an instrument of victory.

6. God Provides in the Wilderness

Rivers and trees appear.

7. God Exposes the Idols

They cannot predict, answer, act, or save.

Key Truth

Isaiah 41 moves from the fear of nations to the faithfulness of God, from powerless idols to the powerful Redeemer, and from Israel's weakness to divine help and future victory.

CVIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 41 begins with:

A courtroom.

The nations are called:

To account.

God asks:

Who controls:

History?

Who raises:

Rulers?

Who calls:

Generations?

The answer is:

The Lord.

Then something interesting happens.

The nations become:

Afraid.

And what do frightened people do?

They make:

Idols.

One craftsman helps:

Another.

They say:

> **“Be strong!”**

Then they nail their god down so:

It will not fall.

That is the tragedy of:

Idolatry.

People are looking for something:

Strong enough to hold them.

So they create something that needs:

Them.

To hold it.

Then God turns to:

Israel.

And says:

You do not need:

An idol.

You have:

Me.

You are:

My servant.

Chosen.

Not rejected.

Then comes:

Verse 10.

“Do not fear, for I am with you.”

Notice God does not say:

Do not fear because:

You are powerful.

You have enough money.

You have enough soldiers.

The situation is easy.

Nothing bad will happen.

He says:

“I am with you.”

That is enough.

Then:

“I will strengthen you.”

“I will help you.”

“I will uphold you.”

Maybe today you feel:

Weak.

Small.

Overwhelmed.

God calls Jacob:

A worm.

Little Israel.

That does not sound:

Impressive.

But the next verse says:

I will make you:

A sharp threshing instrument.

That is what God does.

He takes:

Weak people.

And gives:

Strength.

He takes:

Small people.

And gives:

Purpose.

He takes:

Fearful people.

And gives:

His presence.

Then God says:

“I take hold of your right hand.”

Think about that.

The God who says:

I am the First.

I am with the Last.

I call generations.

I move kings.

I govern nations.

I create rivers.

I declare the future.

Also says:

Give Me your hand.

That is the God of Isaiah 41.

Then the chapter moves to:

Thirst.

Poor people search:

For water.

Nothing.

The tongue:

Dry.

The land:

Barren.

God says:

“I will answer them.”

And He does not merely give:

A cup.

He gives:

Rivers.

Springs.

Pools.

Fountains.

Then:

Trees.

A forest in:

The wasteland.

Why?

So people will say:

God did this.

Then God turns back toward:

The idols.

All right.

If you are gods:

Predict.

Speak.

Act.

Do something.

They cannot.

The final verdict:

Wind.

Confusion.

That means the choice of Isaiah 41 is simple.

Will you trust:

Something you must hold up?

Or:

The God who holds you up?

Will you trust:

What needs nails?

Or:

The hand holding your hand?

Will you trust:

An idol unable to speak?

Or:

The God who declares the future?

Will you fear:

The mountain?

Or believe the God who can reduce mountains to:

Chaff?

Will you stare at:

The desert?

Or trust the God who sees:

Rivers?

So when fear says:

You are alone.

Remember:

“I am with you.”

When weakness says:

You cannot continue.

Remember:

“I will strengthen you.”

When trouble says:

No one will help.

Remember:

“I will help you.”

When you feel:

Unstable.

Remember:

“I will uphold you.”

When you feel:

Forgotten.

Remember:

> **“I have chosen you and not rejected you.”**

When you feel:

Small.

Remember:

Your Redeemer is not.

And when you do not know how to walk through the next moment:

Remember:

The God who holds history also holds:

Your hand.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You are:

The First.

And You remain with:

The last.

You rule:

History.

Nations.

Kings.

Generations.

Father, forgive us for:

Fear.

And forgive us for the idols we create because of:

Fear.

Things we expect to:

Protect us.

Control the future.

Give security.

Yet they themselves need:

Support.

Teach us to trust:

You.

Father, thank You that You call Your people:

Chosen.

Servants.

Not rejected.

When we feel:

Forgotten.

Remind us:

We are not abandoned.

When we are afraid:

Speak again:

“Do not fear, for I am with you.”

Strengthen us.

Help us.

Uphold us.

Take us by:

The right hand.

Father, when we feel:

Small.

Weak.

Insignificant.

Remind us that our Redeemer is:

Strong.

Holy.

Faithful.

Make us useful in:

Your hands.

Turn mountains into:

Chaff.

Turn weakness into:

Strength.

Turn fear into:

Faith.

Father, when we are:

Poor.

Needy.

Thirsty.

And there seems to be:

No water.

Answer us.

Open:

Rivers.

Springs.

Pools.

Fountains.

Bring life to:

Dry places.

Plant trees in:

Wastelands.

And when You do:

Help us recognize:

Your hand.

Father, expose every idol.

Anything false.

Anything empty.

Anything we trust more than:

You.

Teach us that no created thing can:

Predict.

Provide.

Protect.

Redeem.

Like You.

Thank You that You know:

The future.

You rule:

The present.

You remember:

The past.

And You hold:

Your people.

May this promise remain in our hearts:

> **“Do not fear; I will help you.”**

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” — Isaiah 41:10**

Central Truth

The Lord alone rules history, calls generations, raises rulers, declares the future, provides for the needy, and exposes idols as powerless; therefore His chosen people need not fear, because their Redeemer is personally with them to strengthen, help, uphold, guide, protect, and transform their weakness into fruitful service.

Isaiah 41 in One Sentence

Isaiah summons the nations before the sovereign Lord, reveals that God directs history and raises rulers according to His purpose, exposes idols as helpless objects that must themselves be supported, assures chosen Israel that it has not been rejected and need not fear because God will strengthen, help, uphold, and take it by the hand, promises rivers and life in the wilderness, and concludes that the Holy One of Israel alone can predict, provide, redeem, and save while every idol proves to be wind and confusion.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 42 — The Servant of the Lord

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 42 introduces one of the most important figures in the second half of Isaiah:

The Servant of the Lord.

The chapter opens with God saying:

> **“Behold My Servant.”**

This Servant is:

Chosen.

Upheld.

Delighting the heart of God.

Anointed by the Spirit.

Commissioned to bring justice to:

The nations.

Unlike proud earthly rulers, He does not advance through:

Boasting.

Noise.

Self-promotion.

Crushing the weak.

Instead:

A bruised reed He does not break.

A smoldering wick He does not extinguish.

Yet His gentleness should never be confused with:

Weakness.

He will not:

Falter.

Be discouraged.

Fail.

His mission reaches:

The earth.

The coastlands.

The nations.

The New Testament directly applies Isaiah 42:1–4 to:

Jesus Christ.

Matthew quotes this passage in connection with Christ's ministry and identifies Jesus as the Servant in whom God delights.

The Father's words at Jesus' baptism also echo Isaiah's language:

> **"My chosen one in whom My soul delights."**

The Spirit rests upon Him.

He brings:

Justice.

Light.

Freedom.

Sight.

Release.

The chapter therefore gives a remarkable picture of the Messiah.

He is:

Gentle with the broken.

Faithful in His mission.

Universal in His reach.

Spirit-anointed.

A covenant for the people.

A light to the Gentiles.

One who opens:

Blind eyes.

One who releases:

Prisoners.

Isaiah 42 also contains an important distinction.

At the beginning of the chapter, the Servant is:

Faithful.

Spirit-filled.

Successful.

Later in the chapter, Israel is also called:

God’s servant.

But Israel is described as:

Blind.

Deaf.

Disobedient.

This contrast is crucial.

Israel had been called to serve God.

Yet Israel failed in that calling.

The ideal Servant fulfills what Israel failed to fulfill.

This prepares the way for the later Servant passages where the Servant's identity and redemptive mission become even clearer.

Isaiah 42 also emphasizes:

God's glory.

The Lord says:

> **"I will not give My glory to another."**

This directly condemns:

Idolatry.

False worship.

Human substitutes.

The chapter then breaks into:

A new song.

The ends of the earth are called to praise.

Wilderness settlements.

Coastlands.

Mountains.

All proclaim:

The Lord's glory.

Then the imagery changes again.

The gentle Servant does not shout in the streets.

But the Lord Himself marches like:

A warrior.

God's patience has endured.

Now:

He acts.

The chapter then returns to:

Blindness.

But not physical blindness.

Spiritual blindness.

Israel sees many things but:

Does not pay attention.

Its ears are open but:

It does not listen.

The people have suffered:

Plunder.

Captivity.

War.

Yet the tragedy is:

They still do not understand.

The chapter ends with judgment that has not yet produced:

Repentance.

That prepares for the great promise of the next chapter.

The central truth of Isaiah 42 is:

God presents His Spirit-anointed Servant, fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who gently yet faithfully brings justice, becomes a covenant for the people and light for the nations, opens blind eyes and frees captives; while Israel, God's servant by calling, is exposed as spiritually blind and disobedient, showing humanity's need for the faithful Servant who accomplishes the mission God's people could not fulfill.

I. "BEHOLD MY SERVANT"

Isaiah 42:1 — The Chosen, Spirit-Anointed Servant

> **"Behold My Servant, whom I uphold, My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring justice to the nations."**

God begins:

Not with Israel's failure.

But with:

His Servant.

Four things are said.

He is:

God’s Servant.

God’s chosen One.

God’s delight.

Spirit-anointed.

His mission reaches:

The nations.

Cross References

Matthew 12:18

Matthew directly quotes this passage and applies it to Jesus, identifying Him as God’s chosen Servant upon whom the Spirit rests and through whom justice reaches the nations.

Matthew 3:17

At Jesus’ baptism, the Father declares His pleasure in the Son, echoing Isaiah’s description of the One in whom God delights.

Luke 3:22

The Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus and the Father publicly identifies Him as the beloved Son in whom He is pleased.

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah’s ministry begins with:

The Father’s choice.

The Spirit’s anointing.

The Father’s delight.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus did not invent His mission.

He came as the Servant chosen, upheld, and sent by the Father.

II. THE SERVANT DOES NOT SEEK ATTENTION

Isaiah 42:2 — Quiet Strength

> **“He will not shout or cry out, or raise His voice in the streets.”**

The Servant does not build His kingdom through:

Self-advertisement.

Political spectacle.

Shouting.

Aggressive promotion.

His authority does not depend upon:

Noise.

Cross References

Matthew 12:19

Matthew applies this verse directly to Christ’s quiet and non-combative manner.

Matthew 11:29

Jesus describes Himself as gentle and humble in heart and invites the weary to learn from Him.

1 Peter 2:23

When insulted, Jesus did not retaliate with insults but entrusted Himself to the One who judges justly.

Spiritual Principle

True authority does not need:

Constant self-promotion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A loud voice can attract attention.

A faithful life reveals authority.

III. THE SERVANT DOES NOT CRUSH THE WEAK

Isaiah 42:3 — The Bruised Reed and Smoldering Wick

> **“A bruised reed He will not break, and a smoldering wick He will not snuff out. In faithfulness He will bring forth justice.”**

A bruised reed is:

Bent.

Damaged.

Fragile.

A smoldering wick has:

Almost no flame.

The Servant does not:

Discard.

Crush.

Extinguish.

He restores.

Yet notice:

Gentleness and justice exist together.

Cross References

Matthew 12:20

Matthew directly applies this compassionate description to Jesus.

2 Timothy 2:25

God’s servant is instructed to correct opponents gently, hoping God may lead them to repentance.

John 8:11

Jesus refuses to crush the woman caught in sin, while still calling her away from sin.

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah does not treat weakness as:

Worthlessness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Christ knows the difference between rebellion that must be confronted and bruised weakness that needs to be restored.

IV. THE SERVANT WILL NOT FAIL

Isaiah 42:4 — Justice to the Ends of the Earth

> **“He will not falter or be discouraged until He establishes justice on the earth; the coastlands will wait for His teaching.”**

The bruised reed may be weak.

The Servant is not.

He will not:

Falter.

Be crushed.

Give up.

His mission continues until:

Justice is established.

His teaching reaches:

The coastlands.

Cross References

Matthew 12:21

Matthew says the nations will place their hope in the Servant’s name.

Isaiah 51:5

God’s righteousness and salvation go out, and distant peoples wait for His rule.

Psalm 72:8

The righteous king’s dominion is pictured extending widely across the earth.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant is:

Gentle toward the weak.

Unyielding toward the mission.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One who refuses to break the bruised reed cannot Himself be broken by opposition.

V. THE CREATOR COMMISSIONS THE SERVANT

Isaiah 42:5 — The God Who Gives Breath

> **“This is what God the Lord says—the One who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and all that grows from it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it:”**

Before announcing the Servant’s mission, God identifies Himself as:

Creator.

The One who made:

Heavens.

Earth.

Life.

Human breath.

Cross References

Genesis 1:1

God is the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

Psalm 33:6

The heavens were made by the Word of the Lord and their host by His breath.

Jeremiah 10:12

God made the earth by His power and established the world through His wisdom.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s mission rests upon the authority of:

The Creator.

VI. A COVENANT AND A LIGHT

Isaiah 42:6 — The Servant’s Universal Mission

> **“I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness; I will take hold of Your hand. I will keep You and make You to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles,”**

This verse expands the Servant’s work.

He becomes:

A covenant.

A light.

His mission concerns:

Israel.

Gentiles.

The nations.

Cross References

Luke 2:32

Simeon identifies Jesus as a light for revelation to the Gentiles and glory for Israel.

Isaiah 49:6

The Servant is commissioned to bring God’s salvation to the ends of the earth.

Acts 13:47

Paul and Barnabas quote Isaiah’s servant language concerning light and mission to the Gentiles.

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah is not merely a local Savior.

His mission is:

Global.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s covenant purpose was never meant to terminate on one nation; through the Servant, blessing reaches the nations.

VII. THE SERVANT OPENS BLIND EYES

Isaiah 42:7 — Freedom from Darkness

> **“To open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison, and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.”**

The language includes:

Physical.

Spiritual.

Redemptive.

Liberating themes.

Blindness:

Sight.

Captivity:

Freedom.

Darkness:

Light.

Cross References

Luke 4:18

Jesus announces His mission using Isaiah’s language of good news, freedom, recovery of sight, and liberation.

Isaiah 61:1

The Spirit-anointed Servant proclaims liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners.

Zechariah 9:11

God promises release from a waterless pit on the basis of covenant.

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah comes where people cannot:

Free themselves.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Christ does not merely improve the prison.

He opens the door.

VIII. GOD WILL NOT GIVE HIS GLORY TO IDOLS

Isaiah 42:8 — The Exclusive Glory of God

> **“I am the Lord; that is My name! I will not give My glory to another or My praise to idols.”**

God’s glory is:

His.

Not:

Transferable.

Not:

Shared with idols.

Cross References

Isaiah 48:11

God acts for His own name and refuses to surrender His glory to another.

Exodus 20:3

Israel is commanded to have no other gods before the Lord.

Isaiah 45:5

The Lord declares that He alone is God and there is no other.

Spiritual Principle

True worship is:

Exclusive.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can share blessings.

He does not share deity.

IX. GOD DECLARES NEW THINGS BEFORE THEY COME

Isaiah 42:9 — Prophecy Reveals Sovereignty

> **“See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you.”**

God points backward:

Fulfilled prophecy.

Then forward:

Future prophecy.

He knows:

Both.

Cross References

Isaiah 43:19

God announces that He is doing a new thing and calls His people to perceive it.

Revelation 21:5

God declares that He makes all things new.

2 Corinthians 5:17

In Christ, the believer becomes a new creation; the old passes and new life begins.

Spiritual Principle

God is never:

Surprised by tomorrow.

X. SING TO THE LORD A NEW SONG

Isaiah 42:10 — Worldwide Praise

> **“Sing to the Lord a new song, His praise from the ends of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, you coastlands and all who live in them.”**

New revelation of God’s work produces:

New praise.

The geography is:

Global.

Cross References

Psalm 96:1

All the earth is called to sing a new song to the Lord.

Revelation 5:9

Heaven sings a new song to the Lamb because His redemptive work gathers people from every tribe, language, people, and nation.

Psalm 98:1

A new song is offered because the Lord has performed marvelous acts of salvation.

Spiritual Principle

Fresh grace should create:

Fresh praise.

XI. THE WILDERNESS JOINS THE SONG

Isaiah 42:11 — Kedar and Sela Rejoice

> **“Let the wilderness and its towns raise their voices; let the villages of Kedar rejoice.**
> **Let the people of Sela sing for joy; let them shout from the mountaintops.”**

Even distant:

Desert peoples.

Villages.

Mountains.

Join the praise.

Cross References

Psalm 98:4

All the earth is called to shout joyfully to the Lord and break into praise.

Isaiah 44:23

Heavens, earth, mountains, forests, and trees are later called to sing because the Lord redeems His people.

Psalm 65:13

Creation is poetically pictured shouting and singing together under God’s blessing.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation is too great to remain:

Quiet.

XII. GIVE GLORY TO THE LORD

Isaiah 42:12 — Praise in the Islands

> **“Let them give glory to the Lord and proclaim His praise in the islands.”**

The glory belongs to:

God.

Not:

Idols.

Not:

Kings.

Not:

Servants.

Cross References

Psalm 96:3

God’s glory is to be declared among the nations and His wonders among all peoples.

Revelation 14:7

The world is called to fear God, give Him glory, and worship the Creator.

Psalm 145:11

God’s people speak of the glory of His kingdom and proclaim His mighty power.

Spiritual Principle

The proper response to divine salvation is:

Divine glory.

XIII. THE LORD MARCHES LIKE A WARRIOR

Isaiah 42:13 — God Triumphs Over His Enemies

> **“The Lord will march out like a warrior, like a man of war He will stir up His zeal.**
> **With a shout He will raise the battle cry and will triumph over His enemies.”**

The tone changes.

The Servant was:

Gentle.

The Lord now acts:

Powerfully.

God is not:

Passive toward evil.

Cross References

Exodus 15:3

After the deliverance at the Red Sea, the Lord is praised as a warrior who defeats His enemies.

Zephaniah 3:17

The mighty God is present among His people to save them.

Revelation 19:11

Christ is pictured as the righteous heavenly Warrior who judges and makes war in perfect justice.

Spiritual Principle

God’s gentleness toward His people does not mean:

Weakness toward evil.

XIV. GOD’S SILENCE ENDS

Isaiah 42:14 — “Now I Cry Out”

> **“For a long time I have kept silent, I have been quiet and held Myself back. But now, like a woman in labor, I cry out, I gasp and pant.”**

God’s apparent silence had lasted:

A long time.

But silence is not:

Inactivity.

Now:

Action.

Cross References

Isaiah 26:17

Labor pains illustrate intense pressure before a decisive outcome.

John 16:21

Jesus uses childbirth to show how anguish can precede joy.

Psalm 50:21

God warns that His silence should not be mistaken for approval.

Spiritual Principle

Divine patience should never be interpreted as:

Divine indifference.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s silence has an end point.

XV. GOD REMOVES OBSTACLES

Isaiah 42:15 — Mountains and Waters Changed

> **“I will lay waste the mountains and hills and dry up all their vegetation; I will turn rivers into islands and dry up the pools.”**

The Creator controls:

Mountains.

Vegetation.

Rivers.

Pools.

The imagery expresses:

Sovereign intervention.

Cross References

Nahum 1:4

God rebukes seas and rivers and causes fertile lands to wither.

Isaiah 50:2

God reminds His people that His power can dry seas and rivers.

Joel 1:12

Judgment can cause vines, trees, and vegetation to wither.

Spiritual Principle

Creation itself remains subject to:

God’s purposes.

XVI. GOD LEADS THE BLIND

Isaiah 42:16 — Darkness Becomes Light

> **“I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them. I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them.”**

One of the chapter’s most comforting promises.

The blind cannot:

See the road.

God says:

I will lead.

The path is:

Unknown.

God says:

I will guide.

The darkness is:

Real.

God says:

I will turn it to light.

Cross References

Isaiah 35:5

The blind receive sight as part of God’s restoration.

John 9:39

Jesus speaks of His coming in terms of sight and blindness, revealing spiritual realities.

Acts 26:18

Paul is commissioned to open eyes and turn people from darkness to light and from Satan’s power to God.

Spiritual Principle

God does not require you to see the entire path before:

Following Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When you cannot see the road, trust the One holding your hand.

XVII. “I WILL NOT FORSAKE THEM”

This promise is:

Personal.

Covenantal.

Strong.

Spiritual Principle

Unfamiliar paths do not mean:

Absent God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may lead you somewhere you have never been without ever leaving you alone there.

XVIII. IDOL WORSHIPERS TURN BACK IN SHAME

Isaiah 42:17 — False Trust Exposed

> **“But those who trust in idols, who say to images, ‘You are our gods,’ will be turned back in shame.”**

The issue is:

Trust.

Idolatry is not merely:

Owning an image.

It is giving created things:

The confidence that belongs to God.

Cross References

Psalm 97:7

Those serving carved images are put to shame when the true Lord reveals His supremacy.

Psalm 115:8

Those who make and trust idols become spiritually like the lifeless things they worship.

Habakkuk 2:19

A person is condemned for calling dead wood or silent stone to awaken and guide.

Spiritual Principle

Every false god eventually:

Fails its worshiper.

XIX. “HEAR, YOU DEAF”

Isaiah 42:18 — Spiritual Blindness Exposed

> **“Hear, you deaf; look, you blind, and see!”**

Now the chapter turns toward:

Israel.

The blindness is:

Spiritual.

They possess:

Revelation.

But do not respond.

Cross References

Isaiah 6:9

Isaiah’s ministry had already confronted people who heard but failed to understand and saw but failed to perceive.

Mark 8:18

Jesus asks His disciples whether, despite having eyes and ears, they still fail to perceive and understand.

Matthew 13:16

Jesus blesses those whose eyes truly see and whose ears truly hear.

Spiritual Principle

Physical senses do not guarantee:

Spiritual perception.

XX. GOD’S SERVANT IS BLIND

Isaiah 42:19 — Israel’s Failure

> **“Who is blind but My servant, or deaf like My messenger whom I send? Who is blind like the one in covenant with Me, blind like the servant of the Lord?”**

This verse creates an intentional contrast.

Verses 1–4:

The faithful Servant.

Here:

Israel as unfaithful servant.

Israel was called to:

See.

Hear.

Witness.

Teach.

But became:

Blind.

Deaf.

Cross References

Isaiah 43:8

God later calls forth a people who have eyes yet are blind and ears yet are deaf.

Matthew 15:14

Jesus warns that blind guides can lead others into disaster.

Romans 2:19

Paul addresses those who confidently regard themselves as guides to the blind while needing to examine their own obedience.

Spiritual Principle

Calling does not guarantee:

Faithfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A person can possess a mission from God while failing to perceive the God of the mission.

XXI. SEEING WITHOUT PAYING ATTENTION

Isaiah 42:20 — Open Ears That Do Not Listen

> **“You see many things but pay no attention; your ears are open, but you do not listen.”**

The problem is not lack of:

Information.

It is lack of:

Response.

Cross References

Matthew 13:13

Jesus describes people who see without truly perceiving and hear without understanding.

Mark 4:12

Jesus uses Isaiah’s language concerning people who encounter truth yet remain resistant to its meaning.

Jeremiah 5:21

God addresses a foolish people who have eyes but do not see and ears but do not hear.

Spiritual Principle

Exposure to truth is not the same as:

Obedience to truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A Bible can be open while the heart remains closed.

XXII. GOD MAKES HIS LAW GREAT

Isaiah 42:21 — God’s Righteousness Is Magnified

> **“The Lord was pleased, for the sake of His righteousness, to make His law great and glorious.”**

God’s law reveals:

His righteousness.

Its failure does not come from:

The law.

It comes from:

The people who refuse to obey.

Cross References

Matthew 5:17

Jesus says He did not come to abolish the Law and Prophets but to fulfill them.

Romans 3:31

Faith does not overthrow God’s law but establishes its rightful place.

Psalm 40:8

The righteous servant delights to do God’s will and carries His instruction within the heart.

Spiritual Principle

God’s standards are not:

Defective.

Our obedience is.

XXIII. THE PEOPLE ARE PLUNDERED

Isaiah 42:22 — Captivity and Helplessness

> **“But this is a people plundered and looted, all trapped in pits or hidden away in prisons. They have become prey, with no one to rescue them; they have been made loot, with no one to say, ‘Restore them!’”**

The servant people are:

Captive.

Plundered.

Helpless.

This is the consequence of:

Persistent disobedience.

Cross References

Jeremiah 30:16

God promises that those who devoured His people will themselves face judgment and that plunderers will be plundered.

Lamentations 1:3

Judah is pictured going into exile under severe affliction and finding no rest.

2 Kings 17:6

The northern kingdom was conquered and its people carried away by Assyria.

Spiritual Principle

Sin promises freedom and can end in:

Captivity.

XXIV. WHO WILL LISTEN?

Isaiah 42:23 — A Call to Learn

> **“Which of you will listen to this or pay attention in time to come?”**

God wants more than:

Pain.

He wants:

Learning.

Repentance.

Wisdom.

Cross References

Isaiah 1:2

Heaven and earth are called to listen as God confronts His rebellious children.

Deuteronomy 32:1

Moses calls heaven and earth to hear the covenant message he speaks.

Psalm 78:1

God’s people are commanded to listen carefully to instruction and learn from history.

Spiritual Principle

Suffering without reflection can be:

Wasted.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The question is not merely:

“What happened?”

It is:

“What will you learn?”

XXV. WHO GAVE JACOB TO THE PLUNDERERS?

Isaiah 42:24 — Sin and Divine Discipline

> **“Who handed Jacob over to become loot, and Israel to the plunderers? Was it not the Lord, against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in His ways, they were not obedient to His law.”**

The answer is:

God allowed judgment.

Why?

Not because Assyria or Babylon was:

Ultimately sovereign.

Because:

Israel sinned.

Refused God’s ways.

Rejected His law.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:15

Israel had been warned that persistent disobedience to God’s covenant would bring serious consequences.

Isaiah 64:5

The people acknowledge that sin and persistent rebellion have brought them under divine displeasure.

Judges 2:14

When Israel repeatedly abandoned the Lord, God allowed oppressors to overcome them.

Spiritual Principle

God’s sovereignty over judgment does not erase:

Human responsibility.

XXVI. JUDGMENT FAILS TO WAKE THEM

Isaiah 42:25 — Surrounded by Fire Yet Unmoved

> **“So He poured out on them His burning anger, the violence of war. It enveloped them in flames, yet they did not understand; it consumed them, yet they did not take it to heart.”**

This is the tragedy.

Judgment:

Surrounds.

Consumes.

Hurts.

Yet the heart remains:

Unchanged.

Cross References

2 Kings 17:14

Israel refused to listen and hardened itself despite repeated warning.

Isaiah 9:13

Even after judgment, the people did not return to the Lord who struck them.

Hosea 7:9

Strength was consumed and signs of decline appeared, yet the people failed to recognize what was happening.

Spiritual Principle

Pain does not automatically produce:

Repentance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Suffering becomes spiritually fruitful only when we allow it to teach us.

XXVII. THE FAITHFUL SERVANT AND THE BLIND SERVANT

This is one of the chapter's most important theological contrasts.

The Servant of Verses 1–4

Chosen.

Spirit-filled.

Gentle.

Faithful.

Just.

Unfailing.

Worldwide in mission.

Israel the Servant in Verses 18–25

Blind.

Deaf.

Disobedient.

Plundered.

Unresponsive.

Key Truth

Israel's failure creates the need for the faithful Servant who perfectly carries out God's mission.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

The New Testament explicitly identifies:

Jesus.

As the Servant of Isaiah 42.

He is:

Chosen.

Beloved.

Spirit-anointed.

Gentle.

Faithful.

Hope of the nations.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah 42 does not merely provide similarities to Jesus.

Matthew directly tells us:

Jesus fulfills this Servant prophecy.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT THE SPIRIT

The Servant says:

> **“I have put My Spirit upon Him.”**

Jesus ministers in:

The power of the Holy Spirit.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s mission is:

Spirit-anointed.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT GENTLENESS

The bruised reed is:

Not broken.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Messianic gentleness is strength under perfect control.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT JUSTICE

Justice appears repeatedly.

The Servant will:

Bring justice.

Faithfully establish justice.

Continue until justice reaches:

The earth.

Spiritual Principle

Christ’s gentleness does not mean:

Moral indifference.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT THE NATIONS

The mission reaches:

Gentiles.

Coastlands.

Islands.

Ends of the earth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant’s kingdom was always intended to extend beyond Israel’s national borders.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT COVENANT

The Servant Himself becomes:

A covenant for the people.

Spiritual Principle

God’s saving promise becomes personally embodied in:

The Servant.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT LIGHT

The Servant is:

Light to the Gentiles.

He opens:

Blind eyes.

Turns:

Darkness into light.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Messiah does not merely tell people light exists.

He brings them into it.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT CAPTIVITY

Prison.

Dungeon.

Darkness.

All describe:

Human bondage.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption means:

Release.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S GLORY

God says:

> **“I will not give My glory to another.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Anything that steals worship from God eventually competes with the purpose for which we were created.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT PROPHECY

God announces:

New things.

Before:

They happen.

Spiritual Principle

The future is unknown to us.

Not:

To God.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT WORSHIP

The response to God’s saving work is:

A new song.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

New mercy deserves remembered gratitude and renewed praise.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT GOD AS WARRIOR

God:

Waits.

Then:

Acts.

Spiritual Principle

Divine patience is not:

Divine weakness.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT GUIDANCE

God leads:

Blind people.

On:

Unknown roads.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Guidance does not require you to know the road.

It requires you to trust the Guide.

XLI. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS

Israel:

Sees.

Does not perceive.

Hears.

Does not listen.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual blindness can exist alongside:

Religious privilege.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 42 TEACHES ABOUT DISOBEDIENCE

Judgment came because:

Israel would not walk.

Would not obey.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The servant who refuses the Master’s way eventually loses the blessing of faithful service.

XLIII. A BRUISED REED

Some people are:

Bent.

Wounded.

Fragile.

Spiritual Principle

Christ does not measure human worth by:

Present strength.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not throw away what Jesus is willing to restore.

XLIV. A SMOLDERING WICK

The flame appears:

Almost gone.

Jesus does not:

Extinguish it.

Spiritual Principle

A weak flame is still something the Servant can:

Restore.

XLV. GENTLENESS AND JUSTICE

Modern thinking can separate:

Compassion.

Truth.

Jesus does not.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Biblical gentleness does not abandon justice, and biblical justice does not require cruelty.

XLVI. “HE WILL NOT FALTER”

The Servant experiences opposition.

Yet:

No failure.

Spiritual Principle

Human weakness does not become:

Messianic failure.

XLVII. THE COASTLANDS WAIT FOR HIS TEACHING

Distant nations desire:

Instruction.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The teaching of the Messiah belongs to the world, not merely one geographic region.

XLVIII. CREATOR AND REDEEMER

Verse 5:

Creation.

Verses 6–7:

Redemption.

Spiritual Principle

The God who gives physical breath can also give:

Spiritual freedom.

XLIX. “I WILL TAKE HOLD OF YOUR HAND”

God says this to:

The Servant.

Earlier in Isaiah 41 He said similar words to:

Israel.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The mission of God advances under God’s sustaining hand.

L. A LIGHT TO THE GENTILES

Light does not:

Remain hidden.

Spiritual Principle

God’s saving purpose moves outward.

LI. OPEN BLIND EYES

Jesus did this:

Physically.

And:

Spiritually.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every opened eye in Jesus’ ministry pointed beyond itself toward the larger work of bringing people from darkness into truth.

LII. RELEASE FROM THE DUNGEON

God’s salvation breaks:

Bondage.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant came not merely to advise captives but to:

Liberate them.

LIII. “I AM THE LORD”

The name establishes:

Identity.

Authority.

Exclusivity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Everything in the chapter rests on who God is.

LIV. NEW THINGS DECLARED

God does not repeat:

Human predictions.

He declares:

His purpose.

Spiritual Principle

The One who controls history can announce history.

LV. THE NEW SONG

A new act of salvation produces:

New expression of praise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not let yesterday’s worship become the only language you have for today’s mercy.

LVI. KEDAR SINGS

Desert peoples participate.

Spiritual Principle

No region is too distant for:

God’s praise.

LVII. THE ISLANDS PRAISE

The geographical language keeps widening.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s glory refuses to remain provincial.

LVIII. THE LORD AS WARRIOR

God is not:

Passive.

Spiritual Principle

The same Lord who gently carries lambs can decisively defeat evil.

LIX. THE LONG SILENCE

God says:

For a long time.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine silence is not evidence that God has:

Forgotten.

LX. THE LABOR-PAIN IMAGE

Action is now:

Irreversible.

Urgent.

Spiritual Principle

God’s appointed time eventually:

Arrives.

LXI. MOUNTAINS LAID WASTE

Obstacles appear:

Permanent.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can alter what looked immovable.

LXII. THE BLIND LED ON UNKNOWN ROADS

They cannot:

Map it.

God can:

Lead it.

Spiritual Principle

Faith often means following before:

Understanding.

LXIII. DARKNESS BECOMES LIGHT

God does not merely:

Give a flashlight.

He changes:

Darkness.

To:

Light.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Lord can transform the condition, not merely help you cope with it.

LXIV. ROUGH PLACES MADE SMOOTH

Not every road remains:

Hard forever.

Spiritual Principle

God can remove obstacles as well as strengthen travelers.

LXV. “I WILL NOT FORSAKE THEM”

A promise worth:

Remembering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Unknown path.

Known Guide.

That is enough.

LXVI. IDOLS TURN WORSHIPERS BACKWARD

The idol promises:

Progress.

Produces:

Shame.

Spiritual Principle

False worship always eventually reverses the worshiper’s hope.

LXVII. DEAF SERVANTS

Israel possessed:

God’s Word.

Yet failed to hear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual privilege increases responsibility.

LXVIII. BLIND MESSENGERS

A messenger must:

See.

Know.

Speak.

Israel fails at:

Perception.

Spiritual Principle

You cannot guide others faithfully while refusing to see truth yourself.

LXIX. MANY THINGS SEEN, NOTHING LEARNED

Experience alone does not create:

Wisdom.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You can live through many acts of God and still miss what God is teaching if the heart remains inattentive.

LXX. THE LAW MADE GLORIOUS

The problem was never:

God’s righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

Human failure does not diminish the goodness of God’s standard.

LXXI. PLUNDERED PEOPLE

Israel becomes:

Loot.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Disobedience can reduce a servant from testimony to tragedy.

LXXII. “WHO WILL LISTEN?”

God still calls for:

Response.

Spiritual Principle

Even after failure, the Word still says:

Listen.

LXXIII. THE LORD HANDED THEM OVER

This is difficult but important.

The invading powers were:

Responsible.

Israel was:

Responsible.

God remained:

Sovereign.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can use historical judgment without approving the wicked motives of the human agents involved.

LXXIV. WAR AS DISCIPLINE

The chapter does not glorify:

War.

It presents war as:

Judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Violence is never transformed into virtue merely because God remains sovereign over history.

LXXV. FIRE WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING

The saddest words:

> **“They did not take it to heart.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest tragedy is not merely suffering.

It is suffering without learning.

LXXVI. ISAIAH 41 AND ISAIAH 42

Isaiah 41

Israel is:

God’s servant.

Weak.

Chosen.

Helped.

Isaiah 42

The ideal Servant appears:

Spirit-filled.

Faithful.

Universal.

Unfailing.

Later:

Israel’s blindness is exposed.

Key Truth

The contrast prepares readers to distinguish Israel’s calling as servant from the faithful Messianic Servant who fulfills God’s purpose perfectly.

LXXVII. JESUS AND MATTHEW 12

Matthew does not leave the interpretation:

Uncertain.

He directly quotes Isaiah 42:1–4 regarding:

Jesus.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The safest Christological interpretation is the one Scripture itself explicitly gives us.

LXXVIII. JESUS AND THE BRUISED REED

Consider how Jesus treated:

The sick.

Outcasts.

Sinners.

Children.

The poor.

The ashamed.

Spiritual Principle

Isaiah’s Servant is recognizable in the compassionate ministry of:

Christ.

LXXIX. JESUS AND THE NATIONS

The coastlands wait:

For His teaching.

Matthew says:

The nations hope in His name.

Spiritual Principle

The gospel’s global mission is rooted in:

The Servant’s mission.

LXXX. JESUS AND LIGHT

Simeon recognized:

Jesus.

As light to:

Gentiles.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Christ did not come merely to illuminate Israel’s history but to bring revelation to the nations.

LXXXI. JESUS AND RELEASE

Christ brings:

Freedom from sin.

Darkness.

Bondage.

Condemnation.

Spiritual Principle

The deepest prison is not always made of:

Bars.

LXXXII. THE SERVANT AND THE SPIRIT

The Spirit rests upon:

Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Messiah’s public ministry is inseparable from the Spirit’s anointing.

LXXXIII. GOD’S DELIGHT IN THE SERVANT

God says:

> **“In whom My soul delights.”**

Spiritual Principle

Jesus’ ministry flows out of:

The Father’s pleasure.

Not:

Human approval.

LXXXIV. THE SERVANT’S QUIETNESS

He does not:

Shout for status.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Kingdom authority does not require theatrical self-importance.

LXXXV. THE SERVANT’S PERSEVERANCE

He will not:

Be discouraged.

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah finishes:

What He begins.

LXXXVI. THE SERVANT’S JUSTICE

Justice will reach:

The earth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The mission of Christ is personal enough to restore a bruised reed and global enough to establish justice among nations.

LXXXVII. THE NEW SONG OF THE REDEEMED

The appropriate response is:

Praise.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation that reaches the nations deserves praise from:

The nations.

LXXXVIII. THE WARRIOR LORD AND THE GENTLE SERVANT

At first this can look like:

Contrast.

But together they reveal:

The fullness of God’s saving work.

Gentleness toward:

The broken.

Judgment toward:

Evil.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace toward the bruised and judgment against wickedness are not contradictions.

Both flow from holy love.

LXXXIX. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 42

1. Jesus Is the Promised Servant

Principle:

The New Testament directly identifies Christ with Isaiah’s Spirit-anointed Servant.

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2. The Servant Is Gentle with the Weak

Principle:

Christ restores what others might discard.

---

3. The Servant Will Complete His Mission

Principle:

He will not fail or become discouraged.

---

4. The Servant Brings Light to the Nations

Principle:

The Messiah’s saving mission is global.

---

5. God Alone Deserves Glory

Principle:

Idols must never receive the worship belonging to the Creator.

---

6. God Turns Darkness into Light

Principle:

He guides people who cannot see the road ahead.

---

7. Religious Privilege Does Not Prevent Spiritual Blindness

Principle:

Israel saw and heard much yet failed to respond.

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8. Judgment Should Produce Repentance

Principle:

Suffering without spiritual response becomes a missed lesson.

XC. TWELVE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 42

1. Faithful Servant → Blind Servant

2. Gentleness → Violence of Judgment

3. Bruised Reed → Unbroken Messiah

4. Smoldering Wick → Faithful Justice

5. Blindness → Opened Eyes

6. Captivity → Freedom

7. Darkness → Light

8. Idols → Exclusive Glory of God

9. Silence → New Song

10. Divine Patience → Divine Action

11. Unknown Paths → Divine Guidance

12. Hearing Words → Refusing to Listen

Key Truth

Isaiah 42 contrasts the perfect faithfulness of the Servant with the spiritual failure of servant Israel and reveals why God's people need the Servant who sees, hears, obeys, liberates, and completes the mission without failure.

XCI. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who is introduced at the beginning of Isaiah 42?

The Servant of the Lord.

Question 2

Who does the New Testament identify as this Servant?

Jesus Christ.

Question 3

What rests upon the Servant?

The Spirit of God.

Question 4

What does the Servant bring to the nations?

Justice.

Question 5

How does the Servant carry out His work?

With gentleness rather than noisy self-promotion.

Question 6

What does the bruised reed represent?

Something or someone damaged, weak, and easily broken.

Question 7

What does the Servant do with the bruised reed?

He does not break it.

Question 8

What does He do with the smoldering wick?

He does not extinguish it.

Question 9

Will the Servant fail?

No.

He will not falter or be discouraged.

Question 10

How far does His teaching reach?

To the coastlands and nations.

Question 11

Who commissioned the Servant?

The Creator of heaven and earth.

Question 12

What does the Servant become for the people?

A covenant.

Question 13

What does He become for the Gentiles?

A light.

Question 14

What does He do for the blind and captives?

He opens eyes and releases prisoners from darkness.

Question 15

Whose glory will God not give to another?

His own.

Question 16

Why can God declare future things?

Because He knows and governs history.

Question 17

What response is called for in verses 10–12?

A new song of worldwide praise.

Question 18

How is the Lord pictured in verse 13?

As a warrior who triumphs over enemies.

Question 19

What does God promise the blind in verse 16?

Guidance on unknown paths, light in darkness, smooth roads, and His continuing presence.

Question 20

What happens to idol worshipers?

They are turned back in shame.

Question 21

Who is called blind later in the chapter?

Israel, God’s servant by covenant calling.

Question 22

What is Israel’s problem?

It sees but does not pay attention and hears but does not listen.

Question 23

Why was Israel plundered?

Because of persistent sin and disobedience.

Question 24

Did judgment automatically produce repentance?

No.

The people still failed to understand and take it to heart.

Question 25

What major contrast does the chapter establish?

The faithful Messianic Servant succeeds where servant Israel failed.

XCII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 42 asks several searching questions.

Am I Bruised?

Do I believe Christ treats:

Weakness.

Wounds.

Failure.

With:

Gentleness?

Is My Flame Barely Burning?

Do I believe Jesus can:

Restore.

Rather than:

Extinguish?

Am I Confusing Gentleness with Weakness?

Do I understand that Christ is:

Tender.

And:

Unfailing?

Is God’s Mission Bigger Than My Personal World?

Do I care about:

The nations?

The lost?

Those still in:

Darkness?

What Prison Do I Need Christ to Open?

Sin?

Fear?

Guilt?

Bitterness?

Bondage?

What Competes with God for Glory in My Life?

Am I Singing a new song because of fresh mercy?

Am I on an unfamiliar path?

Can I trust God to:

Lead?

Am I spiritually seeing but not:

Paying attention?

Am I hearing Scripture but not:

Listening?

Has God been trying to teach me through:

Correction?

Circumstances?

Discipline?

Am I taking it:

To heart?

XCIII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Servant Who Will Not Break the Bruised Reed Cannot Be Broken by the Mission”

Christ is:

Gentle enough to preserve:

The weakest.

Strong enough to complete:

The greatest assignment.

Principle:

The tenderness of Jesus is not the absence of strength; it is the perfect use of strength for the restoration of the weak and the establishment of righteousness.

XCIV. THE SERVANT GOD DELIGHTS IN

Human approval:

Changes.

God’s delight:

Defines the Servant.

Spiritual Principle

The truest measure of ministry is not:

Popularity.

But:

Faithfulness to the Father.

XCV. THE SPIRIT UPON HIM

The Servant’s mission is:

Empowered.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s work must be accomplished in God’s power.

XCVI. JUSTICE FOR THE NATIONS

Justice is not:

Merely private morality.

It reaches:

Nations.

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah’s reign concerns every dimension of righteousness.

XCVII. NO STREET SHOUTING

His kingdom does not depend upon:

Public spectacle.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Truth does not become stronger merely because it becomes louder.

XCVIII. THE BRUISED REED MINISTRY

Some ministries are built around:

Impressing the strong.

Jesus notices:

The bruised.

Spiritual Principle

The kingdom gives special attention to people the world easily overlooks.

XCIX. THE SMOLDERING WICK MINISTRY

Almost out.

Still:

Valuable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not call finished what Christ is still willing to revive.

C. FAITHFUL JUSTICE

The Servant does not choose between:

Truth.

Compassion.

Spiritual Principle

Perfect justice and perfect mercy meet in:

Christ.

CI. THE SERVANT DOES NOT GET DISCOURAGED

People:

Reject.

Oppose.

Misunderstand.

Still:

He continues.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Messiah’s mission does not depend upon human cooperation for final success.

CII. THE NATIONS WAIT

The coastlands wait for:

His teaching.

Spiritual Principle

The world’s deepest need is not more:

Human theory.

It is:

Divine truth.

CIII. BREATH FROM GOD

Human beings live because:

God gives life.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One who gives breath has authority to define how that breath should be used.

CIV. COVENANT EMBODIED

The Servant is not merely:

A messenger about covenant.

He is given as:

A covenant.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation becomes personal in:

The Servant Himself.

CV. LIGHT ENTERS DARKNESS

Darkness cannot:

Illuminate itself.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual blindness is not cured by trying harder to see.

It requires light from God.

CVI. PRISONERS RELEASED

Captives cannot:

Unlock themselves.

Spiritual Principle

Grace does for prisoners what prisoners cannot do for themselves.

CVII. GLORY BELONGS TO GOD

Any ministry, church, leader, or believer that seeks:

God’s glory.

And:

Personal glory.

Must remember:

God does not surrender what belongs uniquely to Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The safest place for a servant is where the Master receives the glory.

CVIII. FORMER THINGS AND NEW THINGS

God’s past faithfulness supports:

Future confidence.

Spiritual Principle

Remembered fulfillment strengthens trust in promised fulfillment.

CIX. THE NEW SONG FROM THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

The worship circle becomes:

Global.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The mission of the Servant creates a worshiping people from places far beyond Jerusalem.

CX. GOD’S ZEAL AWAKENS

The long silence ends.

Spiritual Principle

God is patient.

Not:

Passive.

CXI. THE GUIDE OF THE BLIND

Blind people need:

More than instructions.

They need:

A guide.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely shout directions from a distance.

He leads.

CXII. UNKNOWN WAYS

God says:

Paths they have not known.

Spiritual Principle

God’s faithfulness is not limited to:

Familiar territory.

CXIII. DARKNESS MADE LIGHT

Not merely:

Less dark.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God specializes in transformations that human beings can only describe as reversal.

CXIV. “I WILL NOT FORSAKE THEM”

The path may change.

The Guide does not.

Spiritual Principle

God’s presence is more dependable than familiar surroundings.

CXV. THE BLIND SERVANT ISRAEL

Israel was called to:

Reveal God.

Yet became:

Unable to perceive.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

It is possible to be surrounded by revelation and still become spiritually numb to it.

CXVI. THE OPEN EAR THAT DOES NOT LISTEN

This is not:

Physical deafness.

It is:

Moral refusal.

Spiritual Principle

Listening is more than hearing words.

It involves:

Response.

CXVII. THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS LAW

God’s Word remained:

Good.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When Scripture exposes us, the solution is not to lower Scripture but to let God correct us.

CXVIII. THE PLUNDERED SERVANT

Calling did not remove:

Consequences.

Spiritual Principle

Privilege does not cancel accountability.

CXIX. THE QUESTION FOR THE FUTURE

“Which of you will listen?”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The wisest response to past failure is future attentiveness.

CXX. SIN AND CAPTIVITY

The chapter answers:

Who gave them over?

God.

Why?

They sinned.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment makes sense only when we take:

Sin.

Seriously.

CXXI. FLAMES WITHOUT REPENTANCE

Judgment came.

Still:

No understanding.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not merely survive correction.

Learn from it.

CXXII. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 42

1. The Servant Is Presented

Chosen, upheld, Spirit-filled, and pleasing to God.

2. The Servant’s Character Is Revealed

Gentle, faithful, and unwavering.

3. The Servant’s Mission Is Commissioned

Covenant, light, sight, and freedom.

4. God Claims Exclusive Glory

Idolatry is rejected.

5. The World Is Called to Sing

The nations respond with praise.

6. The Lord Rises as Warrior

Divine patience gives way to decisive action.

7. The Blind Are Guided

Darkness becomes light and rough places become smooth.

8. Idol Worshipers Are Shamed

False trust collapses.

9. Israel’s Blindness Is Exposed

God’s servant nation sees and hears without responding.

10. Judgment Is Explained

Israel’s suffering came through persistent disobedience, yet even discipline had not awakened the people.

Key Truth

Isaiah 42 moves from the perfect Servant to the failed servant, showing that Jesus fulfills the Spirit-anointed mission of justice, light, covenant, healing, and liberation that sinful Israel could not accomplish in its own strength.

CXXIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 42 begins with:

> **“Behold My Servant.”**

That command matters.

Look at:

Him.

Not first:

Your weakness.

Not first:

Israel’s failure.

Not first:

The darkness.

Look at:

The Servant.

He is:

Chosen.

Spirit-filled.

Loved by the Father.

Faithful.

Gentle.

Strong.

Then look at how He treats:

Weak people.

“A bruised reed He will not break.”

Maybe that describes:

You.

Bruised.

Bent.

Damaged.

Not what you once were.

Not as strong as you want to be.

Jesus does not say:

Throw it away.

He restores:

Bruised reeds.

Then:

“A smoldering wick He will not snuff out.”

Maybe your flame feels:

Small.

Prayer life:

Weak.

Hope:

Faint.

Strength:

Low.

The Servant does not come to extinguish what little remains.

He comes to:

Restore.

But do not mistake:

Gentleness.

For:

Weakness.

Verse 4 says:

He will not falter.

He will not be discouraged.

Until:

Justice is established.

Jesus is tender enough for:

The weakest sinner.

Strong enough for:

The mission of redeeming the nations.

Then God says the Servant becomes:

Light.

Covenant.

Freedom.

Sight.

What a Savior.

He opens:

Blind eyes.

He releases:

Captives.

He brings people from:

Darkness.

Then God says:

> **“I will not give My glory to another.”**

That means every part of salvation should return:

Glory.

To:

God.

Then the entire world begins:

Singing.

That is where redemption should lead.

Not merely:

Relief.

Worship.

Then God says:

He has been silent.

But now:

He acts.

If you have ever wondered whether God’s delay means:

God does not care—

Isaiah says:

No.

He has appointed:

A time.

Then comes another beautiful promise:

> **“I will lead the blind by ways they have not known.”**

Maybe you do not know:

What comes next.

You cannot see:

The road.

You do not recognize:

The terrain.

That does not mean:

You are lost.

If God is leading:

The road does not need to be familiar.

Then:

Darkness becomes:

Light.

Rough places:

Smooth.

And God says:

“I will not forsake them.”

That may be the promise you need most.

Unknown road:

Known God.

Dark path:

Present God.

Weak sight:

Faithful Guide.

But then the chapter turns.

Israel is:

Blind.

Deaf.

God’s servant people had revelation.

History.

Law.

Prophets.

Yet:

They would not listen.

That should warn every religious person.

You can:

Hear sermons.

Read Scripture.

Know theology.

Attend worship.

See God work.

And still:

Fail to pay attention.

The final tragedy is not merely:

Israel suffered.

It is:

Israel suffered and still did not take it to heart.

Do not let that become:

Your story.

When God teaches:

Listen.

When God corrects:

Learn.

When God reveals sin:

Repent.

When God points toward Christ:

Look.

When you are bruised:

Come.

When the flame is weak:

Come.

When you are blind:

Let Him lead.

When you are captive:

Let Him free.

And above everything:

Behold:

The Servant.

Jesus Christ.

The One who does not break the bruised reed.

The One who does not extinguish the smoldering wick.

The One who will not fail.

And the One in whom:

The nations hope.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for:

Your Servant.

Your chosen One.

Your beloved Son.

Jesus Christ.

Thank You that Your Spirit rested upon Him.

Thank You that He came to bring:

Justice.

Light.

Freedom.

Truth.

Salvation.

Father, when we are:

Bruised.

Do not let us believe we are:

Useless.

When our faith feels like:

A smoldering wick.

Breathe fresh life into:

Our hearts.

Thank You that Jesus is:

Gentle.

Yet never weak.

Compassionate.

Yet never compromising.

Faithful.

Never discouraged.

Never failing.

Father, thank You that Christ is:

Light to the nations.

Open:

Blind eyes.

Release:

Captives.

Bring people from:

Darkness.

Into:

Light.

Protect us from:

Idolatry.

Keep us from giving:

Your glory.

To:

People.

Possessions.

Institutions.

Anything created.

You alone are:

God.

Father, give us:

A new song.

May Your praise reach:

Every people.

Every nation.

Every place.

When You seem:

Silent.

Teach us to:

Trust.

When You rise to act:

Teach us to:

Worship.

Father, we are sometimes:

Blind.

Lead us.

We sometimes walk:

Unknown paths.

Guide us.

Turn:

Darkness into light.

Make:

Rough places smooth.

And remind us:

You will not forsake us.

Father, deliver us from:

Spiritual blindness.

Do not let us:

See without noticing.

Hear without listening.

Read without obeying.

Experience correction without learning.

Give us:

Open eyes.

Open ears.

Soft hearts.

Father, where we have sinned:

Correct us.

Where we have wandered:

Restore us.

Where we have become blind:

Give sight.

Where we have become deaf:

Teach us to hear.

And above all:

Keep our eyes fixed upon:

Jesus Christ.

The faithful Servant.

The Light of the nations.

The Liberator of captives.

The Hope of the world.

In His name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“Behold My Servant, whom I uphold, My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring justice to the nations.” — Isaiah 42:1**

Central Truth

God reveals His perfect Servant, fulfilled in Jesus Christ, as the Spirit-anointed, gentle, faithful, and unfailing Messiah who brings justice to the nations, becomes covenant and light, opens blind eyes, frees captives, and leads people from darkness into light; in contrast, Israel's spiritual blindness and disobedience expose humanity's need for the faithful Servant who accomplishes what sinful servants could not.

Isaiah 42 in One Sentence

Isaiah presents the Spirit-anointed Servant fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who gently restores the bruised, faithfully establishes justice, becomes a covenant and light for the nations, opens blind eyes and frees captives, while the Lord claims exclusive glory, calls the world to a new song, rises to defeat evil, guides the blind through unknown paths, and finally exposes Israel's tragic blindness and disobedience as proof of humanity's need for the faithful Servant.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 43 — Fear Not, For I Am With You

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 43 is one of the strongest chapters in Scripture concerning:

Identity.

Redemption.

God's presence.

Divine protection.

Witness.

Salvation.

Restoration.

Forgiveness.

The chapter begins with some of the most personal words God speaks to Israel:

“I have called you by name, you are Mine.”

This is covenant language.

Israel had failed.

Israel had been disciplined.

Israel had been described in Isaiah 42 as:

Blind.

Deaf.

Disobedient.

Yet Isaiah 43 opens:

“But now.”

Those words matter.

Judgment is not:

The end.

Failure is not:

The end.

God reminds Jacob:

I created you.

I formed you.

I redeemed you.

I called you.

You are Mine.

Then comes the famous promise:

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.”

Notice:

God does not say:

You will never encounter water.

You will never cross rivers.

You will never walk through fire.

He promises:

Presence in the trial.

Protection through the trial.

The language deliberately recalls:

The Exodus.

The Red Sea.

God’s past deliverance.

Later in the chapter He explicitly reminds Israel that He made:

A way through the sea.

Destroyed:

Chariots.

Horses.

Armies.

But then He says something surprising:

“Forget the former things.”

This does not mean:

Forget God’s faithfulness.

Ignore history.

It means:

Do not imprison your expectation of God inside yesterday’s method.

The God who once made:

A path through the sea.

Can now make:

A road through the wilderness.

The old miracle involved:

Water opening.

The new miracle will involve:

Water appearing.

God is not limited to:

Repeating Himself.

He says:

“See, I am doing a new thing!”

Isaiah 43 also develops Israel’s calling as:

God’s witness.

The courtroom imagery from Isaiah 41 continues.

The nations and their gods are challenged:

Who predicted history?

Who saved?

Who declared beforehand?

Then God says to Israel:

“You are My witnesses.”

Why has God acted in Israel’s history?

So they may:

Know Him.

Believe Him.

Understand Him.

Testify about Him.

The central testimony is:

“Apart from Me there is no Savior.”

God alone:

Saves.

Declares.

Acts.

Redeems.

No one can reverse:

His work.

The chapter then exposes another painful truth.

The same people whom God:

Created.

Redeemed.

Loved.

Protected.

Called.

Did not faithfully:

Call upon Him.

Worship Him.

Honor Him.

Instead, God says:

> **“You have burdened Me with your sins.”**

Yet immediately after exposing their guilt comes one of the greatest statements of grace in Isaiah:

> **“I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins.”**

Israel cannot claim:

Innocence.

Its fathers sinned.

Its leaders rebelled.

Its worship failed.

Its history includes:

Judgment.

So salvation cannot rest upon:

Human merit.

It rests upon:

God’s grace.

The central truth of Isaiah 43 is:

The Lord reminds His redeemed people that they belong to Him, promises His presence through waters and fire, gathers them from the ends of the earth, calls them to witness that He alone is

Savior, promises a new work of restoration in the wilderness, and offers forgiveness not because Israel deserves it but because He graciously blots out transgression for His own name's sake.

I. "YOU ARE MINE"

Isaiah 43:1 — Created, Formed, Redeemed, Called

> **"But now, this is what the Lord says—the One who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel: 'Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are Mine.'"**

Four foundations are given:

Created.

Formed.

Redeemed.

Called.

Then:

Possession.

> **"You are Mine."**

Cross References

Exodus 19:5

God told Israel that if they listened to His covenant voice, they would be His treasured possession among all peoples, because the whole earth belongs to Him.

John 10:3

Jesus describes the shepherd as calling his own sheep by name and leading them personally.

1 Peter 1:18

Believers are reminded that redemption is not accomplished through temporary material wealth but through God's costly saving work.

Spiritual Principle

Identity begins with:

Whose you are.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fear loses power when the redeemed remember:

“I belong to God.”

II. GOD DOES NOT PROMISE A TRIAL-FREE LIFE

Isaiah 43:2 — Waters, Rivers, and Fire

> **“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; when you pass through the rivers, they will not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not consume you.”**

Notice the repeated word:

When.

Not:

If.

God’s people may encounter:

Waters.

Rivers.

Fire.

But:

God is with them.

Cross References

Psalm 23:4

Even when walking through the valley of deepest darkness, the believer need not fear because the Shepherd is present.

Daniel 3:25

In the fiery furnace, a fourth figure appeared with the three faithful Hebrew men, showing God’s presence in extreme danger.

Psalm 66:12

God’s people speak of passing through fire and water before being brought into a place of abundance.

Spiritual Principle

God often saves:

Through.

Not merely:

From.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The promise is not:

“No fire.”

It is:

“The fire will not have the final word.”

III. THE HOLY ONE IS THE SAVIOR

Isaiah 43:3 — The Lord Your God

> **“For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I gave Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in exchange for you.”**

God identifies Himself as:

Lord.

God.

Holy One.

Savior.

Israel’s safety rests in:

Who He is.

Cross References

Hosea 13:4

God reminds Israel that He alone has been their God from Egypt and that no Savior exists apart from Him.

Luke 2:11

The angels announce the birth of a Savior, Christ the Lord.

Exodus 15:2

After deliverance at the Red Sea, Israel praises the Lord as strength, song, and salvation.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation is not merely something:

God gives.

It reveals:

Who God is.

IV. “YOU ARE PRECIOUS IN MY SIGHT”

Isaiah 43:4 — Loved by God

> **“Since you are precious and honored in My sight, and because I love you, I will give nations in exchange for you, and people in place of your life.”**

This is remarkable covenant language.

Israel had:

Failed.

Yet God still speaks of:

Love.

Preciousness.

Honor.

Cross References

1 Peter 2:9

God’s redeemed people are described as chosen, royal, holy, and called to proclaim His excellencies.

Zephaniah 3:17

God rejoices over His people with gladness, quiets them in His love, and delights over them.

Matthew 16:26

Jesus teaches that one human soul is worth more than gaining the whole world and losing oneself.

Spiritual Principle

God’s discipline does not erase:

His covenant love.

V. “DO NOT BE AFRAID, FOR I AM WITH YOU”

Isaiah 43:5 — Gathering from East and West

> **“Do not be afraid, for I am with you. I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west.”**

Again:

Fear.

Again:

Presence.

The gathering of Israel is rooted in:

God’s commitment.

Cross References

Matthew 28:20

Jesus promises His disciples His continuing presence to the end of the age.

Psalm 107:3

God gathers His redeemed from east, west, north, and south.

Ezekiel 36:24

God promises to gather His scattered people from among the nations and bring them back.

Spiritual Principle

Exile cannot:

Outdistance God.

VI. GOD COMMANDS THE DIRECTIONS TO RELEASE HIS PEOPLE

Isaiah 43:6 — Sons and Daughters from Afar

> **“I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not hold them back!’ Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth—”**

The directions become like:

Servants.

North:

Give them up.

South:

Do not hold them.

Cross References

Isaiah 49:22

God promises to signal the nations so that His sons and daughters are carried home.

Deuteronomy 30:4

Even if Israel is scattered to the farthest horizon, God promises that He can gather them.

Revelation 7:9

John sees a redeemed multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language before God’s throne.

Spiritual Principle

Distance never becomes:

Defeat.

Before God.

VII. CREATED FOR GOD’S GLORY

Isaiah 43:7 — Formed and Made

> **“Everyone who is called by My name, whom I created for My glory, whom I formed and made.”**

Why were God’s people created?

> **“For My glory.”**

This gives life:

Purpose.

Cross References

Ephesians 1:12

God’s redeemed people are saved so that their lives result in praise to His glory.

Genesis 1:27

Human beings are created in God’s image.

1 Peter 2:9

God calls His people out of darkness so they can proclaim His excellencies.

Spiritual Principle

Human life finds its highest purpose in:

God’s glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You were not created merely to exist.

You were created to reflect the glory of your Creator.

VIII. BLIND PEOPLE ARE CALLED FORWARD

Isaiah 43:8 — Eyes Yet Blind, Ears Yet Deaf

> **“Bring out the people who have eyes but are blind, who have ears but are deaf.”**

This continues Isaiah 42.

Israel possesses:

Eyes.

Ears.

Revelation.

Yet remains spiritually:

Blind.

Deaf.

Cross References

Isaiah 6:10

Isaiah’s commission included confronting a people hardened in seeing and hearing.

Jeremiah 5:21

God addresses people with eyes who do not truly see and ears that do not truly hear.

Mark 8:18

Jesus asks His disciples whether they still fail to perceive despite possessing eyes and ears.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual blindness can exist inside:

Religious privilege.

IX. THE NATIONS ENTER THE COURTROOM

Isaiah 43:9 — Let Their Gods Produce Witnesses

> **“Let all the nations gather together and let the peoples assemble. Which of their gods foretold this and proclaimed to us the former things? Let them bring in their witnesses to prove they were right, so that others may hear and say, ‘It is true.’”**

The divine courtroom returns.

God challenges:

False gods.

Produce evidence.

Show prophecy.

Provide witnesses.

Cross References

Isaiah 41:22

God previously challenged the idols to explain past events and predict future ones.

Isaiah 44:7

False gods are again called to announce future events if they truly possess divine knowledge.

Deuteronomy 32:37

God mocks false gods that cannot rise to provide help in the moment of need.

Spiritual Principle

Truth can withstand:

Examination.

X. “YOU ARE MY WITNESSES”

Isaiah 43:10 — Israel’s Purpose

> **“‘You are My witnesses,’ declares the Lord, ‘and My servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me no god was formed, nor will there be one after Me.’”**

Israel’s calling has three inward purposes:

Know.

Believe.

Understand.

And one outward purpose:

Witness.

Cross References

Acts 1:8

Jesus tells His disciples they will receive power from the Holy Spirit and become His witnesses throughout the world.

Isaiah 44:8

God again calls His people witnesses to the truth that no other God exists.

John 8:58

Jesus declares His existence in language that strongly evokes divine identity and preexistence.

Spiritual Principle

A witness speaks from:

What he knows.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely want informed spectators.

He wants faithful witnesses.

XI. THERE IS NO SAVIOR BESIDES THE LORD

Isaiah 43:11 — Exclusive Salvation

> **“I, even I, am the Lord, and apart from Me there is no Savior.”**

This is absolute.

No:

Alternative savior.

Competing deity.

Parallel deliverer.

Cross References

Hosea 13:4

God tells Israel that they know no true God and Savior besides Him.

Acts 4:12

The apostles proclaim salvation in Jesus Christ alone and no other saving name given among humanity.

1 Timothy 2:5

There is one God and one Mediator between God and humanity, Christ Jesus.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical salvation is:

Exclusive.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If God alone is Savior, then salvation cannot ultimately be found in anything that is not God’s saving provision.

XII. GOD HAS REVEALED, SAVED, AND PROCLAIMED

Isaiah 43:12 — Israel as Witness to God’s Acts

> **“I have revealed and saved and proclaimed—I, and not some foreign god among you. You are My witnesses,’ declares the Lord, ‘that I am God.’”**

Three acts:

Revealed.

Saved.

Proclaimed.

Then:

Witness.

Cross References

Isaiah 52:10

God reveals His saving power before the nations so the ends of the earth may see His salvation.

Deuteronomy 4:35

Israel was shown God’s mighty acts so they would know that the Lord alone is God.

Acts 2:32

The apostles bear witness that God raised Jesus from the dead.

Spiritual Principle

Witness grows from:

Experienced grace.

XIII. NO ONE CAN REVERSE GOD’S WORK

Isaiah 43:13 — “Who Can Reverse It?”

> **“Yes, and from ancient days I am He. No one can deliver out of My hand. When I act, who can reverse it?”**

God’s sovereignty is:

Irreversible.

Cross References

John 10:29

Jesus says no one can snatch His sheep from the Father’s hand.

Job 9:12

When God acts, no creature can simply stop Him and demand an accounting as though superior to Him.

Psalm 90:2

Before the mountains existed and from eternity to eternity, God is God.

Spiritual Principle

God’s hand is:

Unchallengeable.

XIV. THE REDEEMER WILL BRING BABYLON DOWN

Isaiah 43:14 — Babylon Becomes Fugitive

> **“This is what the Lord says—your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: ‘For your sake I will send to Babylon and bring down as fugitives all the Babylonians, in the ships in which they took pride.’”**

Babylon looked:

Powerful.

Future.

Threatening.

God already speaks of:

Its defeat.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:2

Babylon’s fall is announced and its idols are exposed as shamed and broken.

Jeremiah 51:11

God raises powers against Babylon as part of His judgment and purpose.

Isaiah 47:1

Babylon is pictured descending from royal pride into humiliation.

Spiritual Principle

God can announce the fall of an empire before the empire reaches:

Its peak.

XV. CREATOR AND KING

Isaiah 43:15 — The Lord’s Identity

> **“I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.”**

Four titles:

Lord.

Holy One.

Creator.

King.

Cross References

Psalm 149:2

Israel is called to rejoice in its Maker and celebrate its King.

Zephaniah 3:15

The Lord, King of Israel, is present among His people and removes their cause for fear.

Isaiah 44:6

God identifies Himself as Israel’s King, Redeemer, First, and Last.

Spiritual Principle

The One who created Israel also has:

Authority to redeem and rule Israel.

XVI. GOD MADE A WAY THROUGH THE SEA

Isaiah 43:16 — The God of the Exodus

> **“This is what the Lord says—He who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters,”**

God reminds Israel:

Remember the sea.

Remember the path.

Remember what looked:

Impossible.

Cross References

Exodus 14:21

God parts the sea so Israel can pass through on dry ground.

Psalm 77:19

God’s path went through the sea and mighty waters even though His footprints could not be traced.

Exodus 15:19

Israel passed safely through the sea while Pharaoh’s forces were overwhelmed.

Spiritual Principle

The God of the impossible past remains God in:

The impossible present.

XVII. EGYPT’S ARMY WAS EXTINGUISHED

Isaiah 43:17 — Chariots and Horses Fall

> **“Who drew out the chariots and horses, the army and reinforcements together, and they lay there, never to rise again, extinguished, snuffed out like a wick:”**

Egypt appeared:

Unstoppable.

Then:

Gone.

Cross References

Exodus 14:28

The returning waters covered Pharaoh’s chariots and horsemen.

Exodus 15:4

Pharaoh’s chariots and army were thrown into the sea.

Psalm 118:12

Enemies may surround like swarming danger yet be suddenly extinguished under God’s power.

Spiritual Principle

Yesterday’s unbeatable army can become:

Today’s testimony.

XVIII. “FORGET THE FORMER THINGS”

Isaiah 43:18 — Do Not Live Only in Yesterday

> **“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.”**

This cannot mean:

Erase God’s works from memory.

God just reminded them of the Exodus.

The point is:

Do not expect God’s future work to be limited to:

Past patterns.

Spiritual Principle

Remember God’s faithfulness without:

Imprisoning God inside yesterday’s method.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith remembers the past but looks forward for the God of the past to work again in new ways.

XIX. “I AM DOING A NEW THING”

Isaiah 43:19 — A Way and Streams

> **“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the desert.”**

Old miracle:

Way through water.

New miracle:

Water in wilderness.

The same God.

A different method.

Cross References

2 Corinthians 5:17

Anyone in Christ is a new creation; the old passes and new life appears.

Revelation 21:5

The One seated on the throne declares that He makes all things new.

Isaiah 35:6

God’s restoration causes waters to burst forth in wilderness and streams to appear in desert.

Spiritual Principle

God specializes in:

New roads.

New streams.

New beginnings.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not stare so long at what God did yesterday that you fail to perceive what He is beginning today.

XX. EVEN THE WILD ANIMALS HONOR GOD

Isaiah 43:20 — Water in the Wilderness

> **“The wild animals honor Me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the wilderness and streams in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen ones,”**

Creation responds to:

Provision.

The desert becomes:

Habitable.

Cross References

Psalm 104:11

God provides water for wild animals and satisfies the needs of creation.

Job 12:7

The animals and birds can teach humanity about the Creator’s hand in the world.

Exodus 17:6

God provides water from the rock for His thirsty people in the wilderness.

Spiritual Principle

The God who leads through wilderness also provides:

Water there.

XXI. FORMED TO PROCLAIM GOD’S PRAISE

Isaiah 43:21 — The Purpose of Redemption

> **“The people I formed for Myself that they may proclaim My praise.”**

God formed Israel:

For Himself.

Their vocation:

Praise.

Witness.

Glory.

Cross References

1 Peter 2:9

God’s chosen people are called to proclaim the excellencies of the One who called them from darkness into light.

Psalm 102:18

God’s saving work is recorded so a future people may praise the Lord.

Ephesians 1:12

God’s saving purpose results in people living for the praise of His glory.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption creates:

Worshipers.

XXII. ISRAEL DID NOT CALL UPON GOD

Isaiah 43:22 — The Redeemed Neglect the Redeemer

> **“Yet you have not called on Me, O Jacob, you have not wearied yourselves for Me, O Israel.”**

After everything God says:

You did not call.

What a contrast.

God:

Called Israel by name.

Israel:

Did not call upon God.

Cross References

Malachi 1:13

God’s people later treated worship as burdensome and wearisome.

Amos 5:25

God questions the heart and faithfulness behind Israel’s sacrificial history.

Micah 6:3

God asks what He has done to burden His people and calls them to answer.

Spiritual Principle

Grace can be:

Received.

Yet worship neglected.

XXIII. SACRIFICE WITHOUT HEART IS NOT THE ISSUE

Isaiah 43:23 — God Did Not Burden Them

> **“You have not brought Me sheep for burnt offerings, nor honored Me with your sacrifices. I have not burdened you with grain offerings nor wearied you with incense.”**

The deeper issue is:

Relationship.

Honor.

Heart.

Cross References

Psalm 51:16

God is not satisfied by sacrifice detached from a broken and repentant heart.

Micah 6:6

The prophet asks what offering could truly satisfy God apart from righteous obedience.

Hosea 6:6

God desires covenant love and true knowledge of Him above empty ritual.

Spiritual Principle

Religious activity cannot replace:

Love for God.

XXIV. ISRAEL BURDENED GOD WITH SIN

Isaiah 43:24 — The Great Reversal

> **“You have not bought any fragrant calamus for Me, or lavished on Me the fat of your sacrifices. But you have burdened Me with your sins and wearied Me with your offenses.”**

Israel complained worship was:

Burdensome.

God says:

Your sin has become the burden.

Cross References

Amos 2:13

God describes being pressed down under the weight of Israel’s accumulated sin.

Ezekiel 6:9

God speaks of being grieved by hearts that turned away toward idols.

Malachi 2:17

The people wearied the Lord with corrupt words and distorted moral claims.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is never:

Light.

It grieves the God who loves.

XXV. GOD BLOTTING OUT TRANSGRESSION

Isaiah 43:25 — Grace for God’s Own Sake

> **“I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins.”**

One of Isaiah’s greatest grace verses.

Who forgives?

God.

Why?

> **“For My own sake.”**

Not because Israel has:

Earned it.

Cross References

Psalm 51:1

David asks God, according to His steadfast mercy, to blot out transgressions.

Jeremiah 31:34

God promises a new covenant in which He forgives wickedness and remembers sin no more against His people.

Hebrews 8:12

The New Testament repeats the new-covenant promise that God will be merciful and no longer hold sins against His people.

Spiritual Principle

Forgiveness rests in:

God’s grace.

Not:

Human merit.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not forgive because we become worthy.

He forgives according to the greatness of His mercy and His redemptive purpose.

XXVI. “I WILL NOT REMEMBER YOUR SINS”

This does not mean:

God loses knowledge.

It means:

He does not hold forgiven guilt against His redeemed people.

Spiritual Principle

Forgiven sin no longer stands as:

A condemning charge.

XXVII. GOD INVITES ISRAEL TO STATE ITS CASE

Isaiah 43:26 — Prove Your Innocence

> **“Review the past for Me, let us argue the matter together; state your case for your innocence.”**

Can Israel prove:

Innocence?

No.

The courtroom exposes:

Guilt.

Cross References

Isaiah 1:18

God summons His people to reason with Him regarding sin, cleansing, and repentance.

Micah 6:1

God brings a covenant case against His people and calls them to answer.

Job 13:3

Job longs to present his case before God, using courtroom-style language.

Spiritual Principle

Grace becomes clearer when:

Self-justification ends.

XXVIII. SIN RUNS THROUGH THE HISTORY

Isaiah 43:27 — Fathers and Leaders Rebelled

> **“Your first father sinned; your leaders rebelled against Me.”**

Israel cannot appeal to:

Perfect ancestry.

Perfect leadership.

Perfect history.

Sin reaches:

Back.

Cross References

Romans 5:12

Sin entered humanity through Adam and death spread because all sinned.

Hosea 6:7

God compares covenant-breaking behavior with earlier transgression.

Jeremiah 2:8

Priests, rulers, and prophets all failed in their responsibilities before God.

Spiritual Principle

No generation is saved by:

Ancestral innocence.

XXIX. JUDGMENT CAME

Isaiah 43:28 — Dignitaries Disgraced

> **“So I disgraced the dignitaries of your temple; I consigned Jacob to destruction and Israel to scorn.”**

God explains:

Judgment.

It did not happen because:

He lacked power.

It came because:

Sin had consequences.

Cross References

2 Chronicles 36:17

Persistent rebellion eventually resulted in devastating conquest and judgment upon Judah.

Lamentations 2:2

Jerusalem’s strongholds and kingdom suffered under divine judgment.

Ezekiel 7:22

God allowed His sanctuary to be profaned as part of covenant judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Grace does not make sin:

Meaningless.

XXX. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 43

1. God Knows His People Personally

Principle:

He calls them by name and says, “You are Mine.”

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2. God Is Present in Trials

Principle:

Waters and fire do not imply abandonment.

---

3. God Alone Is Savior

Principle:

No created substitute can perform the work of redemption.

---

4. God Loves His People

Principle:

Discipline does not erase covenant affection.

---

5. God Gathers the Scattered

Principle:

No distance is beyond His reach.

---

6. We Were Created for God’s Glory

Principle:

Life’s highest purpose is to reflect and proclaim Him.

---

7. God’s People Are Witnesses

Principle:

Those who know His saving acts should testify to them.

---

8. God Is Sovereign Over History

Principle:

No one can reverse what He determines to accomplish.

---

9. God Does New Things

Principle:

His faithfulness is consistent even when His methods are new.

---

10. Redemption Produces Praise

Principle:

The people formed for God should proclaim His glory.

---

11. Sin Burdens and Grieves God

Principle:

Grace should never make us casual about disobedience.

---

12. Forgiveness Is Entirely Grace

Principle:

God blots out sin for His own sake, not because humanity proves itself innocent.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT IDENTITY

Created.

Formed.

Redeemed.

Called.

Mine.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Your deepest identity is not what happened to you.

It is your relationship to the God who created, redeemed, and called you.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

Twice:

> **“Do not be afraid.”**

Why?

God is:

Present.

Savior.

Gatherer.

Spiritual Principle

Fear is answered primarily by:

Who God is.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT TRIALS

Water.

River.

Fire.

All appear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s promise is not exemption from every trial but preservation according to His purpose within and through trial.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S PRESENCE

> **“I will be with you.”**

Spiritual Principle

Presence is often God’s greatest promise because it means no crisis is faced:

Alone.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT REDEMPTION

God says:

> **“I have redeemed you.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption means the life of God’s people is no longer defined merely by bondage but by belonging.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S LOVE

> **“Because I love you.”**

Direct.

Personal.

Covenantal.

Spiritual Principle

God’s love is not inferred only from easy circumstances.

It is declared by:

God Himself.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT PURPOSE

Created for:

God’s glory.

Formed to:

Proclaim His praise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Life becomes disordered when self-glory replaces God’s glory.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT WITNESS

Israel knows:

History.

Deliverance.

Prophecy.

Spiritual Principle

Witness is testimony to:

What God has revealed and done.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT SALVATION

> **“Apart from Me there is no Savior.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every true saving work ultimately comes from the God who alone bears the identity of Savior.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S HAND

No one can:

Snatch from it.

Reverse its work.

Spiritual Principle

Divine sovereignty gives:

Security.

XLI. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT BABYLON

Babylon will appear:

Dominant.

God already speaks of:

Its defeat.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never interpret an empire’s present strength as evidence of permanent sovereignty.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT THE PAST

God reminds Israel of:

The Exodus.

Then says:

Do not dwell on:

Former things.

Spiritual Principle

Remembering is healthy.

Living backward is not.

XLIII. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT NEW THINGS

God’s new thing is:

Already springing up.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may begin restoration before His people have developed eyes to recognize it.

XLIV. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT THE WILDERNESS

Wilderness becomes:

Road.

Desert becomes:

Streams.

Spiritual Principle

God can make the place of deprivation become:

The place of provision.

XLV. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT WORSHIP

Israel was created to:

Praise.

Yet failed to:

Call upon God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Purpose can be known intellectually and neglected practically.

XLVI. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT SIN

Sin:

Burdens.

Offends.

Brings consequences.

Spiritual Principle

The God of grace still takes sin:

Seriously.

XLVII. WHAT ISAIAH 43 TEACHES ABOUT FORGIVENESS

God says:

I blot out.

I do not remember.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The final answer to guilt is not better self-defense.

It is divine forgiveness.

XLVIII. CALLED BY NAME

God’s relationship is:

Personal.

Spiritual Principle

You are not merely:

A number.

A category.

A crowd.

God’s covenant knowledge is personal.

XLIX. “YOU ARE MINE”

Ownership can sound threatening in human contexts.

Here it is:

Comfort.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Belonging to the Redeemer means you are held by the One who paid the price to claim you.

L. WHEN, NOT IF

Waters.

Rivers.

Fire.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical faith prepares people for:

Difficulty.

Not fantasy.

LI. THROUGH THE WATERS

The water does not always:

Disappear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes God parts the sea.

Sometimes He walks with you through the water.

LII. THROUGH THE FIRE

Daniel’s friends later experienced:

This imagery vividly.

Spiritual Principle

The presence of fire is not evidence of:

God’s absence.

LIII. PRECIOUS AND HONORED

God’s valuation differs from:

The world’s.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Your worth is safest when rooted in God’s covenant love rather than public opinion.

LIV. SONS AND DAUGHTERS

God speaks:

Family language.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption gathers:

People.

Not merely territory.

LV. FROM THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

Scattering looks:

Final.

God sees:

Gathering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s reach extends farther than human exile.

LVI. CREATED FOR GLORY

God does not create people merely for:

Self-centered existence.

Spiritual Principle

We flourish most when our lives point beyond ourselves.

LVII. BLIND WITNESSES

Israel’s calling and blindness exist:

Together.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s calling does not excuse blindness; it makes restored sight all the more necessary.

LVIII. KNOW, BELIEVE, UNDERSTAND

The order is striking.

God wants His witnesses to:

Know.

Believe.

Understand.

Spiritual Principle

Public witness should arise from:

Personal knowledge of God.

LIX. NO GOD BEFORE OR AFTER

God is not:

One deity in a sequence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Lord is not the latest religious option.

He is the eternal God.

LX. NO SAVIOR BESIDES HIM

This excludes:

Every idol.

Every empire.

Every self-salvation project.

Spiritual Principle

Only God can solve the deepest human problem.

LXI. GOD HAS PROCLAIMED BEFOREHAND

The idols cannot.

God can.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prophecy demonstrates that the future belongs to God before it belongs to history.

LXII. “WHO CAN REVERSE IT?”

A rhetorical question.

Answer:

No one.

Spiritual Principle

God’s ultimate purpose does not require:

Permission.

LXIII. BABYLON’S SHIPS

What they take pride in:

Fails.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The vehicle of human pride can become the stage of human humiliation.

LXIV. “YOUR KING”

God is not merely:

Creator.

He rules.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption brings people under:

God’s rightful kingship.

LXV. A WAY THROUGH THE SEA

No road existed.

God made:

One.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not need an existing path in order to lead His people forward.

LXVI. THE CHARIOTS THAT NEVER ROSE AGAIN

Egypt’s strength ended:

Suddenly.

Spiritual Principle

Human power may look permanent until God reveals:

Its limit.

LXVII. DO NOT LIVE IN THE EXODUS FOREVER

The Exodus was:

Glorious.

Yet God says:

Look for:

Something new.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Past revival can inspire faith, but it cannot substitute for present obedience and present expectation.

LXVIII. THE NEW THING SPRINGS UP

Growth can begin:

Quietly.

Spiritual Principle

God’s greatest new works may begin before they become:

Obvious.

LXIX. “DO YOU NOT PERCEIVE IT?”

Sometimes the problem is not:

God’s inactivity.

It is:

Our inattentiveness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Ask God for eyes to recognize what He has already started.

LXX. A WAY IN THE WILDERNESS

No highway.

God creates:

One.

Spiritual Principle

God’s guidance is not limited by existing routes.

LXXI. STREAMS IN THE DESERT

No water.

God supplies:

It.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The wilderness may describe your environment.

It does not define God’s resources.

LXXII. ANIMALS HONOR GOD

Creation notices:

Provision.

Spiritual Principle

God’s generosity displays His glory beyond:

Humanity.

LXXIII. MY CHOSEN ONES

God’s people remain:

Chosen.

Even after discipline.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace restores identity before circumstances have fully recovered.

LXXIV. FORMED FOR PRAISE

Praise is not:

Extra.

It belongs to:

Purpose.

Spiritual Principle

A redeemed life should become a vocal testimony to the Redeemer.

LXXV. “YOU HAVE NOT CALLED ON ME”

A painful accusation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

It is possible to belong to a history of grace while personally neglecting prayer.

LXXVI. WORSHIP AS WEARINESS

Israel treated:

God.

As burdensome.

Spiritual Principle

When love grows cold, worship begins to feel like:

Weight.

LXXVII. GOD WAS NOT THE BURDEN

Their:

Sin.

Was.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We often accuse obedience of being burdensome while carrying heavier burdens created by disobedience.

LXXVIII. SIN WEARIES

God uses relational language.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is not merely:

Rule-breaking.

It is relational:

Offense.

LXXIX. “I, EVEN I”

The emphasis falls entirely upon:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When the sinner cannot defend himself, grace says:

“I will act.”

LXXX. BLOTS OUT

Sin is pictured as:

A record.

Removed.

Spiritual Principle

Forgiveness is not divine denial.

It is divine removal of guilt through His gracious provision.

LXXXI. “FOR MY OWN SAKE”

God’s mercy rests ultimately in:

His character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Our assurance is strongest when grounded in God’s name rather than our performance.

LXXXII. “I WILL NOT REMEMBER”

God does not repeatedly reopen:

Forgiven charges.

Spiritual Principle

Grace refuses to make forgiven guilt the believer’s permanent identity.

LXXXIII. STATE YOUR CASE

Israel cannot:

Prove innocence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The courtroom must expose guilt before grace can be understood rightly.

LXXXIV. FIRST FATHER SINNED

The problem is:

Deep.

Historical.

Human.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is not merely a surface behavioral problem.

It belongs to fallen humanity’s history.

LXXXV. LEADERS REBELLED

Leadership did not:

Escape guilt.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Religious office does not create moral immunity.

LXXXVI. JUDGMENT ON THE TEMPLE DIGNITARIES

Sacred office did not protect:

Unfaithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

Religious privilege increases:

Accountability.

LXXXVII. ISAIAH 42 AND 43

Isaiah 42

Israel is:

Blind.

Deaf.

Disciplined.

Isaiah 43

God says:

You are Mine.

I redeemed you.

I will gather you.

I forgive you.

Key Truth

God confronts His people’s blindness without abandoning His redemptive commitment to them.

LXXXVIII. ISAIAH 40, 41, 42, AND 43

Isaiah 40

God comforts.

Isaiah 41

God strengthens.

Isaiah 42

God sends the Servant.

Isaiah 43

God redeems and gathers.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah’s message of comfort keeps expanding until comfort becomes redemption, mission, witness, and forgiveness.

LXXXIX. TEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 43

1. Fear → Belonging

2. Waters → Divine Presence

3. Fire → Preservation

4. Scattering → Gathering

5. Blindness → Witness

6. False gods → One Savior

7. Babylonian Power → Babylonian Defeat

8. Former Things → New Thing

9. Wilderness → Way

10. Sin → Blotted-Out Transgression

Key Truth

Every major movement in Isaiah 43 replaces fear, exile, helplessness, and guilt with belonging, presence, gathering, testimony, renewal, and grace.

XC. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who created and formed Israel?

The Lord.

Question 2

Why does God tell Israel not to fear?

Because He has redeemed them, called them by name, and claimed them as His own.

Question 3

Does God promise Israel will never face trials?

No.

He speaks of waters, rivers, and fire.

Question 4

What does He promise within those trials?

His presence and preservation.

Question 5

How does God identify Himself in verse 3?

As the Lord, Israel’s God, the Holy One, and Savior.

Question 6

How does God describe Israel in verse 4?

As precious, honored, and loved.

Question 7

What will God do with His scattered people?

Gather them from every direction.

Question 8

Why did God create His people?

For His glory.

Question 9

What role does Israel have before the nations?

To be God’s witness.

Question 10

What are God’s people to know?

That the Lord alone is God.

Question 11

How many true Saviors are there?

One.

The Lord declares that apart from Him there is no Savior.

Question 12

Can anyone reverse God’s ultimate work?

No.

Question 13

What future empire does God promise to bring down?

Babylon.

Question 14

What historical event does God remind Israel of?

The Exodus through the sea.

Question 15

Why does He then say not to dwell on former things?

Because He is preparing a new work and His future action should not be restricted to past patterns.

Question 16

What new thing does God promise?

A way in the wilderness and streams in the desert.

Question 17

Why does God provide wilderness water?

For His chosen people.

Question 18

Why did God form His people?

That they might proclaim His praise.

Question 19

How had Israel failed in worship?

They had neglected calling upon and honoring God.

Question 20

What had they burdened God with?

Their sins and offenses.

Question 21

Who blots out transgressions?

God Himself.

Question 22

Why does He do it?

For His own sake.

Question 23

What does He promise concerning forgiven sins?

He will not remember them against His people.

Question 24

Could Israel prove itself innocent?

No.

Its history showed sin from fathers and leaders alike.

Question 25

What is one of the chapter’s central truths?

God’s grace is greater than Israel’s failure, yet His grace never treats sin as insignificant.

XCI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 43 asks several searching questions.

Do I Know Whose I Am?

Can I rest in:

> **“You are Mine”?**

What Waters Am I Passing Through?

Am I interpreting difficulty as:

Abandonment?

What Fire Am I Walking Through?

Do I believe God can be:

Present.

Even there?

Do I believe God knows me:

By name?

Am I living as though I were created for:

My glory?

Or:

God’s?

Am I acting as a witness?

Do people hear from me:

What God has done?

Do I really believe:

There is no Savior besides God?

What “Babylon” looks permanent in my life?

Have I forgotten God can:

Reverse empires?

Am I living in yesterday’s miracle?

Has the past become a substitute for expecting:

God’s present work?

What new thing might God already be beginning?

Is there a wilderness where I need:

A way?

Is there a desert where I need:

Streams?

Has worship become:

Weariness?

Have I blamed God for burdens created by:

Sin?

Do I believe God can truly:

Blot out transgression?

Am I still remembering against myself what God promises not to hold against the forgiven?

XCII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The God Who Calls You by Name Will Walk With You Through the Fire”

God does not merely say:

I know:

Israel.

He says:

> **“I have called you by name.”**

Then:

> **“I will be with you.”**

Principle:

God’s knowledge is personal, His redemption is relational, and His presence remains with His people in the very places where fear says they have been abandoned.

XCIII. “BUT NOW”

Isaiah 42 ended:

Judgment.

Isaiah 43 begins:

Grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never assume the darkest final verse of one chapter is the last chapter God can write.

XCIV. CREATED AND FORMED

Israel exists because:

God acted.

Spiritual Principle

Creation itself creates:

Dependence.

XCV. REDEEMED

God does not merely:

Own as Creator.

He rescues as:

Redeemer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who made you is also the God who acts to rescue what sin has broken.

XCVI. CALLED BY NAME

Specific.

Personal.

Known.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people are not anonymous to:

God.

XCVII. WATER, RIVER, FIRE

Different:

Trials.

Same:

Presence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s presence is not limited to one type of crisis.

XCVIII. “I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD”

The promise is rooted in:

Identity.

Spiritual Principle

Security grows out of theology.

XCIX. PRECIOUS IN MY SIGHT

God’s people had been:

Scorned.

Yet:

Precious.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human rejection does not determine divine valuation.

C. “BECAUSE I LOVE YOU”

One of the simplest and strongest statements in:

The chapter.

Spiritual Principle

God’s covenant dealings cannot be understood apart from:

His love.

CI. DO NOT FEAR

Again.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God repeats comfort because frightened hearts often need repeated truth.

CII. EAST, WEST, NORTH, SOUTH

Every direction:

Answered.

Spiritual Principle

There is no compass point outside God’s reach.

CIII. SONS AND DAUGHTERS

God gathers:

Persons.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption is not merely moving populations.

It is bringing sons and daughters home.

CIV. CALLED BY MY NAME

Belonging creates:

Representation.

Spiritual Principle

Those who bear God’s name should live for:

God’s glory.

CV. CREATED FOR MY GLORY

Purpose explains:

Existence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Self-centered living is a misuse of a life created for God-centered purpose.

CVI. BLIND PEOPLE AS WITNESSES

God intends to restore:

Their testimony.

Spiritual Principle

God can call flawed witnesses while continuing to correct their blindness.

CVII. THE COURTROOM OF HISTORY

False gods cannot:

Explain.

Predict.

Save.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

History itself becomes evidence in God’s case against idolatry.

CVIII. KNOW, BELIEVE, UNDERSTAND

Faith involves:

Mind.

Heart.

Recognition.

Spiritual Principle

God desires more than verbal loyalty.

He desires real knowledge of:

Him.

CIX. BEFORE ME NO GOD

No predecessor.

No successor.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not part of a divine family tree.

He alone is God.

CX. THERE IS NO SAVIOR BESIDES ME

What idols promise:

God alone performs.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation requires the One who possesses actual authority over sin, history, death, and judgment.

CXI. MY WITNESSES

The people who experienced:

Deliverance.

Must speak.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Silence is a poor response to remembered redemption.

CXII. NO ONE DELIVERS OUT OF HIS HAND

God’s grasp is:

Final.

Spiritual Principle

The safest place is not outside danger but inside:

God’s hand.

CXIII. BABYLON WILL FALL

God announces:

Its future.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The thing that looks like tomorrow’s master may already be under tomorrow’s judgment.

CXIV. CREATOR, HOLY ONE, KING

God surrounds Israel’s identity:

Above.

Below.

Around.

Spiritual Principle

The Redeemer possesses every qualification necessary to save.

CXV. GOD OF THE SEA

Israel knows this God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Past deliverance is evidence of divine character, not a formula limiting future methods.

CXVI. “FORGET THE FORMER THINGS”

Not:

Forget gratitude.

But:

Stop restricting expectation.

Spiritual Principle

Nostalgia can become spiritually limiting when it refuses to believe God can work differently now.

CXVII. “SEE”

The new thing requires:

Attention.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some new works of God are missed because people keep looking backward.

CXVIII. SPRINGING UP

Growth begins:

Before maturity.

Spiritual Principle

Do not despise the first signs of divine renewal.

CXIX. ROAD IN THE WILDERNESS

The wilderness no longer means:

No way.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not need favorable terrain to lead.

CXX. WATER IN THE DESERT

The desert no longer means:

No supply.

Spiritual Principle

God’s resources are not produced by the environment.

CXXI. CREATED FOR PRAISE

The destination of redemption is:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The rescued should become the praising.

CXXII. “YET”

After all the grace:

Israel neglected God.

Spiritual Principle

Grace received does not automatically produce gratitude expressed.

CXXIII. EMPTY WORSHIP

The issue is not merely:

Missing ritual.

It is:

Missing love.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God wants the worshiper before He wants the offering.

CXXIV. BURDENING GOD WITH SIN

An astonishing phrase.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is personally offensive to:

The holy God.

CXXV. GRACE ANSWERS GUILT

Immediately after:

Sin.

Comes:

Blotting out.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who names sin most clearly also announces grace most beautifully.

CXXVI. FORGIVEN FOR GOD’S SAKE

The foundation is:

God Himself.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation ultimately magnifies:

The Savior.

CXXVII. NO CLAIM TO INNOCENCE

The courtroom is:

Lost.

Grace is:

Needed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The sinner’s best hope is not winning the argument.

It is receiving mercy.

CXXVIII. THE HISTORY OF SIN

Father.

Leaders.

People.

All implicated.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption must address a problem deeper than one bad generation.

CXXIX. ELEVEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 43

1. Blindness → Witness

2. Fear → “You Are Mine”

3. Water → Presence

4. Fire → Preservation

5. Scattering → Gathering

6. Idols → One Savior

7. Captivity → Redemption

8. Old Exodus → New Thing

9. Wilderness → Highway

10. Desert → Streams

11. Transgression → Forgiveness

Key Truth

Isaiah 43 moves repeatedly from what threatens God’s people toward what God Himself supplies: belonging, presence, salvation, gathering, direction, provision, and grace.

CXXX. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 43

1. God Claims His People

Created, formed, redeemed, called, and owned.

2. God Promises His Presence

Through waters, rivers, and fire.

3. God Gathers the Scattered

Sons and daughters return from every direction.

4. God Calls Israel His Witness

They are to testify that He alone is God and Savior.

5. God Promises Babylon’s Defeat

The future oppressor will not rule forever.

6. God Announces a New Exodus

A way appears in the wilderness and streams in the desert.

7. God Exposes Sin and Offers Grace

Israel cannot prove innocence, yet God Himself blots out transgressions.

Key Truth

The chapter begins with belonging and ends with forgiveness, placing Israel’s entire hope in the redeeming character of God rather than in Israel’s own record.

CXXXI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 43 begins with words every fearful heart needs:

> **“Do not be afraid.”**

But God does not leave the command:

Unsupported.

He gives reasons.

> **“I created you.”**
>
> **“I formed you.”**
>
> **“I redeemed you.”**

“I called you by name.”

“You are Mine.”

That is identity.

Then:

The waters come.

Notice God does not say:

Because you are Mine, there will be:

No water.

No rivers.

No fire.

He says:

“When.”

When you pass through.

Some trials are:

Avoided.

Some:

Removed.

Some:

Passed through.

But the great promise is:

“I will be with you.”

That changes everything.

Water with God is different from:

Water alone.

Fire with God is different from:

Fire alone.

Then God says:

“You are precious.”

“I love you.”

Maybe circumstances have made you wonder:

Does God still care?

Israel had been:

Disobedient.

Disciplined.

Scattered.

Yet God speaks:

Love.

Then He gathers:

East.

West.

North.

South.

No matter how far:

God knows how to bring home.

Then He tells Israel:

“You are My witnesses.”

What should a witness say?

Tell the truth about:

God.

He saved.

He delivered.

He proclaimed.

He alone is:

Savior.

Then the chapter moves toward Babylon.

Babylon looks powerful.

God says:

I will bring it:

Down.

That means the power frightening you does not own:

The future.

God does.

Then God reminds Israel:

Remember the sea.

Remember Egypt.

Remember the chariots.

Remember how I made a road where there was:

No road.

Then:

“Forget the former things.”

Why remind them only to say forget?

Because God does not want them worshiping:

A method.

Yes:

Remember the Red Sea.

But do not think:

“I can only be delivered if God parts another sea.”

Maybe this time there is:

No sea.

Maybe there is:

A desert.

Then God says:

Fine.

I will make:

A road through it.

Maybe there is:

No water.

Then:

I will make streams.

The lesson is:

Trust the God of the miracle.

Not merely:

The form the miracle took.

Then:

“See, I am doing a new thing!”

Could it be that God is already doing something:

New.

And you have been too busy looking backward to:

See it?

Then the chapter exposes:

Israel’s sin.

This is important.

Grace does not say:

Your sin never mattered.

God says:

You burdened Me with it.

That is strong language.

But then:

Grace speaks.

“I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions.”

Israel cannot:

Argue itself innocent.

Neither can we.

The answer is not:

Self-defense.

The answer is:

Grace.

God blots out:

Sin.

God refuses to hold forgiven sin:

Against His people.

That is where Isaiah 43 leaves us.

Not with Israel saying:

Look how faithful we were.

But with God saying:

Look how gracious:

I am.

So:

When you are afraid—

Remember:

You are His.

When you enter the water—

Remember:

He is with you.

When you walk through fire—

Remember:

It does not decide your final destiny.

When you feel scattered—

Remember:

God gathers.

When you face an impossible future—

Remember:

God declares it before it arrives.

When the wilderness has no road—

Remember:

God makes ways.

When the desert has no water—

Remember:

God makes streams.

When your past condemns you—

Do not pretend:

Innocence.

Run to:

Grace.

And remember:

The God who called you by name is also the God who says:

> **“I am doing a new thing.”**

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You are:

Creator.

Redeemer.

Savior.

King.

Holy One.

Thank You that You know Your people:

By name.

Thank You for saying:

> **“You are Mine.”**

When we are afraid:

Remind us:

We belong to You.

When we pass through:

Waters.

Rivers.

Fire.

Be with us.

Keep us from assuming that trials mean:

Abandonment.

Father, thank You that Your presence is greater than:

The water.

The current.

The flame.

Thank You for Your love.

Thank You that Your people are:

Precious.

Honored.

Known.

Gather us from every place where sin, fear, and sorrow have scattered:

Our hearts.

Father, make us:

Witnesses.

Give us courage to tell others:

Who You are.

What You have done.

How You save.

Teach us to confess:

There is no Savior besides You.

Thank You that no one can reverse:

Your ultimate purpose.

Father, when Babylon looks strong:

Remind us that empires:

Rise.

Fall.

But You remain.

Thank You for the Red Sea.

Thank You for every past deliverance.

But keep us from living:

Only in the past.

Open our eyes to:

The new thing.

Make a way where we see:

No road.

Bring streams where we see:

No water.

Provide in:

The wilderness.

Father, You formed us for:

Your praise.

Forgive us when worship becomes:

Neglected.

Cold.

Wearisome.

Forgive us for every sin that has:

Grieved You.

Thank You for Your promise:

“I blot out your transgressions.”

We have no defense apart from:

Your mercy.

So cleanse us.

Restore us.

Renew us.

And help us stop carrying forgiven guilt as though Your grace were:

Insufficient.

Teach us to live as people who are:

Created for Your glory.

Redeemed by Your grace.

Called by Your name.

Kept by Your presence.

And sent as:

Your witnesses.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are Mine." — Isaiah 43:1**

Central Truth

The Lord assures His redeemed people that they belong to Him, promises to remain with them through waters and fire, gathers them from every direction, calls them to witness that He alone is Savior, announces the defeat of Babylon and a new work of restoration in the wilderness, and graciously blots out the sins of a people who cannot prove themselves innocent.

Isaiah 43 in One Sentence

Isaiah declares that the Creator and Redeemer has called Israel by name and claimed them as His own, promises His presence through waters and fire, gathers His scattered sons and daughters, appoints them as witnesses that He alone is Savior, foretells Babylon's defeat, announces a new exodus with a way in the wilderness and streams in the desert, and finally reveals that although Israel has burdened Him with sin, He Himself graciously blots out their transgressions for His own sake.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 44 — The Only God and Redeemer

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 44 continues the great message of:

Comfort.

Identity.

Redemption.

The Spirit.

The folly of idols.

The sovereignty of God.

The restoration of Jerusalem.

The coming work of Cyrus.

The chapter begins with:

God’s chosen servant Israel.

And ends with:

A named pagan ruler whom God will use as an instrument of restoration.

Between those two points, Isaiah emphasizes one central truth:

There is only:

One God.

One Redeemer.

One Rock.

One sovereign Lord over:

Creation.

History.

Prophecy.

Kings.

Nations.

Forgiveness.

Restoration.

The chapter begins tenderly:

> **“Do not be afraid, O Jacob My servant.”**

God reminds Israel:

I made you.

I formed you.

I chose you.

I will help you.

Then He gives a remarkable promise:

> **“I will pour out My Spirit on your descendants.”**

The imagery moves from:

Dry ground.

To:

Water.

From:

Thirst.

To:

Streams.

From:

Spiritual barrenness.

To:

Flourishing life.

The children of Israel will openly say:

> **“I belong to the Lord.”**

Then God declares:

> **“I am the First and I am the Last; apart from Me there is no God.”**

That statement controls the chapter.

Isaiah then launches one of Scripture’s strongest attacks against:

Idolatry.

The satire is deliberate.

A man cuts down:

A tree.

Part of the tree becomes:

Firewood.

He warms himself.

He cooks:

Dinner.

Then from the leftover wood he fashions:

A god.

He bows down.

Prays.

And says:

> **“Save me! You are my god!”**

Isaiah wants us to feel the absurdity.

The same piece of wood becomes:

Fuel.

Food preparation.

Object of worship.

The idol cannot:

Speak.

See.

Think.

Save.

It must be:

Made.

Carried.

Fastened.

Protected.

Yet human beings worship:

What their own hands produced.

Isaiah explains the spiritual tragedy:

> **“A deluded heart misleads him.”**

Idolatry is not merely:

Intellectual error.

It is:

Spiritual deception.

The idolater cannot even say:

> **“Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?”**

Then comes one of the chapter’s most beautiful reversals.

After exposing:

Sin.

Blindness.

Idolatry.

God says:

> **“I will not forget you.”**

Then:

> **“I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist.”**

And:

> **“Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.”**

Grace does not merely say:

Your sin is bad.

Grace says:

Return.

Your sin can be:

Removed.

Then all creation is summoned to:

Sing.

Heavens.

Earth.

Mountains.

Forests.

Trees.

Why?

“The Lord has redeemed Jacob.”

The chapter then closes by returning to:

God’s sovereignty.

He created heaven and earth:

Alone.

He frustrates:

False prophets.

He overturns:

False wisdom.

He fulfills:

His messengers’ words.

He announces:

Jerusalem will be rebuilt.

Judah’s cities restored.

The deep dried.

And then comes one of the most astonishing prophetic statements in Isaiah:

“Cyrus.”

The ruler is:

Named.

God calls him:

“My shepherd.”

Cyrus will accomplish:

God’s purpose.

Jerusalem will be:

Rebuilt.

The temple foundations:

Laid again.

Cyrus is not presented as:

Israel’s Messiah.

He is a pagan ruler whom God sovereignly uses.

The designation “shepherd” describes:

His appointed historical function.

Isaiah 44 therefore moves from:

Chosen Israel.

To:

Spirit-filled restoration.

To:

Exclusive monotheism.

To:

The absurdity of idols.

To:

Forgiveness.

To:

Creation-wide praise.

To:

Prophetic sovereignty.

To:

Cyrus.

The central truth of Isaiah 44 is:

The Lord alone is Israel's Creator, King, Redeemer, Rock, and sovereign God; He promises His Spirit upon future generations, exposes idols as powerless products of human hands, sweeps away the sins of His people, calls them to return, and demonstrates His control over history by announcing restoration and naming Cyrus as the ruler who will accomplish His purpose concerning Jerusalem and the temple.

I. "HEAR THIS, O JACOB MY SERVANT"

Isaiah 44:1 — Chosen by God

> **"But now hear this, O Jacob My servant, Israel, whom I have chosen."**

God again addresses:

His servant.

His chosen people.

Isaiah 43 had exposed:

Sin.

Now Isaiah 44 opens with:

Grace.

Cross References

Isaiah 41:8

God had already called Israel His servant, Jacob His chosen one, and the offspring of Abraham His friend.

Deuteronomy 7:6

Israel was set apart as a people belonging to the Lord and chosen for covenant relationship.

John 15:16

Jesus reminds His disciples that they did not ultimately choose Him first; He chose and appointed them for fruitfulness.

Spiritual Principle

God’s calling is rooted in:

His grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The servant’s security begins with the One who chose the servant.

II. FORMED IN THE WOMB AND HELPED BY GOD

Isaiah 44:2 — “Do Not Be Afraid”

> **“This is what the Lord says—the One who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you: Do not be afraid, O Jacob My servant, O Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.”**

God gives three assurances:

I made you.

I formed you.

I will help you.

“Jeshurun” is an affectionate covenant designation for:

Israel.

Cross References

Jeremiah 1:5

God told Jeremiah that He knew him before birth and appointed his calling before he entered public life.

Psalm 139:13

The psalmist praises God for forming human life within the womb.

Deuteronomy 33:26

Jeshurun is reminded that no one compares with the God who rides the heavens to help His people.

Spiritual Principle

The God who formed you is not:

Indifferent to you.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If God cared enough to form you, He is not too distant to help you.

III. WATER ON THIRSTY GROUND

Isaiah 44:3 — The Spirit Poured Out

> **“For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground. I will pour out My Spirit on your descendants, and My blessing on your offspring.”**

Two parallel pictures:

Water on:

Dry land.

Spirit on:

Future generations.

The physical imagery points toward:

Spiritual renewal.

Cross References

Joel 2:28

God promises to pour out His Spirit upon sons, daughters, young, old, and servants.

Acts 2:17

Peter quotes Joel’s promise at Pentecost, identifying the outpouring of the Spirit as part of God’s last-days work.

John 7:38

Jesus speaks of living water flowing from those who believe in Him, which John connects with the Spirit.

Spiritual Principle

The Spirit brings life where there was:

Dryness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely command dry ground to become fruitful.

He pours out what makes fruitfulness possible.

IV. THEY WILL SPRING UP BESIDE STREAMS

Isaiah 44:4 — Flourishing Descendants

> **“They will spring up like grass in a meadow, like willows by flowing streams.”**

The result of:

Water.

Spirit.

Blessing.

Is:

Growth.

Cross References

Psalm 1:3

The righteous person is like a tree planted beside streams of water, fruitful and enduring.

Psalm 92:12

The righteous flourish like a palm tree and grow strong like a cedar.

Jeremiah 17:8

The person trusting in the Lord is like a tree by water whose leaves remain green even during heat.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual flourishing requires:

Divine supply.

V. “I BELONG TO THE LORD”

Isaiah 44:5 — Open Identification with God

> **“One will say, ‘I belong to the Lord’; another will call himself by the name of Jacob; another will write on his hand, ‘The Lord’s,’ and take the name Israel.”**

The renewed generation willingly identifies with:

God.

No embarrassment.

No divided loyalty.

They say:

The Lord’s.

Cross References

Galatians 3:29

Those who belong to Christ are described as Abraham’s offspring and heirs according to promise.

Revelation 7:3

God’s servants are marked as belonging to Him before judgment proceeds.

Exodus 13:9

Israel was given visible reminders so God’s saving acts and instruction would remain before them.

Spiritual Principle

Grace produces:

Belonging.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True renewal does not merely say:

“God belongs to me.”

It gladly says:

“I belong to God.”

VI. THE FIRST AND THE LAST

Isaiah 44:6 — There Is No Other God

> **“This is what the Lord says—Israel’s King and Redeemer, the Lord Almighty: ‘I am the First and I am the Last; apart from Me there is no God.’”**

God identifies Himself as:

King.

Redeemer.

Lord Almighty.

First.

Last.

Only God.

Cross References

Revelation 1:17

Christ identifies Himself as the First and the Last.

Isaiah 41:4

The Lord had already declared Himself the First and the One present with the last generations.

Revelation 22:13

Christ declares Himself the Alpha and Omega, First and Last, Beginning and End.

Spiritual Principle

God is not:

One among many.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is no divine competition because there is no second God.

VII. “WHO IS LIKE ME?”

Isaiah 44:7 — Predict the Future

> **“Who is like Me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and set it out before Me, since I appointed an ancient people. Let them foretell the things to come, what is yet to take place.”**

God issues a challenge.

If there is another God:

Speak.

Predict.

Prove it.

Cross References

Isaiah 46:9

God calls His people to remember that He alone is God and none compares with Him.

Exodus 15:11

Moses asks who among supposed gods is like the Lord, majestic in holiness and wonders.

Isaiah 41:22

The idols had already been challenged to explain past events and declare future ones.

Spiritual Principle

God’s knowledge of history proves:

His sovereignty over history.

VIII. THERE IS NO OTHER ROCK

Isaiah 44:8 — God’s Witnesses Need Not Fear

> **“Do not tremble, do not be afraid. Did I not proclaim this long ago and declare it? You are My witnesses. Is there any God besides Me? No, there is no other Rock; I know of none.”**

Again:

Do not fear.

Why?

There is:

One Rock.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 32:4

God is called the Rock whose work is perfect and whose ways are just.

2 Samuel 22:32

David asks who is God besides the Lord and who is a rock besides God.

Isaiah 41:10

God had already told His people not to fear because He is with them, strengthening and upholding them.

Spiritual Principle

Fear decreases when:

God’s uniqueness becomes clear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When everything else shifts, stand on the Rock who has no rival.

IX. IDOL MAKERS ARE NOTHING

Isaiah 44:9 — Treasured Idols Are Worthless

> **“All who make idols are nothing, and the things they treasure are worthless. Those who would speak up for them are blind; they are ignorant, to their own shame.”**

Idolatry reverses:

Value.

People treasure:

Worthless things.

Then become:

Blind.

Cross References

Psalm 115:4

The idols of the nations are silver and gold, merely the work of human hands.

Jeremiah 10:14

Those who make idols become foolish because the image contains no life or truth.

1 Corinthians 8:4

Paul states that an idol has no true divine existence and there is only one God.

Spiritual Principle

We become spiritually distorted when we assign ultimate value to:

Worthless substitutes.

X. WHO MAKES A GOD?

Isaiah 44:10 — The Absurdity of Manufactured Deity

> **“Who shapes a god and casts an idol, which can profit him nothing?”**

The question exposes:

Contradiction.

If you:

Shape it.

How is it:

Your Creator?

Cross References

Habakkuk 2:18

A carved image cannot truly teach because its maker has trusted in his own creation.

Jeremiah 2:11

God condemns people who exchange their true glory for something that cannot profit.

Psalm 115:4

Idols are human craftsmanship, not living gods.

Spiritual Principle

The maker cannot sensibly worship:

What he made.

XI. THE CRAFTSMEN WILL BE ASHAMED

Isaiah 44:11 — Human Makers, Human Limitations

> **“Look, all his associates will be put to shame; the craftsmen are only human. Let them all come together and take their stand; they will be brought down to terror and disgrace.”**

Isaiah reminds us:

The craftsman is:

Human.

The idol is:

Less than its maker.

Cross References

Isaiah 45:16

Idol makers are destined for shame when the true God reveals Himself.

Jeremiah 10:14

The maker becomes foolish because what he produces has no breath.

Isaiah 1:29

Those who trusted corrupt worship practices would eventually be ashamed of what they had chosen.

Spiritual Principle

Anything made by limited humans cannot become:

Unlimited God.

XII. THE BLACKSMITH GROWS TIRED

Isaiah 44:12 — The Maker Is Weaker Than the God He Pretends to Make

> **“The blacksmith takes a tool and works it in the coals; he shapes an idol with hammers, forging it with the strength of his arms. He gets hungry and loses his strength; he drinks no water and grows faint.”**

What irony.

The man making:

The god.

Gets:

Hungry.

Thirsty.

Weak.

Cross References

Jeremiah 10:9

Idols are assembled through the work of craftsmen using metals and decorative materials.

Exodus 32:4

Aaron fashioned the golden calf from donated gold and the people treated the manufactured object as divine.

Isaiah 40:19

Isaiah previously described the craftsman casting an idol and the goldsmith covering it.

Spiritual Principle

A tired man cannot create:

An untiring God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The idol cannot be greater than the exhausted hands that made it.

XIII. THE CARPENTER DESIGNS HIS GOD

Isaiah 44:13 — Made in Human Form

> **“The carpenter measures with a line and marks out an outline with a marker; he shapes it with chisels and marks it with a compass. He makes it in the form of a man, in human beauty, to dwell in a shrine.”**

The idol is:

Measured.

Marked.

Shaped.

Designed.

Human likeness is projected:

Onto deity.

Cross References

Jeremiah 10:3

A craftsman cuts and shapes wood according to human skill.

Isaiah 40:20

A craftsman carefully constructs an idol designed not to fall.

Deuteronomy 4:16

Israel was warned not to corrupt worship by making carved images in human form.

Spiritual Principle

Idolatry often makes god in:

Our image.

Rather than worshiping the God who made us in:

His.

XIV. THE TREE GROWS BY GOD’S RAIN

Isaiah 44:14 — The Idol Depends on God Before It Exists

> **“He cuts down cedars, or perhaps takes a cypress or an oak. He lets it grow among the trees of the forest, or plants a pine, and the rain makes it grow.”**

Before the idol exists:

God provides the tree.

God sends:

Rain.

The irony deepens.

Cross References

Isaiah 40:20

Wood is selected for an idol and shaped by skilled craftsmanship.

Jeremiah 10:3

A tree is cut from the forest and worked by human hands.

Psalm 104:16

The trees are watered and sustained by God’s provision.

Spiritual Principle

The material used to manufacture an idol exists only because:

God created and sustained it.

XV. ONE TREE: FIREWOOD AND “GOD”

Isaiah 44:15 — The Absurd Division

> **“It is used for fuel for burning; some of it he takes and warms himself, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. But he also fashions a god and worships it; he makes an idol and bows down to it.”**

One tree.

Part:

Firewood.

Part:

God.

That is Isaiah’s point.

Cross References

Jeremiah 10:8

Idolatrous instruction is exposed as foolish because the object worshiped is merely wood.

Deuteronomy 4:28

Israel was warned that exile would expose them to gods made by human hands that cannot see, hear, eat, or smell.

Habakkuk 2:19

Woe is pronounced on anyone who asks wood and stone to awaken and guide.

Spiritual Principle

Idolatry takes:

Ordinary creation.

And gives it:

Ultimate devotion.

XVI. HALF THE WOOD COOKS DINNER

Isaiah 44:16 — The Fire Is Useful; the Idol Is Not

> **“Half of the wood he burns in the fire; over it he prepares his meal, he roasts his meat and eats his fill. He warms himself and says, ‘Ah! I am warm; I see the fire.’”**

The wood actually has:

Legitimate usefulness.

Heat.

Cooking.

But then humans demand from it:

Divinity.

Cross References

Jeremiah 10:5

Idols cannot move or act and must be carried.

Psalm 115:5

Idols possess mouths but cannot speak.

Habakkuk 2:19

A silent piece of wood cannot truly awaken or reveal truth.

Spiritual Principle

A created thing can be useful without being:

Worthy of worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Good gifts become idols when we ask them to do what only God can do.

XVII. “SAVE ME! YOU ARE MY GOD!”

Isaiah 44:17 — The Leftover Wood Becomes Savior

> **“From the rest he makes a god, his idol; he bows down to it and worships. He prays to it and says, ‘Save me! You are my god!’”**

This is Isaiah’s climax.

The worshiper asks:

The leftover wood.

To:

Save him.

Cross References

Judges 10:14

God sarcastically tells Israel to cry to the gods they chose and see whether those gods can rescue them.

Jeremiah 2:28

God asks where Judah’s manufactured gods are when trouble comes and challenges them to arise and save.

Psalm 115:5

Idols have mouths but cannot speak and therefore cannot answer prayer.

Spiritual Principle

Every idol eventually receives a request:

“Save me.”

And fails.

XVIII. SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS

Isaiah 44:18 — Eyes Shut, Minds Closed

> **“They know nothing, they understand nothing; their eyes are plastered shut so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand.”**

Idolatry produces:

Darkness.

Cross References

Isaiah 6:10

Persistent rebellion can lead to hardened perception and spiritual dullness.

2 Corinthians 4:4

Paul describes minds blinded so that the light of the gospel is not perceived.

Psalm 135:16

Idols have mouths but do not speak, eyes but do not see, and those who trust them become spiritually like them.

Spiritual Principle

False worship damages:

Spiritual perception.

XIX. “NO ONE STOPS TO THINK”

Isaiah 44:19 — The Missing Step

> **“No one stops to think, no one has the knowledge or understanding to say, ‘Half of it I used for fuel; I even baked bread over its coals, I roasted meat and I ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?’”**

The problem is:

Failure to reflect.

Isaiah says:

Stop.

Think.

Cross References

Romans 1:21

Human beings can know something of God yet become futile in reasoning when they refuse to honor Him.

Jeremiah 10:8

Idolatry is exposed as senseless instruction centered on wood.

Isaiah 46:8

God later tells idolaters to remember, think carefully, and take truth to heart.

Spiritual Principle

Many idols survive because people never:

Question them honestly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One of the first steps out of deception is:

Stop and think.

XX. FEEDING ON ASHES

Isaiah 44:20 — “Is This Thing a Lie?”

> **“He feeds on ashes, a deluded heart misleads him; he cannot save himself, or say, ‘Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?’”**

The idolater consumes:

Ashes.

Trusts:

A lie.

Cannot save:

Himself.

Cross References

Romans 1:25

People exchange God’s truth for a lie and worship created things rather than the Creator.

Isaiah 44:9

Idols and the objects people treasure prove worthless.

Habakkuk 2:18

Trust in a carved image is trust in falsehood.

Spiritual Principle

Idolatry is:

Self-deception.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The most dangerous lie may be the one we hold so tightly that we stop asking whether it is true.

XXI. “I WILL NOT FORGET YOU”

Isaiah 44:21 — Remember Who You Are

> **“Remember these things, Jacob, for you, Israel, are My servant. I have made you, you are My servant; Israel, I will not forget you.”**

After twenty verses of:

Warning.

Idolatry.

Foolishness.

God says:

I will not forget.

Cross References

Isaiah 49:15

God says His remembrance of His people is stronger even than a mother’s natural attachment to her child.

Isaiah 43:1

The Lord tells Israel that He created, redeemed, called, and claimed them.

Deuteronomy 4:31

God will not abandon or destroy His covenant people or forget His covenant.

Spiritual Principle

God’s remembrance is stronger than:

Israel’s failure.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The people who forget God are still addressed by the God who says:

“I will not forget you.”

XXII. SINS SWEPT AWAY LIKE CLOUDS

Isaiah 44:22 — “Return to Me”

> **“I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.”**

What imagery.

Cloud:

Gone.

Morning mist:

Vanished.

Sin:

Removed.

Then:

Return.

Cross References

Isaiah 1:18

Though sins are scarlet, God promises cleansing that makes them white as snow.

Colossians 2:14

God cancels the record of debt that stood against His people.

Jeremiah 3:12

God calls His unfaithful people to return because He is merciful.

Spiritual Principle

Forgiveness creates:

A road home.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not say:

“Clean yourself up and then return.”

He says:

“I have redeemed you—return.”

XXIII. ALL CREATION IS CALLED TO SING

Isaiah 44:23 — Redemption Deserves Cosmic Praise

> **“Sing for joy, you heavens, for the Lord has done this; shout aloud, you earth beneath. Burst into song, you mountains, you forests and all your trees, for the Lord has redeemed Jacob, He displays His glory in Israel.”**

Heavens.

Earth.

Mountains.

Forests.

Trees.

All:

Sing.

Cross References

Psalm 96:11

Heaven and earth are called to rejoice in the Lord’s righteous rule.

Isaiah 55:12

Mountains, hills, and trees are poetically pictured rejoicing at God’s restoration.

Psalm 98:4

All the earth is summoned to shout joyfully and sing praise.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption is:

Worship-worthy.

XXIV. THE REDEEMER IS ALSO CREATOR

Isaiah 44:24 — “I Made All Things”

> **“This is what the Lord says—your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: ‘I am the Lord, the Maker of all things, who stretches out the heavens by Myself, who spreads out the earth by My own hand,’”**

God alone:

Creates.

This destroys:

Idolatry.

No idol helped.

No rival assisted.

Cross References

Job 9:8

God alone stretches out the heavens and rules creation.

Psalm 104:2

God is pictured stretching out the heavens like a curtain.

Jeremiah 10:12

The Lord made the earth by His power and established the world by His wisdom.

Spiritual Principle

The Redeemer has the power to restore because He is:

Creator.

XXV. GOD EXPOSES FALSE PROPHETS

Isaiah 44:25 — Human Wisdom Overturned

> **“Who foils the signs of false prophets and makes fools of diviners, who overthrows the learning of the wise and turns it into nonsense,”**

God exposes:

False spiritual claims.

False predictions.

False wisdom.

Cross References

1 Corinthians 1:20

Paul asks where human wisdom stands when God exposes the world’s wisdom as unable to save.

Jeremiah 50:36

False wise men and deceivers are brought to shame under divine judgment.

Deuteronomy 18:22

A false prophet is exposed when predictions claimed in God’s name do not come to pass.

Spiritual Principle

God does not fear:

Human claims to wisdom.

XXVI. GOD FULFILLS HIS SERVANTS' WORDS

Isaiah 44:26 — Jerusalem Will Be Rebuilt

> **"Who carries out the words of His servants and fulfills the predictions of His messengers, who says of Jerusalem, 'It shall be inhabited,' of the towns of Judah, 'They shall be rebuilt,' and of their ruins, 'I will restore them,'"**

False prophets:

Fail.

God's messengers:

Vindicated.

Jerusalem:

Rebuilt.

Judah:

Restored.

Cross References

Jeremiah 30:18

God promises restoration of Jacob's dwellings and rebuilding after judgment.

Zechariah 1:16

God declares that He will return to Jerusalem with mercy and that the city will be rebuilt.

2 Peter 1:19

Prophetic revelation is described as a reliable word deserving careful attention.

Spiritual Principle

Ruins do not mean:

God's promise is ruined.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can speak “rebuilt” over what presently looks destroyed.

XXVII. GOD SPEAKS TO THE DEEP

Isaiah 44:27 — Waters Obey

> **“Who says to the watery deep, ‘Be dry, and I will dry up your streams,’”**

God commands:

Waters.

This recalls:

Exodus.

And anticipates:

Deliverance from Babylon.

Cross References

Exodus 14:21

God dried the sea so Israel could pass through.

Jeremiah 51:36

God promises judgment against Babylon and speaks of drying her sea and springs.

Isaiah 11:15

God is pictured drying waters to create a pathway for His returning people.

Spiritual Principle

What looks like an uncrossable barrier can become:

Dry ground.

XXVIII. CYRUS IS NAMED

Isaiah 44:28 — “He Is My Shepherd”

> **“Who says of Cyrus, ‘He is My shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem, “Let it be rebuilt,” and of the temple, “Let its foundations be laid.”’”**

This is one of Isaiah’s most striking prophetic declarations.

The ruler is:

Named.

Cyrus.

He is called:

“My shepherd.”

That does not mean:

He is spiritually equivalent to Israel’s Messiah.

It means:

God assigns him a historical role.

He will accomplish:

God’s purpose.

Jerusalem:

Rebuilt.

Temple:

Foundations laid.

Cross References

2 Chronicles 36:22

Cyrus later issues a proclamation permitting the return and rebuilding in Jerusalem.

Ezra 1:1

God moves Cyrus to decree that the Lord’s house in Jerusalem be rebuilt.

Ezekiel 34:23

Ezekiel speaks of a distinct Davidic Shepherd for God's people; this helps us recognize that "shepherd" language can describe different roles in different contexts and should not make Cyrus the Messianic Shepherd.

Spiritual Principle

God can use rulers who do not fully understand:

His entire redemptive plan.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's sovereignty is so complete that He can use a foreign king as a tool of restoration without making that king the source of redemption.

XXIX. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 44

1. God Forms His People

Principle:

Our identity begins with the Creator who made us.

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2. God Helps His Servant

Principle:

The One who formed Israel remains committed to helping Israel.

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3. The Spirit Brings Life

Principle:

Dry spiritual ground becomes fruitful under divine outpouring.

---

4. Renewal Produces Belonging

Principle:

Renewed people gladly say, “I belong to the Lord.”

---

5. There Is Only One God

Principle:

The Lord alone is First, Last, King, Redeemer, and Rock.

---

6. Idolatry Is Irrational

Principle:

Humans make an object and then ask the object to save its maker.

---

7. Idolatry Blinds

Principle:

A deluded heart can become incapable of recognizing an obvious lie.

---

8. God Does Not Forget His People

Principle:

Human forgetfulness does not erase divine remembrance.

---

9. God Sweeps Away Sin

Principle:

Grace removes guilt like mist disappearing in the morning.

---

10. Redemption Produces Praise

Principle:

Heaven and earth are summoned to rejoice in God’s saving work.

---

11. God Rules Prophecy and History

Principle:

False predictions fail; God’s declared purpose stands.

---

12. God Can Use Unexpected People

Principle:

Cyrus can serve God’s historical purpose without being the covenant Redeemer.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 44 TEACHES ABOUT THE SPIRIT

The Spirit is pictured as:

Water.

Poured out.

Bringing:

Life.

Growth.

Future blessing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Where the Spirit is poured out, spiritual drought does not have to remain drought.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 44 TEACHES ABOUT FUTURE GENERATIONS

The blessing reaches:

Descendants.

Offspring.

Spiritual Principle

God’s work is:

Generational.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 44 TEACHES ABOUT BELONGING

> **“The Lord’s.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The deepest mark of spiritual renewal is joyful ownership by God.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 44 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S UNIQUENESS

First.

Last.

No other God.

No other Rock.

Spiritual Principle

Monotheism is not:

Peripheral.

It is foundational.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 44 TEACHES ABOUT IDOLATRY

The idol is:

Made.

Measured.

Hammered.

Cut.

Sanded.

Carved.

Supported.

Then:

Worshiped.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Anything dependent upon human construction cannot become the ultimate object of human trust.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 44 TEACHES ABOUT SPIRITUAL DECEPTION

The idolater cannot say:

> **“Is not this a lie?”**

Spiritual Principle

Deception is most dangerous when:

Self-awareness disappears.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 44 TEACHES ABOUT FORGIVENESS

Sins become:

Cloud.

Mist.

Gone.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s forgiveness does not merely rearrange the cloud.

It sweeps it away.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 44 TEACHES ABOUT RETURNING TO GOD

> **“Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.”**

Spiritual Principle

Redemption calls people:

Home.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 44 TEACHES ABOUT CREATION

God made:

All things.

By Himself.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who created everything does not need created substitutes.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 44 TEACHES ABOUT PROPHECY

God:

Declares.

Carries out.

Fulfills.

Spiritual Principle

Prophecy demonstrates not merely foreknowledge but:

Sovereign purpose.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 44 TEACHES ABOUT CYRUS

God can:

Name.

Raise.

Commission.

Use.

A foreign ruler.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s purposes are not limited to people who fully understand that He is using them.

XLI. THE THIRSTY LAND

Dryness is not:

The final condition.

Spiritual Principle

God can pour before the ground produces.

XLII. SPIRIT BEFORE FRUIT

God pours:

Spirit.

Then descendants:

Spring up.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual fruitfulness is the result of divine life, not religious strain.

XLIII. “I BELONG TO THE LORD”

This is:

Identity.

Confession.

Commitment.

Spiritual Principle

Grace changes:

Possession.

XLIV. FIRST AND LAST

No one stands:

Before Him.

No one remains:

After Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every idol exists between moments.

God stands over all moments.

XLV. THE ONLY ROCK

Idols must be:

Fastened.

God is:

Rock.

Spiritual Principle

False gods need stability.

The true God gives stability.

XLVI. IDOLS TREASURED

People treasure:

What cannot save.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Whatever receives your highest value begins to shape your worship.

XLVII. THE HUNGRY BLACKSMITH

He grows:

Weak.

Spiritual Principle

Human weakness cannot manufacture divine omnipotence.

XLVIII. THE CARPENTER’S COMPASS

God is:

Designed.

Measured.

Shaped.

In the idol maker’s imagination.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A god that fits perfectly inside human measurements is not the God of Scripture.

XLIX. THE TREE IN THE FOREST

Before man:

Cuts it.

God:

Grew it.

Spiritual Principle

Idolatry steals material from God’s creation and gives glory to the material instead of:

The Creator.

L. FIREWOOD AND WORSHIP

Same wood.

Two uses.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The absurdity of idolatry becomes visible when we remember the ordinary nature of what we are tempted to worship.

LI. “SAVE ME!”

The cry belongs to:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Whatever receives your ultimate cry for salvation functions as:

Your god.

LII. CLOSED EYES

Idolatry creates:

Spiritual blindness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We eventually stop seeing clearly when we repeatedly choose what is false.

LIII. “NO ONE STOPS TO THINK”

Reflection is missing.

Spiritual Principle

Unexamined worship can become:

Dangerous worship.

LIV. ASHES FOR FOOD

A devastating image.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

False worship cannot nourish the soul.

It leaves ash where people expected bread.

LV. THE LIE IN THE RIGHT HAND

Close.

Familiar.

Held tightly.

Still:

A lie.

Spiritual Principle

Proximity does not make deception:

Truth.

LVI. “REMEMBER THESE THINGS”

God commands:

Reflection.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The cure for spiritual forgetfulness begins with remembering truth.

LVII. “I WILL NOT FORGET YOU”

One of the chapter’s tenderest promises.

Spiritual Principle

God’s covenant memory outlasts:

Human wandering.

LVIII. OFFENSES LIKE CLOUD

Clouds can look:

Large.

Then:

Disappear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The size of remembered guilt is not greater than the power of divine forgiveness.

LIX. SINS LIKE MORNING MIST

Mist appears:

Thick.

Then:

Gone.

Spiritual Principle

Forgiveness changes the standing of the redeemed person before God.

LX. “RETURN TO ME”

Not merely:

Return to religion.

Return to:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Repentance is not merely leaving sin.

It is coming home to the Redeemer.

LXI. HEAVENS SING

Redemption expands:

Praise.

Spiritual Principle

Grace is never intended to terminate in:

Silence.

LXII. FORESTS SING

Creation joins:

The song.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption is so glorious that Isaiah must borrow the voices of creation to describe the response it deserves.

LXIII. GOD ALONE STRETCHED OUT THE HEAVENS

No helpers.

No divine committee.

Spiritual Principle

God’s creative sovereignty is:

Exclusive.

LXIV. FALSE PROPHETS FAIL

God exposes:

Pretended knowledge.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A false prediction may impress briefly.

God’s truth survives history.

LXV. HUMAN WISDOM OVERTURNED

Wisdom against God becomes:

Foolishness.

Spiritual Principle

Brilliance without truth is not:

Wisdom.

LXVI. JERUSALEM REBUILT

At the time of prophecy:

Ruins lie ahead.

Yet restoration is already:

Spoken.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can promise rebuilding before the destruction is even complete.

LXVII. TOWNS OF JUDAH RESTORED

God sees:

Future habitation.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment has boundaries determined by:

God.

LXVIII. THE DEEP DRIED

Water obeys:

Its Creator.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Barriers remain barriers only until God speaks to them.

LXIX. CYRUS BY NAME

This is one of Isaiah’s strongest demonstrations of:

God’s rule over future history.

Spiritual Principle

God can prepare a ruler for an assignment long before God’s people know the ruler exists.

LXX. “MY SHEPHERD”

Cyrus serves:

A limited historical purpose.

He is:

God’s instrument.

Not:

God’s equal.

Not:

Israel’s ultimate Redeemer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

An instrument can serve God’s purpose without becoming the source of God’s salvation.

LXXI. “HE WILL ACCOMPLISH ALL THAT I PLEASE”

The emphasis is:

God’s pleasure.

Not:

Cyrus’s glory.

Spiritual Principle

Human rulers accomplish only what divine sovereignty permits within God’s ultimate purposes.

LXXII. THE TEMPLE FOUNDATIONS

Restoration becomes:

Concrete.

Jerusalem.

Temple.

Foundations.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s promises eventually enter history in visible forms.

LXXIII. ISAIAH 43 AND ISAIAH 44

Isaiah 43

God says:

I blot out your transgressions.

Isaiah 44

God says:

I sweep away your offenses.

Key Truth

Isaiah repeats forgiveness because God wants His people to understand that redemption is grounded in grace rather than their own record.

LXXIV. ISAIAH 41–44 AND THE IDOL POLEMIC

Isaiah 41

Idols cannot predict.

Isaiah 42

God will not give idols His glory.

Isaiah 43

No other Savior exists.

Isaiah 44

Idols are exposed as absurd products of human hands.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah does not merely tell Israel to reject idols.

He systematically shows why idols are intellectually, spiritually, and redemptively bankrupt.

LXXV. ISAIAH 44 AND THE SPIRIT

The chapter begins with:

Spirit.

Then:

Belonging.

Then:

Witness.

Then:

Redemption.

Spiritual Principle

The Spirit’s work produces people who know:

Whose they are.

LXXVI. ISAIAH 44 AND CYRUS

The chapter begins with:

Jacob My servant.

It ends with:

Cyrus My shepherd.

God uses:

Covenant people.

And:

Foreign rulers.

But in different roles.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s sovereignty assigns different people different purposes without confusing their identities.

LXXVII. TEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 44

1. Dry Ground → Spirit-Poured Life

2. Fear → Divine Help

3. Idols → Only God

4. Manufactured gods → Creator

5. Blindness → Witness

6. Human Craftsmanship → Divine Sovereignty

7. Delusion → Truth

8. Sin → Swept-Away Forgiveness

9. Ruins → Rebuilt Jerusalem

10. Babylonian Captivity → Cyrus-Led Restoration

Key Truth

Isaiah 44 contrasts everything humans manufacture, trust, and boast in with the God who creates, redeems, forgives, predicts, restores, and governs history.

LXXVIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What does God call Jacob?

His servant.

Question 2

What does He say about Israel?

Israel is chosen.

Question 3

What three things does God say about Israel in verse 2?

He made them, formed them, and will help them.

Question 4

What does God promise to pour on thirsty land?

Water.

Question 5

What does the water imagery represent spiritually?

The outpouring of God’s Spirit and blessing.

Question 6

What happens to the descendants?

They flourish like grass and willows beside streams.

Question 7

How do they identify themselves?

They openly say they belong to the Lord.

Question 8

How does God describe Himself in verse 6?

As King, Redeemer, Lord Almighty, First, Last, and the only God.

Question 9

What is God’s challenge to any supposed rival?

Predict the future and prove divine knowledge.

Question 10

What does God call Himself besides King and Redeemer?

The only Rock.

Question 11

What does Isaiah say about idol makers?

They and their treasured objects are worthless.

Question 12

Why is the blacksmith example ironic?

The man who makes the god becomes hungry, thirsty, tired, and weak.

Question 13

What does the carpenter do?

He measures and shapes wood into a human-like idol.

Question 14

What happens to the same wood?

Part is burned for heat and cooking, while the remainder becomes an object of worship.

Question 15

What does the idolater ask the idol to do?

Save him.

Question 16

Why does the idolater fail to see the absurdity?

His heart is deceived and his spiritual perception is darkened.

Question 17

What question can he no longer honestly ask?

> **“Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?”**

Question 18

What does God tell Israel in verse 21?

He will not forget them.

Question 19

How does God describe their forgiven offenses?

Like a cloud and morning mist swept away.

Question 20

What does He call them to do?

Return to Him.

Question 21

Why does all creation sing?

Because the Lord has redeemed Jacob and displayed His glory.

Question 22

Who created heaven and earth?

The Lord alone.

Question 23

What does God do with false prophets and diviners?

He exposes and frustrates their claims.

Question 24

What does He do with His true messengers?

He fulfills His declared word.

Question 25

What does God say about Jerusalem?

It will be inhabited and rebuilt.

Question 26

What does He say about Judah’s ruins?

He will restore them.

Question 27

Who is named in verse 28?

Cyrus.

Question 28

What title does God give Cyrus?

“My shepherd.”

Question 29

What will Cyrus do?

Accomplish God’s historical purpose concerning Jerusalem and the temple.

Question 30

Does calling Cyrus “shepherd” make him the Messiah?

No.

He is a foreign ruler appointed for a particular historical role, while Isaiah’s Messianic Servant and Shepherd themes develop in distinct contexts.

LXXIX. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 44 asks several searching questions.

Do I Really Believe God Formed Me?

Does that change how I view:

My life?

My purpose?

My worth?

Am I Living in Fear even though God says:

“I will help you”?

Is there spiritual dryness in my life?

Am I asking for:

God’s Spirit?

Am I praying for future generations?

Children?

Grandchildren?

Those who come after me?

Can I gladly say:

“I belong to the Lord”?

What is my Rock?

Money?

Health?

Government?

Reputation?

Success?

Or:

God?

What have I turned into an idol?

Something useful that I have asked to:

Save me?

Give me identity?

Give me ultimate security?

Is there anything “in my right hand” that I need to admit is:

A lie?

Have I forgotten that God says:

“I will not forget you”?

Do I believe He can sweep away:

Sin?

Guilt?

Shame?

Have I returned to:

God Himself?

Do I praise God for:

Redemption?

Do I trust His Word more than:

False predictions?

Human speculation?

Can I believe God is already preparing:

Restoration.

Even while I still see:

Ruins?

LXXX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Worship What You Have to Hold Up—Trust the God Who Holds You Up”

The idol:

Needs wood.

Needs tools.

Needs a craftsman.

Needs nails.

Needs support.

God needs:

Nothing.

Principle:

Anything that depends upon you for its existence cannot become the ultimate foundation of your existence.

LXXXI. GOD FORMED YOU IN THE WOMB

Identity is not:

Accidental.

Spiritual Principle

Life begins under:

God’s creative knowledge.

LXXXII. “I WILL HELP YOU”

Simple.

Powerful.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Creator’s help is greater than the creature’s fear.

LXXXIII. DRY GROUND AND SPIRITUAL DROUGHT

God recognizes:

Dryness.

Spiritual Principle

God does not condemn thirsty ground for being dry.

He promises:

Water.

LXXXIV. THE SPIRIT ON DESCENDANTS

God’s vision extends:

Beyond one generation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pray not merely that God blesses you, but that His Spirit works powerfully in those who come after you.

LXXXV. WILLows BY STREAMS

Growth is tied to:

Source.

Spiritual Principle

Where roots stay close to living water, fruitfulness becomes possible.

LXXXVI. “THE LORD’S”

What a beautiful inscription.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The most important label on a redeemed life is:

Belonging to God.

LXXXVII. NO GOD BESIDES ME

Not:

One better God.

The:

Only God.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical faith is exclusive because God’s identity is exclusive.

LXXXVIII. NO OTHER ROCK

Every false foundation:

Cracks.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A Rock does not need you to stabilize it.

It stabilizes you.

LXXXIX. IDOL MAKERS ARE BLIND

Their hands work.

Their hearts:

Do not see.

Spiritual Principle

Technical skill does not guarantee spiritual wisdom.

XC. THE BLACKSMITH FAINTS

He needs:

Food.

Water.

Rest.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A man who cannot sustain himself cannot manufacture a god capable of sustaining the universe.

XCI. THE CARPENTER MEASURES THE IDOL

The idol fits:

Human dimensions.

Spiritual Principle

Human imagination naturally creates gods small enough to manage.

XCII. THE TREE OWES ITS LIFE TO GOD

Rain:

From God.

Growth:

From God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

It is irrational to worship the gift while ignoring the Giver.

XCIII. THE FIREWOOD WORKS BETTER THAN THE IDOL

As:

Fuel.

The wood actually does something.

As:

God.

Nothing.

Spiritual Principle

Created things become dangerous when we demand from them more than God designed them to give.

XCIV. “SAVE ME”

Every heart eventually cries:

For rescue.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What you turn to first for ultimate rescue reveals what functions as your god.

XCV. DECEPTION CLOSES THE MIND

The heart:

Misleads.

Spiritual Principle

Sin affects not only behavior but:

Perception.

XCVI. THE LIE IN THE HAND

The idolater holds:

The evidence.

And still:

Misses the truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Deception can become so familiar that we stop questioning what is obviously false.

XCVII. GOD REMEMBERS

Israel forgets:

God.

God says:

I will not forget:

You.

Spiritual Principle

Grace is stronger than spiritual forgetfulness.

XCVIII. CLOUDS SWEPT AWAY

Clouds can:

Block the sun.

Then disappear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Forgiven guilt may have once darkened everything, but grace can clear the sky.

XCIX. MORNING MIST

Mist looks:

Real.

Then:

Vanishing.

Spiritual Principle

God’s forgiveness is not imaginary; the guilt is truly removed from the forgiven person’s standing before Him.

C. “RETURN TO ME”

This is the heart of:

Repentance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption is not merely getting away from judgment.

It is getting back to God.

CI. HEAVEN AND EARTH PRAISE

Redemption becomes:

Cosmic celebration.

Spiritual Principle

What God does in salvation is worthy of more praise than one human voice can give.

CII. CREATOR AND REDEEMER

Same God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The hands that formed the world are fully capable of restoring what sin has broken.

CIII. FALSE PROPHETS VERSUS TRUE MESSENGERS

One:

Fails.

One:

Is fulfilled.

Spiritual Principle

Time eventually tests prophecy.

CIV. JERUSALEM “SHALL BE INHABITED”

God speaks:

Future restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can address ruins using future tense.

CV. “I WILL RESTORE THEM”

Simple words.

Huge promise.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration is not too difficult for the One who created from nothing.

CVI. CYRUS BEFORE THE DECREE

God announces:

Before fulfillment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may have already named the instrument in His plan before His people ever see the answer.

CVII. CYRUS AS SHEPHERD

His role is:

Historical.

Instrumental.

Limited.

Spiritual Principle

God can use imperfect rulers to accomplish specific purposes without endorsing everything about them.

CVIII. THE TEMPLE WILL BE REBUILT

Judgment did not erase:

Worship forever.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can restore the very place that sin and judgment left in ruins.

CIX. ELEVEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 44

1. Dry Ground → Water

2. Human Weakness → Divine Spirit

3. Fear → Help

4. Idols → Only God

5. Wood → Worshiped Image

6. Blindness → Truth

7. Delusion → Recognition

8. Forgotten Feeling → “I Will Not Forget You”

9. Sin Cloud → Cleared Sky

10. Ruins → Rebuilding

11. Exile → Restoration Through Cyrus

Key Truth

Isaiah 44 demonstrates that everything idols promise falsely—identity, security, salvation, wisdom, and control of the future—the Lord alone actually possesses and provides.

CX. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 44

1. God Reassures His Chosen Servant

Israel is formed, chosen, and helped.

2. God Promises the Spirit

Dry ground becomes fruitful and future generations belong to Him.

3. God Declares His Uniqueness

He is First, Last, King, Redeemer, and Rock.

4. God Exposes Idolatry

Human beings manufacture gods from material they also burn for fuel.

5. God Calls His People to Return

Their sins are swept away like cloud and mist.

6. Creation Celebrates Redemption

Heaven and earth sing because Jacob is redeemed.

7. God Announces Restoration Through Cyrus

Jerusalem and the temple will be rebuilt according to His sovereign purpose.

Key Truth

Isaiah 44 moves from divine formation to spiritual renewal, from idol exposure to forgiveness, and from exile's ruins to restoration under the sovereign Word of God.

CXI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 44 begins with:

God saying:

> **"Do not be afraid."**

Why?

Because:

I made you.

I formed you.

I chose you.

I will help you.

That is the foundation.

Then God says:

The ground may be:

Dry.

But:

I will pour water.

Your children may live in:

Difficult times.

But:

I can pour out My Spirit.

Do not only pray for:

Your own spiritual life.

Pray:

Generationally.

Lord, pour Your Spirit on:

Our children.

Our grandchildren.

Those who come after us.

Then imagine a generation saying:

“I belong to the Lord.”

What a prayer.

Then God says:

“I am the First and I am the Last.”

There is no other God.

No other:

Rock.

Then Isaiah turns to:

Idols.

And almost laughs at the absurdity.

A man cuts down:

A tree.

Part becomes:

Fire.

He cooks:

Dinner.

Warms:

His hands.

Then looks at the leftover chunk of wood and says:

You are:

My god.

Save:

Me.

Isaiah is saying:

Think.

Stop.

Look at what you are doing.

We may not bow before:

Wooden statues.

But the heart still manufactures:

Idols.

Money.

Status.

Politics.

Career.

Possessions.

Relationships.

Reputation.

Success.

Health.

Anything can become:

An idol.

The question is:

Am I asking something created to give me what only the Creator can give?

Security.

Identity.

Meaning.

Salvation.

Then Isaiah says the idolater cannot even ask:

> **“Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?”**

That may be one of the most important questions in the chapter.

What are you holding?

What are you trusting?

What are you afraid to lose?

What promise have you believed?

Could it be:

A lie?

Then suddenly God says:

> **“I will not forget you.”**

How beautiful.

You forgot:

Me.

I will not forget:

You.

Then:

> **“I have swept away your offenses like a cloud.”**

Imagine looking at:

A dark cloud.

Then the wind:

Moves.

The sky:

Clears.

That is God’s picture of:

Forgiveness.

Then:

“Return to Me.”

That is the goal.

Not merely:

Feel less guilty.

Return to:

God.

Then everything starts:

Singing.

Heaven.

Earth.

Mountains.

Trees.

Why?

Because:

Redemption deserves a song.

Then the chapter ends with:

History.

False prophets cannot:

Predict accurately.

Idols cannot:

Speak.

But God says:

Jerusalem will be:

Rebuilt.

Judah’s towns:

Restored.

The temple:

Founded again.

And He names:

Cyrus.

That reminds us:

God does not merely know:

General possibilities.

He knows:

People.

Names.

Events.

Kings.

Future outcomes.

The people may see:

Ruins.

God sees:

Rebuilding.

The people may see:

Exile.

God sees:

Return.

The people may see:

Babylon.

God sees:

Cyrus.

The people may see:

A destroyed temple.

God sees:

Foundations being laid again.

So:

Do not fear.

Ask for:

The Spirit.

Say:

“I belong to the Lord.”

Reject:

Idols.

Question:

The lie in your hand.

Remember:

God has not forgotten you.

Receive:

Forgiveness.

Return:

To Him.

Sing:

Because you are redeemed.

And when all you can see is:

Ruins—

Remember:

God can already be speaking:

“Rebuilt.”

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You are:

Our Maker.

Our Helper.

Our Redeemer.

Our King.

Our Rock.

Thank You that You formed:

Life.

Know:

Life.

Sustain:

Life.

Father, when we are afraid:

Remind us that You say:

“I will help you.”

Where our hearts are:

Dry.

Pour:

Water.

Where our families need:

Renewal.

Pour out:

Your Spirit.

Bless:

Future generations.

May our children.

Our grandchildren.

Those who follow us.

Gladly say:

“I belong to the Lord.”

Father, expose every:

Idol.

Anything we trust more than:

You.

Anything we ask to:

Save us.

Define us.

Secure us.

Give us ultimate meaning.

Give us courage to ask:

“Is this thing in my hand a lie?”

Open our eyes.

Clear our minds.

Deliver us from:

Self-deception.

Thank You that You say:

“I will not forget you.”

When we feel:

Forgotten.

Remind us:

We are remembered.

Thank You for:

Forgiveness.

Sweep away:

Our offenses.

Our sins.

Our guilt.

Like:

Cloud.

Morning mist.

Then call us:

Home.

Teach us to:

Return to You.

Father, put a song:

In our hearts.

Let our lives proclaim:

You have redeemed us.

Thank You that You created:

Heaven.

Earth.

Everything.

You need:

No rival.

No helper.

No adviser.

Thank You that You expose:

Falsehood.

And fulfill:

Your Word.

When we see:

Ruins.

Give us faith to hear:

“Rebuilt.”

When we see:

Desolation.

Give us faith to hear:

“Restored.”

When we do not see:

The instrument.

Remind us:

You already know the Cyrus of Your purpose.

Rule our hearts.

Direct our steps.

Receive all:

Glory.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.” — Isaiah 44:22**

Central Truth

The Lord alone is Israel’s Creator, King, Redeemer, Rock, and sovereign God; He promises the life-giving outpouring of His Spirit, exposes idols as powerless products of human deception, remembers His servant, sweeps away sin, calls His people to return, and proves His control over history by declaring Jerusalem’s restoration and naming Cyrus as the ruler who will carry out His appointed purpose.

Isaiah 44 in One Sentence

Isaiah declares that the Lord who formed and chose Israel will pour out His Spirit and blessing on future generations, that He alone is the First, the Last, the Rock, and the only God, that idols are absurd and powerless products of human hands, that He graciously sweeps away His people’s sins and calls them to return, and that as sovereign Creator and Redeemer He will fulfill His prophetic Word by rebuilding Jerusalem and using Cyrus as His appointed shepherd to advance that restoration.

Isaiah Chapter 45 — The Sovereignty of God and the Calling of Cyrus

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 45 is one of the strongest declarations of:

The sovereignty of God.

The uniqueness of God.

The authority of God over rulers.

The certainty of prophecy.

The folly of idolatry.

The universal call to salvation.

The chapter begins with a remarkable statement:

> **“This is what the Lord says to His anointed, to Cyrus.”**

Cyrus is a foreign king.

He is not:

An Israelite.

A Davidic king.

The Messiah.

Yet God calls him:

His anointed instrument.

The Hebrew idea behind “anointed” refers to one:

Set apart.

Appointed.

Commissioned.

For a specific task.

Cyrus is used by God to:

Subdue nations.

Open gates.

Release exiles.

Allow Jerusalem to be rebuilt.

Permit the temple foundations to be restored.

This demonstrates one of the chapter’s major truths:

God can use someone who does not fully know Him to accomplish:

His sovereign purpose.

God says explicitly:

> **“Though you do not acknowledge Me.”**

And again:

> **“Though you have not known Me.”**

Cyrus may not fully understand:

The God using him.

But God fully understands:

Cyrus.

God knows:

His name.

His future.

His victories.

His purpose.

His place in history.

Isaiah 45 repeatedly declares:

> **“There is no other.”**

The Lord is not:

One god among many.

He is:

The only God.

He governs:

Light.

Darkness.

Peace.

Calamity.

Creation.

History.

Kings.

Nations.

Prophecy.

Salvation.

Isaiah therefore gives no room for:

Cosmic dualism.

There is not a good god controlling one side of reality and an equal evil god controlling another.

God alone is:

Sovereign.

Verse 7 must be handled carefully.

When God says:

> **“I bring peace and create calamity,”**

the contrast concerns:

Well-being and disaster.

Peace and judgment.

It does not mean God creates:

Moral evil.

Scripture consistently presents God as:

Holy.

Righteous.

Just.

But historical disaster and judgment do not exist outside:

His sovereignty.

The chapter then confronts those who would:

Quarrel with their Maker.

The image is:

Clay arguing with Potter.

The clay says:

What are you doing?

The answer is not that human questions are always sinful.

Scripture contains many faithful questions.

The problem is:

Creaturely arrogance.

Trying to put:

The Creator.

On trial.

The Lord then reminds Israel:

I created the earth.

I created humanity.

I stretched out the heavens.

I command the stars.

I raised Cyrus.

That puts the issue in perspective.

Then the chapter broadens from:

Israel.

Cyrus.

Babylon.

To:

All nations.

God says:

> **“Turn to Me and be saved, all you ends of the earth.”**

That is one of the clearest universal invitations in Isaiah.

Salvation reaches:

Beyond Israel.

Beyond one nation.

Beyond one geography.

The reason is simple:

> **“For I am God, and there is no other.”**

If there is only:

One God.

Then there is only:

One ultimate Savior.

Then comes another majestic declaration:

> **“Before Me every knee will bow; by Me every tongue will swear.”**

The New Testament takes this language and applies it in powerful ways to:

Jesus Christ.

Philippians 2 declares that every knee will bow at the name of Jesus and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

The final verse returns to:

Israel.

> **“In the Lord all the descendants of Israel will be justified and will glory.”**

Not:

In Cyrus.

Not:

In national strength.

Not:

In human righteousness.

But:

In the Lord.

The central truth of Isaiah 45 is:

The Lord alone is God and sovereignly directs rulers, nations, creation, history, judgment, prophecy, and salvation; He raises Cyrus as an appointed instrument to release His people,

confronts every challenge to His authority, calls all the ends of the earth to turn to Him for salvation, and declares that every knee will ultimately bow before His unrivaled lordship.

I. CYRUS IS GOD’S ANOINTED INSTRUMENT

Isaiah 45:1 — God Takes Cyrus by the Right Hand

> **“This is what the Lord says to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have taken hold of, to subdue nations before him, to strip kings of their armor, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut:”**

This is extraordinary.

A foreign ruler is called:

God’s anointed.

The title describes:

Appointment.

Commission.

Purpose.

It does not identify Cyrus as:

The Messiah.

God takes:

His right hand.

God opens:

Nations.

Kings.

Doors.

Gates.

Cross References

2 Chronicles 36:22

The Lord moved Cyrus, king of Persia, to issue a proclamation allowing the restoration work connected with Jerusalem to begin.

Ezra 1:1

God stirred Cyrus’s spirit so he issued the decree permitting the rebuilding of the Lord’s house in Jerusalem.

Proverbs 21:1

The heart of a king is under the Lord’s sovereign direction, like water channels turned wherever He wills.

Spiritual Principle

Kings may possess:

Authority.

But God possesses authority over:

Kings.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can place His hand on a ruler who does not yet recognize the hand guiding him.

II. GOD GOES BEFORE CYRUS

Isaiah 45:2 — Mountains Leveled, Gates Broken

> **“I will go before you and level the mountains; I will break down gates of bronze and cut through bars of iron.”**

Cyrus’s success is not presented as:

Self-created.

God says:

I will go before you.

I will level.

I will break.

I will cut.

Cross References

Psalm 107:16

God breaks gates of bronze and cuts through bars of iron when He delivers the imprisoned.

Deuteronomy 31:8

The Lord goes ahead of His people and promises not to leave or forsake them.

Isaiah 40:4

Mountains are made low and rough places leveled in preparation for the Lord’s work.

Spiritual Principle

God can remove:

What human beings call impenetrable.

III. HIDDEN TREASURES GIVEN TO CYRUS

Isaiah 45:3 — “I Call You by Name”

> **“I will give you treasures hidden in darkness, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the Lord, the God of Israel, who calls you by name.”**

God knows:

Cyrus.

Before Cyrus knows:

God.

He calls:

His name.

He directs:

His victories.

He gives:

Treasures.

Cross References

Colossians 2:3

In Christ are found all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Proverbs 2:4

Wisdom is to be sought like hidden treasure.

Exodus 33:12

Moses is assured that God knows him by name, reflecting personal divine knowledge.

Spiritual Principle

God’s knowledge of people precedes:

Their knowledge of Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God knew Cyrus’s name before Cyrus understood God’s purpose.

IV. CYRUS IS RAISED FOR ISRAEL’S SAKE

Isaiah 45:4 — “Though You Do Not Acknowledge Me”

> **“For the sake of Jacob My servant, of Israel My chosen one, I summon you by name and give you a title of honor, though you do not acknowledge Me.”**

Why is Cyrus raised?

Partly:

For Israel’s sake.

God uses:

An outside ruler.

For:

His covenant people.

Cross References

Romans 9:11

God’s purposes stand according to His calling and not merely according to human achievement.

Isaiah 45:5

God repeats that He strengthens Cyrus even though Cyrus has not known Him.

John 1:10

Christ was in the world He made, yet the world did not recognize Him, illustrating the tragedy of receiving divine activity without true recognition.

Spiritual Principle

God’s purposes are not dependent upon:

Human awareness.

V. “THERE IS NO OTHER”

Isaiah 45:5 — The Only God Strengthens Cyrus

> **“I am the Lord, and there is no other; apart from Me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not known Me,”**

This is one of the chapter’s major refrains:

No other.

Cyrus may worship:

Other gods.

But no other god actually exists as:

God.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 4:35

Israel was shown God’s mighty works so they would know that the Lord alone is God.

1 Kings 8:60

Solomon prays that all peoples may know the Lord is God and there is no other.

Philippians 4:13

Paul testifies that Christ supplies strength for what God calls him to endure and accomplish.

Spiritual Principle

God can empower an instrument without that instrument fully understanding:

The source.

VI. THE WHOLE EARTH MUST KNOW

Isaiah 45:6 — From Sunrise to Sunset

> **“So that from the rising of the sun to the place of its setting people may know there is none besides Me. I am the Lord, and there is no other.”**

The goal is:

Global recognition.

East.

West.

Everywhere.

Cross References

Malachi 1:11

God’s name is destined to be honored among the nations from sunrise to sunset.

Psalm 113:3

The Lord’s name is worthy of praise from the rising of the sun to its setting.

Isaiah 59:19

People from east and west will ultimately fear the name and glory of the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

God’s glory is:

Global.

VII. GOD RULES OVER PEACE AND CALAMITY

Isaiah 45:7 — Light, Darkness, Peace, and Disaster

> **“I form the light and create darkness, I bring peace and create calamity; I, the Lord, do all these things.”**

This verse declares:

Sovereignty.

God rules:

Day.

Night.

Well-being.

Historical disaster.

Judgment.

“Calamity” here should not be confused with:

Moral evil.

God does not become the author of:

Sin.

He does remain sovereign over:

Judgment.

National disaster.

Historical reversal.

Cross References

Amos 3:6

When calamity overtakes a city under divine judgment, the prophet reminds the people that such events are not beyond the Lord’s sovereignty.

Lamentations 3:38

Both adversity and prosperity remain under the authority of the Most High.

Job 2:10

Job acknowledges that human beings must receive both good circumstances and painful providence without charging God with wrongdoing.

Spiritual Principle

Nothing in history exists:

Outside God’s rule.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is never forced to watch history helplessly from the sidelines.

VIII. LET RIGHTEOUSNESS RAIN DOWN

Isaiah 45:8 — Salvation Springs from the Earth

> **“Shower down, O heavens, from above, and let the skies pour out righteousness. Let the earth open wide, let salvation spring up, and righteousness flourish with it; I, the Lord, have created it.”**

Beautiful imagery.

Heavens:

Rain righteousness.

Earth:

Produces salvation.

God:

Creates it.

Cross References

Psalm 85:11

Faithfulness springs from the earth while righteousness looks down from heaven.

Hosea 10:12

God’s people are called to seek the Lord until He comes and showers righteousness upon them.

Isaiah 61:11

As earth brings forth plants, God causes righteousness and praise to spring up before the nations.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation is:

God-produced fruit.

IX. WOE TO THE CLAY THAT QUARRELS WITH THE POTTER

Isaiah 45:9 — Creature Versus Creator

> **“Woe to those who quarrel with their Maker, those who are nothing but potsherds among the potsherds on the ground. Does the clay say to the potter, ‘What are you making?’ Does your work say, ‘The potter has no hands’?”**

The problem is not:

Honest questioning.

The problem is:

Arrogant accusation.

Clay acting as though:

It knows more than the Potter.

Cross References

Romans 9:20

Paul uses the potter-clay imagery to remind humanity that creatures are not in a position to put God’s sovereign purpose on trial.

Jeremiah 18:6

Israel is compared to clay in the potter’s hand, subject to God’s authority and shaping.

Job 40:2

God asks whether the one contending with the Almighty will instruct Him.

Spiritual Principle

Questions can be faithful.

Arrogant accusations against the Creator are:

Different.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

It is one thing to ask God what He is doing.

It is another to tell Him He has no right to do it.

X. THE CHILD DOES NOT COMMAND THE PARENT

Isaiah 45:10 — Creator Authority Illustrated

> **“Woe to the one who says to a father, ‘What are you begetting?’ or to a mother, ‘What are you bringing forth?’”**

The imagery emphasizes:

Absurd reversal.

The created result attempts to control:

The source.

Cross References

Job 38:4

God asks Job where he was when the earth’s foundations were established.

Romans 9:20

Humanity is reminded that the creature cannot claim authority over the Creator.

Isaiah 29:16

Isaiah earlier rebuked the idea that clay could act as though the Potter did not understand His own work.

Spiritual Principle

God’s authority is rooted in:

His identity as Creator.

XI. DO NOT COMMAND THE MAKER

Isaiah 45:11 — God Controls the Future

> **“This is what the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and its Maker, says: ‘Concerning things to come, do you question Me about My children, or give Me orders about the work of My hands?’”**

Israel may be confused by:

Cyrus.

A pagan ruler.

Used by God.

But God says:

Do not presume you can command:

My plan.

Cross References

Job 38:2

God rebukes counsel that darkens truth through words without sufficient knowledge.

Romans 11:34

No one has fully known the Lord’s mind or served as His counselor.

Isaiah 55:8

God’s thoughts and ways exceed human thoughts and ways.

Spiritual Principle

God’s methods do not require:

Our prior approval.

XII. CREATOR OF EARTH AND HUMANITY

Isaiah 45:12 — The Stars Obey Him

> **“It is I who made the earth and created mankind on it. My own hands stretched out the heavens; I marshaled their starry host.”**

The answer to:

Who controls Cyrus?

Is:

The same One who controls:

Stars.

Cross References

Genesis 1:1

God created the heavens and the earth.

Psalm 33:6

The heavens and their hosts exist by the Lord’s Word.

Isaiah 40:26

God brings out the stars and calls them each by name.

Spiritual Principle

The One who commands the stars can:

Direct a king.

XIII. CYRUS WILL SET THE EXILES FREE

Isaiah 45:13 — Raised Up in Righteousness

> **“I will raise up Cyrus in righteousness: I will make all his ways straight. He will rebuild My city and set My exiles free, but not for a price or reward,’ says the Lord Almighty.”**

Cyrus has:

A specific assignment.

Rebuild.

Release.

Restore.

Not because Israel:

Bribes him.

But because:

God directs history.

Cross References

Ezra 1:1

Cyrus issues the decree allowing the rebuilding of the Lord’s house.

2 Chronicles 36:23

Cyrus announces that he has been commissioned to permit the rebuilding at Jerusalem.

Isaiah 44:28

God had already named Cyrus as His shepherd who would fulfill His purpose.

Spiritual Principle

God can create:

Political conditions.

For redemptive purposes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may open prison doors through instruments the prisoners never expected.

XIV. THE NATIONS WILL RECOGNIZE GOD'S PRESENCE

Isaiah 45:14 — "Surely God Is With You"

> **"This is what the Lord says: 'The products of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush, and those tall Sabeans—they will come over to you and be yours; they will walk behind you, coming over in chains. They will bow down before you and plead with you, saying, "Surely God is with you, and there is no other; there is no other God."'"**

The central confession is:

God is with you.

There is:

No other.

Cross References

Psalm 68:29

Kings bring gifts in recognition of the Lord's glorious rule centered in Zion.

Isaiah 60:5

Nations and their wealth are pictured coming toward restored Zion under God's blessing.

Zechariah 8:23

People from the nations seek God’s people because they recognize that God is with them.

Spiritual Principle

God’s work among His people can become:

Testimony to outsiders.

XV. “TRULY YOU ARE A GOD WHO HIDES HIMSELF”

Isaiah 45:15 — Hidden Yet Saving

> **“Truly You are a God who hides Himself, O God of Israel, the Savior.”**

God’s ways are not always:

Visible.

Immediate.

Predictable.

But hiddenness does not mean:

Absence.

He remains:

Savior.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 29:29

Some things remain hidden with God while what He reveals belongs to His people for obedience.

Job 23:8

Job searches for God and cannot perceive Him, despite continuing to wrestle with faith.

Psalm 44:24

The psalmist cries out from the experience of God seeming hidden during suffering.

Spiritual Principle

God may hide:

His method.

Without hiding:

His faithfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

An unseen God can still be actively working.

XVI. IDOL MAKERS WILL BE SHAMED

Isaiah 45:16 — False Worship Ends in Disgrace

> **“All the makers of idols will be put to shame and disgraced; they will go off into disgrace together.”**

Isaiah 44 explained:

Why.

Isaiah 45 announces:

The outcome.

Cross References

Isaiah 44:11

Idol makers are destined for shame because what they create cannot save.

Jeremiah 10:14

Those who trust crafted images become foolish because the images contain no life.

Psalm 97:7

Those who worship idols are put to shame when God reveals His supremacy.

Spiritual Principle

Whatever replaces God eventually:

Fails.

XVII. EVERLASTING SALVATION

Isaiah 45:17 — Saved by the Lord

> **“But Israel will be saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation; you will never be put to shame or disgraced, to ages everlasting.”**

Idolaters:

Shame.

God’s redeemed:

Salvation.

And not temporary salvation:

Everlasting.

Cross References

Romans 10:11

Those who trust in the Lord will not ultimately be put to shame.

Isaiah 51:6

God’s salvation will endure even when creation itself passes away.

Hebrews 5:9

Christ is described as the source of eternal salvation to those who obey Him.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation outlasts:

Human kingdoms.

XVIII. GOD DID NOT CREATE THE EARTH TO BE EMPTY

Isaiah 45:18 — The Creator Has Purpose

> **“For this is what the Lord says—He who created the heavens, He is God; He who fashioned and made the earth, He founded it; He did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited—He says: ‘I am the Lord, and there is no other.’”**

Creation has:

Order.

Purpose.

Design.

God made the earth:

Intentionally.

Cross References

Genesis 1:1

God is the Creator of heaven and earth.

Genesis 1:28

Humanity is commissioned to fill and steward the earth.

Isaiah 40:22

God spreads out the heavens and reigns above the earth He made.

Spiritual Principle

Creation is not:

Meaningless accident.

XIX. GOD HAS SPOKEN OPENLY

Isaiah 45:19 — “Seek Me” Is Not Vain

> **“I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness; I have not said to Jacob’s descendants, ‘Seek Me in vain.’ I, the Lord, speak the truth; I declare what is right.”**

God’s revelation is:

Truthful.

Meaningful.

Accessible.

Seeking Him is not:

Pointless.

Cross References

John 18:20

Jesus states that He taught publicly and did not hide His message in secrecy.

Deuteronomy 30:14

God’s Word is described as near enough to hear, know, and obey.

Isaiah 48:16

God declares that He has spoken openly from the beginning rather than acting through hidden deceit.

Spiritual Principle

God does not invite people to seek:

Nothing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Seeking God is never wasted effort when God Himself has invited the search.

XX. THE NATIONS ARE SUMMONED

Isaiah 45:20 — Idols Cannot Save

> **“Gather together and come; assemble, you fugitives from the nations. Ignorant are those who carry about idols of wood, who pray to gods that cannot save.”**

Idols must be:

Carried.

God carries:

His people.

Idols cannot:

Save.

God:

Can.

Cross References

Psalm 115:4

The gods of the nations are merely objects of silver and gold made by human hands.

Jeremiah 2:28

God challenges people to call upon their idols and see whether they can save in trouble.

Isaiah 46:7

People carry an idol, set it in place, and pray to it, yet it cannot answer or rescue.

Spiritual Principle

A god that must be carried cannot:

Carry your salvation.

XXI. THERE IS NO GOD BESIDES THE RIGHTEOUS SAVIOR

Isaiah 45:21 — Prophecy and Salvation

> **“Declare what is to be, present it—let them take counsel together. Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the Lord? And there is no God apart from Me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none but Me.”**

God connects:

Prophecy.

Righteousness.

Salvation.

He knows:

The future.

He acts:

Righteously.

He saves.

Cross References

Isaiah 46:10

God declares the end from the beginning and accomplishes His purpose.

Titus 2:13

The New Testament speaks of the great God and Savior in connection with Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 43:11

The Lord had already declared that there is no Savior apart from Him.

Spiritual Principle

The God who predicts rightly also:

Saves rightly.

XXII. “TURN TO ME AND BE SAVED”

Isaiah 45:22 — Salvation for the Ends of the Earth

> **“Turn to Me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.”**

One of the great invitations of Scripture.

Who is invited?

> **“All you ends of the earth.”**

What must they do?

Turn:

To God.

Why?

There is:

No other.

Cross References

John 3:16

God’s saving love extends to the world, offering eternal life through faith in His Son.

Acts 4:12

Salvation is found in no other name than Jesus Christ.

Romans 10:13

Everyone who calls upon the Lord’s name will be saved.

Spiritual Principle

The uniqueness of God creates:

The universality of the invitation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Because there is only one Savior, every person is invited to turn to Him.

XXIII. EVERY KNEE WILL BOW

Isaiah 45:23 — God Swears by Himself

> **“By Myself I have sworn, My mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before Me every knee will bow; by Me every tongue will swear.”**

No greater name exists by which:

God could swear.

Therefore:

He swears by Himself.

And the promise:

Every knee.

Every tongue.

Cross References

Romans 14:11

Paul quotes this passage to emphasize that everyone will give account before God.

Philippians 2:10

Paul applies the imagery to Jesus Christ, declaring that every knee will bow at His name.

Hebrews 6:13

Because no one greater existed, God swore by Himself when confirming His promise.

Spiritual Principle

Universal acknowledgment of God’s lordship is:

Certain.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every knee will bow.

The great question is whether we bow now in faith or later under unavoidable recognition of His lordship.

XXIV. DELIVERANCE AND STRENGTH ARE IN THE LORD

Isaiah 45:24 — The Source of Righteousness

> **“They will say of Me, ‘In the Lord alone are deliverance and strength.’ All who have raged against Him will come to Him and be put to shame.”**

Deliverance:

In the Lord.

Strength:

In the Lord.

Not:

Self.

Nation.

Idol.

Cyrus.

Cross References

Philippians 4:13

Paul speaks of strength supplied through Christ for the circumstances God calls him to endure.

Psalm 2:12

The rebellious are warned to submit to the Son and find refuge rather than persist in defiance.

Psalm 2:1

The nations rage against the Lord and His Anointed, yet their opposition cannot overthrow God’s rule.

Spiritual Principle

Everything needed for true salvation is:

In the Lord.

XXV. JUSTIFIED AND GLORYING IN THE LORD

Isaiah 45:25 — Israel’s Hope

> **“But in the Lord all the descendants of Israel will be justified and will glory.”**

The chapter ends:

Not with Cyrus.

With:

The Lord.

Justification:

In the Lord.

Glory:

In the Lord.

Cross References

Jeremiah 9:24

Those who boast are told to boast in knowing the Lord, who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness.

1 Corinthians 1:31

Paul teaches that the one who boasts should boast in the Lord.

Romans 11:26

Paul speaks of God’s saving purpose for Israel within the unfolding plan of redemption.

Spiritual Principle

The redeemed have:

No reason for self-glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The person justified by God has every reason to glory in God and none to glory in himself.

XXVI. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 45

1. God Rules Rulers

Principle:

Kings possess authority only beneath the sovereignty of the King of heaven.

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2. God Can Use People Who Do Not Fully Know Him

Principle:

Cyrus served God’s purpose before fully understanding the God directing him.

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3. God Goes Before His Instruments

Principle:

Closed gates are not closed to the God who controls history.

---

4. There Is No Other God

Principle:

The Lord possesses no divine rival.

---

5. God Rules Over Historical Calamity

Principle:

Judgment and national disaster are not outside divine sovereignty.

---

6. The Creature Must Not Put the Creator on Trial

Principle:

Humility recognizes the difference between asking God and arrogantly ordering God.

---

7. God Knows the Future

Principle:

The One who created history can declare history before it unfolds.

---

8. God’s Salvation Is Everlasting

Principle:

Political deliverance points toward a salvation that outlives every earthly kingdom.

---

9. Idols Cannot Save

Principle:

Anything that must be carried cannot carry the burden of redemption.

---

10. Salvation Is Offered to All Nations

Principle:

The ends of the earth are invited to turn to the one true God.

---

11. Every Knee Will Bow

Principle:

God’s universal lordship will ultimately be acknowledged.

---

12. Justification Is in the Lord

Principle:

The final hope of God’s people rests not in achievement but in Him.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 45 TEACHES ABOUT SOVEREIGNTY

God:

Raises Cyrus.

Goes before Cyrus.

Opens gates.

Strengthens him.

Directs nations.

Releases exiles.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Providence is God’s sovereignty entering the details of history.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 45 TEACHES ABOUT CYRUS

Cyrus is:

Anointed.

Shepherd.

Instrument.

But not:

The Messiah.

Spiritual Principle

Titles must be interpreted according to:

Context.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can anoint someone for a historical task without making that person the ultimate Anointed One.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 45 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S UNIQUENESS

Again.

Again.

Again:

> **“There is no other.”**

Spiritual Principle

God’s uniqueness is the theological backbone of:

The chapter.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 45 TEACHES ABOUT CALAMITY

God says:

> **“I create calamity.”**

This means:

Historical disaster.

Judgment.

Adversity.

Not:

Moral wickedness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never protect God’s holiness by weakening His sovereignty, and never defend His sovereignty by accusing Him of moral evil.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 45 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN QUESTIONS

Job asked:

Questions.

David asked:

Questions.

Prophets asked:

Questions.

The problem in verse 9 is not:

Inquiry.

It is:

Arrogance.

Spiritual Principle

Faith may ask:

“Why?”

Humility does not say:

“You had no right.”

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 45 TEACHES ABOUT CREATION

Earth.

Humanity.

Heaven.

Stars.

All:

Made.

Ordered.

By God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Creator’s authority does not begin when we agree with it.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 45 TEACHES ABOUT PROPHECY

Cyrus is:

Named.

His work:

Described.

The future:

Declared.

Spiritual Principle

God’s prophetic Word reveals that history is never:

Unknown territory to Him.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 45 TEACHES ABOUT IDOLATRY

Idols must be:

Carried.

They cannot:

Save.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never pray for ultimate rescue to something that would fall over if you stopped carrying it.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 45 TEACHES ABOUT SALVATION

God is:

Righteous.

And:

Savior.

These are not:

Opposites.

Spiritual Principle

God saves without becoming:

Unjust.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 45 TEACHES ABOUT THE NATIONS

Egypt.

Cush.

Sabeans.

Ends of earth.

Every knee.

Every tongue.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah’s vision of salvation is larger than one national border.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 45 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

The New Testament applies Isaiah 45:23’s universal bowing and confession to:

Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Principle

The apostolic use of Isaiah places Jesus within the divine lordship confessed in this chapter.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When Paul applies language belonging to the Lord in Isaiah to Jesus in Philippians 2, he presents Christ’s lordship in the strongest possible theological terms.

XXXVIII. GOD TAKES CYRUS BY THE HAND

Cyrus may think:

I conquered.

God says:

I held your hand.

Spiritual Principle

Providence can operate beneath:

Human perception.

XXXIX. GOD GOES BEFORE

Before Cyrus:

Arrives.

God:

Prepares.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s preparation often begins before we become aware that a door is opening.

XL. BRONZE GATES

Humanly:

Strong.

Divinely:

Breakable.

Spiritual Principle

Security structures are never:

God-proof.

XLI. SECRET TREASURES

Cyrus receives:

Spoils.

But even those are under:

God’s control.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What people call fortunate discovery may still exist inside divine providence.

XLII. CALLED BY NAME

Before Cyrus recognizes God:

God recognizes Cyrus.

Spiritual Principle

Divine knowledge precedes:

Human response.

XLIII. “FOR JACOB’S SAKE”

God moves:

International history.

For:

Covenant purpose.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A global event can serve a purpose centered in God’s redemptive plan.

XLIV. “THOUGH YOU HAVE NOT KNOWN ME”

This is repeated because it matters.

Spiritual Principle

God is not dependent upon a ruler’s theology before He can govern that ruler’s role in history.

XLV. FROM SUNRISE TO SUNSET

God wants:

Universal recognition.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The goal of providence is not merely changed circumstances but revealed glory.

XLVI. LIGHT AND DARKNESS

Both remain:

Created realities.

Spiritual Principle

There is no independent cosmic power equal to God.

XLVII. PEACE AND CALAMITY

Prosperity does not prove:

God approves everything.

Calamity does not prove:

God disappeared.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Circumstances change.

God’s throne does not.

XLVIII. RIGHTEOUSNESS RAINING

Isaiah imagines:

Salvation.

Growing.

Spiritual Principle

God can make righteousness flourish where spiritual ground has been barren.

XLIX. CLAY ARGUES WITH POTTER

The picture is intentionally:

Absurd.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A creature can disagree emotionally with providence without ever becoming wiser than the Creator.

L. “WHAT ARE YOU MAKING?”

Sometimes we ask:

Exactly that.

Spiritual Principle

The faithful version of the question is:

“Lord, help me trust what You are making.”

LI. GOD’S CHILDREN ARE HIS WORK

Israel belongs:

To God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We do not get to command the Craftsman regarding work that ultimately belongs to Him.

LII. STAR COMMANDER

God marshals:

The stars.

Spiritual Principle

The universe is not:

Leaderless.

LIII. CYRUS RAISED IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

The phrase concerns:

God’s righteous purpose.

Not a declaration that every aspect of Cyrus’s personal life was:

Righteous.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s righteous use of a ruler does not require declaring the ruler righteous in every respect.

LIV. EXILES SET FREE

Political action becomes:

Instrument of restoration.

Spiritual Principle

God can use ordinary governmental decrees within extraordinary providence.

LV. “NOT FOR PRICE”

The return cannot be reduced to:

Commercial negotiation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God determines release, He is not dependent upon the captive’s purchasing power.

LVI. “GOD IS WITH YOU”

That becomes:

The nations’ confession.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest evidence in God’s people should be:

God’s presence.

LVII. THE GOD WHO HIDES

God sometimes works:

Behind scenes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Hidden providence is still providence.

LVIII. IDOLATERS ASHAMED

False trust creates:

False confidence.

Spiritual Principle

What cannot save eventually exposes those who trusted it.

LIX. EVERLASTING SALVATION

Cyrus provides:

Historical release.

God provides:

Everlasting salvation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse the instrument of temporary deliverance with the Source of eternal salvation.

LX. CREATED TO BE INHABITED

God creates with:

Purpose.

Spiritual Principle

God’s works are not:

Aimless.

LXI. SEEK ME, NOT IN VAIN

God invites:

Seeking.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not call hungry souls to an empty table.

LXII. IDOLS MUST BE CARRIED

The absurdity continues from:

Isaiah 44.

Spiritual Principle

False gods burden worshipers.

The true God saves them.

LXIII. A RIGHTEOUS GOD AND SAVIOR

Justice and salvation:

Meet.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God never saves by ceasing to be righteous.

LXIV. “TURN TO ME”

The call is:

Personal.

Direct.

Universal.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation requires:

Turning.

LXV. ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

No people excluded by:

Geography.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The invitation is as wide as humanity because the Savior is the only God.

LXVI. EVERY KNEE

Rich.

Poor.

King.

Servant.

Believer.

Rebel.

Every:

Knee.

Spiritual Principle

No human status exempts anyone from:

God’s lordship.

LXVII. EVERY TONGUE

Human speech ultimately:

Acknowledges.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The mouth that denies God today does not change God’s identity.

LXVIII. PHILIPPIANS 2 AND ISAIAH 45

Paul echoes:

Isaiah 45:23.

Then declares:

Every knee bows.

Every tongue confesses:

Jesus Christ is Lord.

Spiritual Principle

The New Testament presents Jesus not as:

A rival to the Lord of Isaiah.

But within:

The divine identity and lordship.

LXIX. STRENGTH IN THE LORD

Not merely:

From.

But:

In.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual strength is safest when its source remains visible.

LXX. RAGING AGAINST GOD

Opposition ends in:

Shame.

Spiritual Principle

Defiance cannot overthrow:

The One against whom it rages.

LXXI. JUSTIFIED IN THE LORD

Not:

Self-justified.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The courtroom hope of sinners is not that they successfully defend themselves but that righteousness is found in the Lord.

LXXII. GLORY IN THE LORD

The chapter ends:

God-centered.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation begins with God.

Ends with:

God’s glory.

LXXIII. ISAIAH 44 AND ISAIAH 45

Isaiah 44

Cyrus is named:

God’s shepherd.

Isaiah 45

Cyrus is called:

God’s anointed instrument.

Key Truth

The titles describe Cyrus’s appointed historical task, while the chapter carefully insists that the Lord alone remains God, Redeemer, Savior, and source of everlasting salvation.

LXXIV. CYRUS AND CHRIST

Cyrus:

Releases physical exiles.

Christ:

Brings deeper redemption.

Cyrus:

Rebuilds Jerusalem.

Christ:

Brings salvation to the nations.

Cyrus:

Serves temporarily.

Christ:

Receives universal bowing and confession in the New Testament application of Isaiah 45.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Temporary deliverers can foreshadow aspects of salvation without becoming equal to the final Savior.

LXXV. ISAIAH 40–45

Isaiah 40

Behold your God.

Isaiah 41

Fear not, I will help you.

Isaiah 42

Behold My Servant.

Isaiah 43

You are Mine.

Isaiah 44

There is no other Rock.

Isaiah 45

Turn to Me and be saved.

Key Truth

These chapters steadily expand the message from comfort for Israel toward the universal declaration that the one true God alone creates, rules, redeems, and saves.

LXXVI. TWELVE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 45

1. Cyrus the Ruler → God the Sovereign

2. Closed Gates → God-Opened Doors

3. Unknown God → God Who Knows Cyrus by Name

4. Many Supposed Gods → One True God

5. Human Calamity → Divine Sovereignty

6. Clay → Potter

7. Human Questions → Divine Wisdom

8. Exile → Release

9. Idols → Everlasting Salvation

10. Hidden Providence → Certain Salvation

11. Gods That Cannot Save → The Righteous Savior

12. Human Rebellion → Every Knee Bowing

Key Truth

Everything in Isaiah 45 moves toward the confession that the Lord alone is God, history belongs to Him, salvation comes from Him, and every creature ultimately stands beneath His authority.

LXXVII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who is named at the beginning of Isaiah 45?

Cyrus.

Question 2

What title is given to Cyrus?

God calls him His anointed instrument.

Question 3

Does that make Cyrus the Messiah?

No. The title describes his divine appointment for a particular historical task.

Question 4

What does God promise to do before Cyrus?

Go before him, level obstacles, break gates, and open the way.

Question 5

Why does God call Cyrus by name?

To demonstrate divine knowledge and sovereign purpose.

Question 6

Did Cyrus fully acknowledge God when God called him?

No.

God says Cyrus did not yet acknowledge or know Him.

Question 7

Why did God raise Cyrus?

Among other purposes, for Jacob and Israel, His chosen people.

Question 8

How many true gods does Isaiah recognize?

One.

Question 9

What does verse 7 teach?

God is sovereign over both prosperity and historical calamity.

Question 10

Does verse 7 mean God creates moral evil?

No. The context concerns calamity, adversity, peace, and historical judgment, not God becoming the author of sin.

Question 11

What picture is used for those arguing arrogantly with God?

Clay arguing with the potter.

Question 12

What does God remind Israel He created?

Earth, humanity, heavens, and the starry host.

Question 13

What will Cyrus do?

Rebuild Jerusalem and release God’s exiles.

Question 14

Will the exiles have to purchase their freedom from Cyrus?

No.

Question 15

What confession will the nations eventually make?

That God is with His people and there is no other God.

Question 16

What does “God who hides Himself” mean?

God’s methods may not always be visible or understandable, though He remains active and faithful.

Question 17

What happens to idol makers?

They are put to shame.

Question 18

What kind of salvation does God promise Israel?

Everlasting salvation.

Question 19

Why did God form the earth?

Not to remain empty but to be inhabited according to His purpose.

Question 20

Has God asked His people to seek Him in vain?

No.

Question 21

Why are idols foolish?

They must be carried and cannot save.

Question 22

Who foretells history?

The Lord.

Question 23

How does God identify Himself in verse 21?

As the only God, the righteous God, and Savior.

Question 24

Who is invited to salvation?

All the ends of the earth.

Question 25

What must they do?

Turn to God.

Question 26

What will every knee eventually do?

Bow.

Question 27

What will every tongue do?

Acknowledge God’s lordship.

Question 28

How does the New Testament use this passage?

Philippians 2 applies its universal bowing and confession language to Jesus Christ.

Question 29

Where are deliverance and strength found?

In the Lord alone.

Question 30

Where are God’s people justified?

In the Lord.

LXXVIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 45 asks several searching questions.

Do I Really Believe God Is Sovereign?

Not merely over:

Church.

Prayer.

Bible study.

But:

Governments?

Rulers?

History?

Nations?

Am I afraid of a closed gate?

Do I believe God can:

Break bronze?

Cut iron?

Am I confused because God is using someone I would not have chosen?

Can I trust God’s plan when the instrument seems:

Unexpected?

Do I recognize that there is:

No other God?

Or am I practically trusting:

Money?

Politics?

Government?

Reputation?

Human power?

Am I blaming God for moral evil while failing to distinguish His sovereignty over calamity from sinful human motives?

Am I questioning God humbly?

Or quarreling with:

My Maker?

Have I tried to tell the Potter:

What He is allowed to make?

Am I trusting God with:

Things to come?

Is my life witnessing that:

God is with me?

Am I carrying an idol that cannot carry me?

Do I believe salvation is found:

Only in God?

Have I answered the invitation:

“Turn to Me and be saved”?

Am I bowing willingly now?

Do I glory in:

Myself?

Or:

The Lord?

LXXIX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The God Who Opens Gates Does Not Need Permission from the Gatekeeper”

Cyrus will face:

Kings.

Walls.

Bronze gates.

Iron bars.

God says:

> **“I will go before you.”**

Principle:

What looks closed from the human side may already be under orders from the sovereign God.

LXXX. CYRUS’S RIGHT HAND

God takes:

The hand.

Spiritual Principle

Human power is always:

Secondary.

LXXXI. STRIPPED KINGS

Royal power can disappear:

Quickly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A crown does not make a king independent of God.

LXXXII. OPEN DOORS

Some doors open through:

Providence.

Spiritual Principle

God can create access where no access existed.

LXXXIII. MOUNTAINS LEVELED

The obstacle is:

Large.

God’s promise:

Larger.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never measure divine ability by the height of the mountain.

LXXXIV. BRONZE AND IRON

Human defenses are:

Strong.

Not:

Absolute.

Spiritual Principle

Nothing made by humans becomes impenetrable to:

God.

LXXXV. HIDDEN RICHES

Cyrus will discover:

Treasures.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can place provision inside places His servants have not yet reached.

LXXXVI. GOD CALLS PEOPLE BEFORE THEY KNOW HIM

Cyrus illustrates:

Providence.

Spiritual Principle

God can be at work in a person’s life before that person understands His hand.

LXXXVII. NO OTHER GOD

Repeated because humanity repeatedly:

Forgets.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Idolatry begins when “there is no other” becomes “perhaps something else can save me.”

LXXXVIII. GOD STRENGTHENS THE UNKNOWING KING

Cyrus’s strength is not:

Self-originating.

Spiritual Principle

People may benefit from divine providence without recognizing:

Its source.

LXXXIX. UNIVERSAL RECOGNITION

From:

East.

To:

West.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s ultimate purpose cannot be confined to one corner of the earth.

XC. LIGHT AND DARKNESS

God rules both:

Day.

Night.

Spiritual Principle

There is no region of reality beyond His sovereignty.

XCI. CALAMITY IS NOT MORAL EVIL

This distinction matters.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may send judgment without becoming sinful, because righteous judgment and moral wickedness are not the same thing.

XCII. RIGHTEOUSNESS FROM HEAVEN

Salvation is:

God-originated.

Spiritual Principle

Humanity does not manufacture:

Divine righteousness.

XCIII. THE POTTER

The Potter sees:

Shape.

Purpose.

Finished vessel.

The clay sees:

Pressure.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What feels like pressure to the clay may be design in the Potter’s hand.

XCIV. THE CREATOR DOES NOT TAKE ORDERS FROM THE CREATURE

Humility requires:

Perspective.

Spiritual Principle

God welcomes faith.

Not:

Divine management from humans.

XCV. THE STARRY HOST

Billions of stars.

All marshaled.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who organizes stars is capable of organizing history.

XCVI. CYRUS AND RESTORATION

The king acts.

God receives:

The glory.

Spiritual Principle

The instrument never replaces:

The Hand.

XCVII. GOD WITH YOU

The nations recognize:

Presence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The strongest testimony is not merely that God gives things to His people but that God is with His people.

XCVIII. THE HIDDEN GOD

We cannot always:

Trace.

Spiritual Principle

Faith trusts God even when providence operates behind:

Curtains.

XCIX. EVERLASTING SALVATION

Everything Cyrus accomplishes is:

Temporary.

God’s salvation:

Everlasting.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never settle for temporary rescue when God offers eternal salvation.

C. GOD CREATES WITH PURPOSE

Earth was:

Formed.

Inhabited.

Ordered.

Spiritual Principle

Divine creation is intentional.

CI. GOD SPEAKS TRUTH

Not riddles designed to:

Mislead.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may reveal mystery without becoming deceptive.

CII. SEEKING GOD IS NOT VAIN

God invites:

Seek.

Spiritual Principle

The seeker is not pursuing:

An empty God.

CIII. CARRYING IDOLS

Imagine carrying:

Your savior.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If your savior becomes a burden you must constantly hold together, you need another Savior.

CIV. RIGHTEOUS GOD AND SAVIOR

Justice.

Mercy.

Together.

Spiritual Principle

The gospel does not ask God to stop being righteous in order to save.

CV. TURN TO ME

Not:

Turn to religion.

Turn to:

Me.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Salvation is ultimately a movement of the heart toward God Himself.

CVI. THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

No one can say:

The invitation did not reach this far.

Spiritual Principle

God’s saving call is global.

CVII. EVERY KNEE WILL BOW

Universal.

Certain.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s lordship is not created by our acknowledgment; our acknowledgment merely recognizes what has always been true.

CVIII. EVERY TONGUE

Speech becomes:

Confession.

Spiritual Principle

The universe will not eternally remain confused about:

Who is Lord.

CIX. DELIVERANCE AND STRENGTH

Both in:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One who saves is also the One who sustains after salvation.

CX. RAGE ENDS IN SHAME

Rebellion has:

A destination.

Spiritual Principle

No creature can successfully outlast the Creator in opposition.

CXI. JUSTIFIED

The final answer to:

Guilt.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The believer’s glory is not:

“I proved myself righteous.”

It is:

“God justified me.”

CXII. GLORY IN THE LORD

Everything returns:

To Him.

Spiritual Principle

Grace destroys:

Boasting in self.

CXIII. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 45

1. God Calls Cyrus

A foreign king becomes an appointed instrument.

2. God Goes Before Him

Mountains fall and gates open.

3. God Declares His Uniqueness

There is no other God.

4. God Affirms Sovereignty Over History

Light, darkness, peace, and calamity remain under His authority.

5. God Rebukes the Quarreling Clay

The Creator’s wisdom exceeds creaturely understanding.

6. God Commissions Cyrus to Restore

Jerusalem is rebuilt and exiles released.

7. The Nations Recognize God

They confess that there is no other God.

8. Idolatry Is Exposed

False gods cannot save.

9. The Whole Earth Is Invited to Salvation

> **“Turn to Me and be saved.”**

10. Universal Lordship Is Declared

Every knee bows, every tongue confesses, and justification is found in the Lord.

Key Truth

Isaiah 45 moves from one named ruler to all the ends of the earth, showing that the God who governs Cyrus is the same God who rules creation, judges idols, calls nations, saves sinners, and will ultimately receive universal acknowledgment.

CXIV. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 45 begins with:

A man who does not fully know God.

Yet God says:

I know:

Him.

His name:

Cyrus.

His future:

Known.

His path:

Prepared.

His doors:

Opened.

His enemies:

Subdued.

His assignment:

Defined.

That should remind us:

God can be working through people and circumstances we would never have:

Chosen.

Then God says:

> **“I will go before you.”**

That is one of the great truths of providence.

Before Cyrus reaches:

The gate.

God is already:

There.

Before Cyrus sees:

The mountain.

God has already decided:

It will be leveled.

Before Cyrus finds:

The treasure.

God already knows:

Where it is.

Then the Lord repeatedly says:

“There is no other.”

That truth must settle:

The heart.

There is not:

One God of Israel.

Another god of Persia.

Another god of Babylon.

Another god of history.

There is:

One Lord.

Then comes the difficult statement:

“I bring peace and create calamity.”

We should neither:

Soften it away.

Nor:

Misuse it.

God does not create:

Sin.

But no earthquake of history shakes:

His throne.

No national collapse makes:

Him helpless.

No disaster places Him:

Outside control.

He remains:

Sovereign.

Then comes:

The clay.

Perhaps you have looked at your life and asked:

Lord—

What are You making?

Why:

This road?

This loss?

This delay?

This person?

This method?

The question itself can be:

Honest.

But Isaiah warns us:

Do not let the question become:

Arrogance.

The clay does not see:

The finished vessel.

The Potter:

Does.

Then God says:

I created:

Earth.

Humanity.

Heavens.

Stars.

And:

I raised Cyrus.

In other words:

Do not think Cyrus is harder for Me to direct than:

A star.

Then the chapter reaches:

The nations.

Idols cannot:

Save.

They must be:

Carried.

What a picture.

People carry:

Their gods.

Then beg their gods:

Carry us.

But God says:

Turn to:

Me.

> **“Turn to Me and be saved, all you ends of the earth.”**

That invitation could hardly be:

Larger.

All:

The earth.

Why?

“For I am God, and there is no other.”

Only one Savior.

Therefore:

Everyone needs Him.

Then God swears:

Every knee will:

Bow.

Every tongue:

Confess.

Paul later takes this language and places it around:

Jesus Christ.

Jesus is not presented as one more:

Religious option.

Every knee:

Bows.

Every tongue:

Confesses.

So the question is not ultimately:

Will God be Lord?

He is.

The question is:

Will we acknowledge Him:

Now?

Will we turn:

Now?

Will we trust:

Now?

Will we bow:

Now?

The chapter ends exactly where it should:

“In the Lord.”

Deliverance:

In the Lord.

Strength:

In the Lord.

Justification:

In the Lord.

Glory:

In the Lord.

Not:

In Cyrus.

Not:

In government.

Not:

In ourselves.

So when God uses an unexpected person:

Trust Him.

When a mountain stands ahead:

Remember He goes before.

When the gate appears locked:

Remember bronze can break.

When providence confuses you:

Remember you are clay, not Potter.

When God seems hidden:

Remember hidden is not absent.

When idols promise salvation:

Remember they cannot save.

When guilt asks where justification can be found:

Answer:

In the Lord.

And when the whole world seems divided over who truly rules:

Remember:

> **“I am the Lord, and there is no other.”**

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You alone are:

God.

There is:

No other.

You are:

Creator.

King.

Redeemer.

Savior.

Sovereign Lord over:

History.

Nations.

Kings.

Generations.

Father, help us trust You when Your methods are:

Unexpected.

When You use people we would not have chosen.

When You open doors through circumstances we did not expect.

Teach us to remember:

You go before.

Break:

Bronze gates.

Cut:

Iron bars.

Level:

Mountains.

Father, forgive us when we act like:

Clay arguing with the Potter.

Give us humble hearts.

Let us ask:

Questions.

Without accusing:

Your character.

Help us trust that Your wisdom exceeds:

Our understanding.

Father, remind us that no ruler stands:

Above You.

No nation exists:

Outside Your authority.

No crisis places You:

Outside control.

Thank You that even when You seem:

Hidden.

You remain:

Savior.

Father, expose every:

Idol.

Anything we carry that we expect to:

Carry us.

Anything we trust to:

Save us.

Anything we honor more than:

You.

Turn our hearts toward:

You alone.

Thank You for the invitation:

“Turn to Me and be saved.”

Draw:

People from every nation.

Every background.

Every place.

To:

Your salvation.

Father, thank You that salvation is found:

In You.

Deliverance:

In You.

Strength:

In You.

Righteousness:

In You.

Justification:

In You.

Glory:

In You.

Teach us to bow:

Willingly.

Joyfully.

Faithfully.

Before You.

And thank You for Jesus Christ.

The One before whom every knee will bow.

The One every tongue will confess as:

Lord.

May our lives acknowledge His lordship:

Now.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"Turn to Me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other." — Isaiah 45:22**

Central Truth

The Lord alone is God and sovereign over creation, kings, nations, history, judgment, prophecy, and salvation; He appoints Cyrus as His instrument to release Israel, rebukes creaturely arrogance, exposes powerless idols, summons every nation to turn to Him for salvation, and declares that every knee will ultimately bow before His unrivaled authority and that righteousness, strength, justification, and glory are found in Him alone.

Isaiah 45 in One Sentence

Isaiah declares that the one true God sovereignly calls and directs Cyrus to subdue nations, open gates, release exiles, and rebuild Jerusalem, while revealing Himself as Creator and ruler over light, darkness, peace, and calamity, rebuking the clay that quarrels with its Maker, exposing idols that cannot save, inviting all the ends of the earth to turn to Him for salvation, and promising that every knee will bow, every tongue acknowledge His lordship, and His people will be justified and glory in Him alone.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 46 — The Living God Versus Lifeless Idols

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 46 presents one of the clearest contrasts in Scripture between:

False gods.

And:

The living God.

The chapter begins with:

Bel.

Nebo.

Two prominent Babylonian deities.

But they are not pictured as:

Triumphant.

Powerful.

Victorious.

Instead:

They bow.

They stoop.

They must be:

Loaded onto animals.

Carried away.

Their images become:

Burdens.

That is the great irony of the chapter.

False gods must be:

Carried.

The true God:

Carries His people.

False gods become:

Burdens.

The Lord bears:

Burdens.

False gods cannot:

Move.

Speak.

Answer.

Save.

The Lord says:

> **“I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.”**

Isaiah deliberately sets these truths:

Side by side.

The question is not merely:

Which god is stronger?

The deeper contrast is:

Which God is alive?

Babylon’s idols are:

Made.

Transported.

Positioned.

Supported.

Carried.

The Lord:

Makes.

Carries.

Sustains.

Rescues.

The chapter therefore forces the worshiper to ask:

Am I carrying my god?

Or is my God carrying me?

Then Isaiah moves from:

Idolatry.

To:

God’s eternal counsel.

The Lord says:

> **“Remember the former things.”**

Why?

Because history proves:

His faithfulness.

Then comes one of Scripture’s strongest declarations of divine sovereignty:

> **“I make known the end from the beginning.”**

And:

> **“My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.”**

God is not:

Guessing.

Reacting.

Improvising.

Panicking.

Trying to rescue His plan from human events.

His purpose:

Stands.

What He says:

He brings about.

What He plans:

He does.

The “bird of prey” from the east continues the theme developed in Isaiah 41, 44, and 45.

The historical figure is:

Cyrus.

God summons him:

From afar.

For:

His purpose.

Again, the point is not:

The greatness of Cyrus.

The point is:

The sovereignty of God.

Cyrus moves because:

God summons.

History moves because:

God purposes.

Then the chapter ends by addressing:

The stubborn-hearted.

Those far from:

Righteousness.

Yet even here the emphasis remains on:

Grace.

God says:

> **“I am bringing My righteousness near.”**

And:

> **“My salvation will not be delayed.”**

The stubborn people are not told:

Climb up to righteousness.

They are told:

God is bringing righteousness near.

The central truth of Isaiah 46 is:

Babylon’s idols must be carried and cannot save, but the living God carries, sustains, and rescues His people from birth to old age; He alone knows the end from the beginning, His purpose cannot fail, He raises rulers to accomplish His will, and He brings His righteousness and salvation near to His people.

I. BEL BOWS DOWN

Isaiah 46:1 — Babylon’s Gods Become Burdens

> **“Bel bows down, Nebo stoops low; their idols are loaded onto beasts of burden. The images you carry are heavy loads, a burden for weary animals.”**

Bel and Nebo were associated with:

Babylonian religion.

Yet Isaiah pictures them:

Bent.

Stooping.

Carried.

A god should:

Carry the worshiper.

These idols must be:

Carried by animals.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:2

Jeremiah later announces Babylon’s fall and specifically declares that Bel will be put to shame and Babylon’s idols exposed.

Jeremiah 51:44

God promises judgment upon Bel and declares that what Babylon trusted will be humiliated.

Psalm 115:4

The idols of the nations are made from silver and gold by human hands and possess no living power.

Spiritual Principle

A god that must be transported cannot:

Transport you through life.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Anything you must carry in order to keep it functioning cannot be your ultimate Savior.

II. THE IDOLS CANNOT RESCUE THEMSELVES

Isaiah 46:2 — Gods Going into Captivity

> **“They stoop and bow down together; unable to rescue the burden, they themselves go into captivity.”**

The picture becomes even more devastating.

The idols cannot:

Rescue their worshipers.

They cannot even:

Rescue themselves.

They become:

Captives.

Cross References

Jeremiah 43:12

God declares that the idols of Egypt can be broken and carried away, showing their helplessness before divine judgment.

1 Samuel 5:4

The idol Dagon was found fallen and broken before the ark of the Lord, exposing the impotence of false gods.

Isaiah 46:7

Later in this chapter, the idol is pictured unable to move, answer, or save anyone from trouble.

Spiritual Principle

False gods fail:

At the moment salvation is needed most.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If your god can become a prisoner, he cannot free prisoners.

III. GOD CARRIES HIS PEOPLE

Isaiah 46:3 — Carried from the Womb

> **“Listen to Me, house of Jacob, all you who remain of the house of Israel, you whom I have upheld since your birth, and carried from the womb.”**

What a contrast.

Verse 1:

People carry idols.

Verse 3:

God carries people.

The Lord says:

From birth.

From the womb.

I carried:

You.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 1:31

Moses reminds Israel that God carried them through the wilderness as a father carries his child.

Isaiah 63:9

God is pictured sharing the distress of His people, redeeming them and carrying them through former days.

Exodus 19:4

God reminds Israel that He carried them on eagles' wings and brought them to Himself.

Spiritual Principle

The true God does not:

Burden His people like an idol.

He bears them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The idol says:

"Carry me."

God says:

"I will carry you."

IV. GOD CARRIES THROUGH OLD AGE

Isaiah 46:4 — From Birth to Gray Hair

> **"Even to your old age I am He, and to gray hairs I will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you."**

One of Scripture's tenderest promises.

God does not say:

I carried you only when:

Young.

Useful.

Strong.

Productive.

He says:

To old age.

To gray hair.

Cross References

Psalm 71:18

The psalmist asks God not to forsake him in old age so he can continue declaring God’s power to future generations.

Psalm 68:19

The Lord is praised as the God who daily bears the burdens of His people and saves them.

Isaiah 40:11

God is pictured as a Shepherd who carries lambs close to His heart and gently leads His flock.

Spiritual Principle

God’s faithfulness does not expire with:

Human strength.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You may become weaker with age.

The arms carrying you do not.

V. “I HAVE MADE YOU”

This is the foundation.

God does not merely say:

I will carry you.

He says:

I made you.

Spiritual Principle

The Creator takes responsibility for:

His covenant people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One who formed you is not confused about how to sustain you.

VI. “I WILL CARRY YOU”

This is:

Present.

Future.

Personal.

Spiritual Principle

God’s care is not merely:

Historical.

It continues.

VII. “I WILL SUSTAIN YOU”

To sustain means:

To hold up.

Maintain.

Support.

Keep.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely start the journey.

He supplies strength for the road.

VIII. “I WILL RESCUE YOU”

Carrying does not eliminate:

Danger.

But it includes:

Deliverance.

Spiritual Principle

The God who sustains can also:

Save.

IX. TO WHOM WILL YOU COMPARE GOD?

Isaiah 46:5 — No Equal

> **“To whom will you compare Me or count Me equal? To whom will you liken Me, that we may be alike?”**

The answer:

No one.

Isaiah has already asked this question in:

Chapter 40.

Now he repeats it.

Cross References

Isaiah 40:18

Isaiah asks what likeness could possibly be compared with God.

Isaiah 40:25

The Holy One challenges anyone to produce an equal.

Psalm 89:6

No being in heaven can be compared with the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Every comparison eventually:

Breaks down.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may be illustrated by created things, but He can never be contained by the illustration.

X. PEOPLE PAY TO MAKE THEIR GOD

Isaiah 46:6 — Gold Becomes an Idol

> **“Some pour out gold from their bags and weigh out silver on the scales; they hire a goldsmith to make it into a god, and they bow down and worship it.”**

The sequence is tragic.

Money.

Craftsman.

Object.

Worship.

They pay someone:

To make their god.

Cross References

Exodus 32:4

Aaron fashioned Israel’s gold into a calf, and the people treated the manufactured object as divine.

Jeremiah 10:9

Silver and gold are shaped by craftsmen into idols.

Hosea 8:4

Israel used silver and gold to manufacture idols, turning material blessing into false worship.

Spiritual Principle

Wealth can become:

The raw material of idolatry.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When money creates what you worship, money is already controlling more than your wallet.

XI. THE IDOL MUST BE CARRIED

Isaiah 46:7 — It Cannot Move, Answer, or Save

> **“They lift it to their shoulders and carry it; they set it up in its place, and it stands there. From that spot it cannot move. Even if someone cries out to it, it does not answer; it cannot save them from their troubles.”**

This verse gives four failures.

It cannot:

Move.

Answer.

Respond.

Save.

The worshiper cries.

The idol:

Stands there.

Silent.

Cross References

Psalm 115:7

Idols have feet but cannot walk and possess no living power.

Jeremiah 10:5

Idols cannot move and must be carried because they have no ability to act.

Habakkuk 2:19

Those who ask wood or stone to awaken receive no answer because there is no life within the idol.

Spiritual Principle

A silent god is useless in:

A crying world.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not entrust your deepest prayer to something incapable of hearing it.

XII. REMEMBER AND STAND FIRM

Isaiah 46:8 — Take It to Heart

> **“Remember this, and stand firm; take it to heart, you rebels.”**

God calls rebellious people to:

Remember.

Stand firm.

Think deeply.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 8:2

Israel is commanded to remember how God led them through the wilderness and what He taught them there.

Isaiah 44:19

Isaiah condemned idolaters because they failed to stop and reflect honestly upon what they were worshiping.

Numbers 15:39

Israel was given reminders so they would remember God's commands rather than follow wandering hearts and eyes.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual stability requires:

Memory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Forgetfulness feeds rebellion.

Remembering God feeds faithfulness.

XIII. REMEMBER THE FORMER THINGS

Isaiah 46:9 — "I Am God"

> **"Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me."**

Earlier Isaiah 43 said:

Do not dwell on former things.

Here:

Remember them.

No contradiction.

Isaiah 43 warned against:

Living in yesterday.

Isaiah 46 commands remembering:

God’s demonstrated faithfulness.

Cross References

Isaiah 44:6

The Lord declares Himself the First and the Last with no other God beside Him.

Deuteronomy 4:39

Israel is commanded to know and take to heart that the Lord alone is God in heaven and on earth.

Isaiah 45:5

God declares again that there is no God apart from Him.

Spiritual Principle

Remember:

God’s character.

Without becoming trapped in:

Past methods.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith remembers yesterday’s God while expecting Him to remain faithful tomorrow.

XIV. GOD DECLARES THE END FROM THE BEGINNING

Isaiah 46:10 — “My Purpose Will Stand”

> **“I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, ‘My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.’”**

This is one of Scripture’s great sovereignty verses.

God knows:

The end.

From:

The beginning.

Why?

Because history is not:

Outside Him.

His purpose:

Stands.

Cross References

Job 42:2

Job confesses that God can accomplish all He purposes and that no plan of His can ultimately be thwarted.

Ephesians 1:11

God works all things according to the counsel and purpose of His will.

Proverbs 19:21

Human beings have many plans, but the Lord’s purpose ultimately stands.

Spiritual Principle

God does not merely:

Predict history.

He governs history according to:

His purpose.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God never reaches the end of history and discovers it became something He did not expect.

XV. “MY PURPOSE WILL STAND”

Human plans:

Change.

Governments:

Change.

Cultures:

Change.

God’s purpose:

Stands.

Spiritual Principle

Stability rests in:

Divine purpose.

Not human predictability.

XVI. “I WILL DO ALL THAT I PLEASE”

This does not mean:

Arbitrary cruelty.

God’s pleasure is always consistent with:

His holy character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s sovereignty is never separated from God’s holiness.

XVII. THE BIRD OF PREY FROM THE EAST

Isaiah 46:11 — Cyrus Fulfills God’s Purpose

> **“From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill My purpose. What I have said, that I will bring about; what I have planned, that I will do.”**

The “bird of prey” refers in context to:

Cyrus.

A rapid conqueror.

Summoned:

By God.

Cross References

Ezekiel 17:3

A great eagle becomes imagery for a powerful imperial ruler acting upon nations.

Jeremiah 49:22

A conquering ruler is compared to an eagle rising and spreading wings over its target.

Isaiah 41:2

Isaiah previously spoke of the ruler from the east whom God summons to conquer nations.

Spiritual Principle

Cyrus moves because:

God’s purpose moves history.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The ruler may think he is chasing conquest while God is directing the larger story.

XVIII. “WHAT I HAVE SAID, I WILL BRING ABOUT”

God’s speech is not:

Wishful thinking.

Spiritual Principle

Divine promise carries:

Divine ability.

XIX. “WHAT I HAVE PLANNED, I WILL DO”

Human plans can fail because of:

Lack of knowledge.

Lack of power.

Changed circumstances.

God lacks:

None.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Nothing can surprise God into abandoning His eternal purpose.

XX. GOD ADDRESSES THE STUBBORN-HEARTED

Isaiah 46:12 — Far from Righteousness

> **“Listen to Me, you stubborn-hearted, you who are far from righteousness.”**

God calls them:

Stubborn.

Far.

Yet still:

Calls them to listen.

Cross References

Ezekiel 2:4

God describes rebellious people as stubborn and hard-hearted while still sending His message to them.

Romans 10:3

Paul speaks of those who ignore God’s righteousness and attempt to establish their own.

Isaiah 1:4

Israel is described as sinful and rebellious, turning away from the Holy One.

Spiritual Principle

Being far from righteousness does not place someone beyond:

God’s call.

XXI. RIGHTEOUSNESS IS BROUGHT NEAR

Isaiah 46:13 — Salvation Will Not Delay

> **“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 glory to Israel.”**

This is:

Grace.

The people are:

Far from righteousness.

God says:

I will bring righteousness:

Near.

Cross References

Romans 1:17

The gospel reveals the righteousness of God in connection with faith.

Isaiah 51:5

God says His righteousness draws near and His salvation goes out.

Isaiah 62:11

God announces to Zion that her salvation is coming and His reward is with Him.

Spiritual Principle

The sinner’s hope is not:

Closing the distance alone.

It is:

God bringing salvation near.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When we are far from righteousness, grace does not merely shout from a distance—it brings salvation near.

XXII. SALVATION WILL NOT BE DELAYED

God operates according to:

His appointed time.

Spiritual Principle

Delay from our perspective does not equal:

Failure in God’s purpose.

XXIII. GLORY TO ISRAEL

The final destination is:

God’s glory displayed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption ends where it began:

With God receiving the glory.

XXIV. THE GREAT CONTRAST OF ISAIAH 46

The Idol

Must be carried.

Cannot move.

Cannot speak.

Cannot answer.

Cannot save.

Can be captured.

Becomes a burden.

The Lord

Carries His people.

Sustains them.

Speaks.

Answers through His revealed Word.

Rescues.

Rules history.

Declares the future.

Brings salvation.

Key Truth

The question of Isaiah 46 is not merely, “Which God should you worship?” but, “Why would you carry a god when the living God offers to carry you?”

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 46 TEACHES ABOUT IDOLATRY

Idolatry reverses:

The proper order.

Creator should carry:

Creature.

Instead:

Creature carries idol.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every idol eventually becomes heavier than the worshiper expected.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 46 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S CARE

From:

Womb.

To:

Old age.

God says:

I carry.

Spiritual Principle

God’s faithfulness spans:

An entire lifetime.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 46 TEACHES ABOUT AGING

Aging brings:

Weakness.

Gray hair.

Changing strength.

But not:

A weaker God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Your body may age.

God’s promises do not.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 46 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S UNIQUENESS

No equal.

No comparison.

No rival.

Spiritual Principle

The Lord belongs in:

A category by Himself.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 46 TEACHES ABOUT MEMORY

Twice:

Remember.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A forgetful faith becomes a fragile faith.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 46 TEACHES ABOUT PROPHECY

End.

Beginning.

Ancient times.

Future.

All known to:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Prophecy is possible because God is sovereign over:

Time.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 46 TEACHES ABOUT PROVIDENCE

Cyrus is:

Summoned.

Directed.

Used.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Providence is often God’s invisible hand directing visible history.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 46 TEACHES ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS

People are:

Far.

God brings righteousness:

Near.

Spiritual Principle

True righteousness is received from God’s gracious action rather than produced by stubborn human self-reliance.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 46 TEACHES ABOUT SALVATION

God says:

My salvation.

I will grant it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Salvation belongs to God before it becomes ours.

XXXIV. BEL BOWS DOWN

A god that once looked:

Impressive.

Ends:

Stooping.

Spiritual Principle

False gods eventually reveal:

Their weakness.

XXXV. NEBO STOOPS

Religious prestige cannot:

Protect an idol.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Age, tradition, popularity, and cultural power cannot turn falsehood into truth.

XXXVI. THE ANIMALS ARE WEARY

Even the animals carrying the idols become:

Burdened.

Spiritual Principle

False worship burdens:

More than the worshiper.

XXXVII. THE IDOLS GO INTO CAPTIVITY

What a reversal.

Supposed saviors become:

Captives.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not expect freedom from what cannot keep itself free.

XXXVIII. GOD CARRIED ISRAEL FROM BIRTH

Israel existed because:

God sustained.

Spiritual Principle

God’s care precedes:

Israel’s awareness.

XXXIX. OLD AGE DOES NOT CANCEL COVENANT CARE

God does not say:

I carried you while you were useful.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The worth of God’s people does not decline when their physical strength declines.

XL. GRAY HAIRS

Isaiah mentions something:

Ordinary.

Human.

Visible.

Spiritual Principle

God’s promises enter:

Real aging.

Real weakness.

Real life.

XLI. “I AM HE”

God remains:

The same.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Aging changes us.

It does not change God.

XLII. MADE, CARRIED, SUSTAINED, RESCUED

Four verbs.

One God.

Spiritual Principle

The Creator does not abandon His covenant work halfway through.

XLIII. NO COMPARISON

People often compare:

Power.

Money.

Influence.

God says:

Do not compare Me.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not simply stronger than idols.

He is fundamentally unlike them.

XLIV. GOLD FROM A BAG

Worship begins with:

Material.

Spiritual Principle

Created wealth can become:

False deity.

XLV. SILVER ON THE SCALE

Measured metal becomes:

A supposedly immeasurable god.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot weigh the material for your god and still claim that god is the transcendent Creator.

XLVI. THE GOLDSMITH

The idol needs:

Skill.

Spiritual Principle

Anything requiring a craftsman cannot become:

The Craftsman of heaven.

XLVII. SHOULDERS CARRY THE IDOL

Human muscles:

Move it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If your faith collapses when your own strength fails, you may have been carrying an idol rather than trusting the Lord.

XLVIII. THE IDOL STANDS IN ONE PLACE

Motionless.

Spiritual Principle

A stationary idol cannot lead:

A moving life.

XLIX. CRYING WITHOUT AN ANSWER

The worshiper cries:

Nothing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Silence from a lifeless idol is not mystery.

It is inability.

L. THE IDOL CANNOT SAVE FROM TROUBLE

This is the final test.

Can it:

Save?

No.

Spiritual Principle

The value of an object of trust becomes clearest:

In crisis.

LI. REMEMBER

God commands:

Memory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When fear erases perspective, memory restores proportion.

LII. TAKE IT TO HEART

Not merely:

Think.

But:

Internalize.

Spiritual Principle

Truth must move from:

Memory.

To:

Conviction.

LIII. “YOU REBELS”

God speaks:

Strongly.

Yet continues:

Speaking.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s rebuke is itself mercy when rebellion is still being called back to truth.

LIV. FORMER THINGS

What has God already:

Done?

Spiritual Principle

Past faithfulness provides evidence for present trust.

LV. “THERE IS NONE LIKE ME”

Not merely:

No better God.

No:

Comparable being.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s uniqueness is qualitative, not merely competitive.

LVI. END FROM BEGINNING

Humans know:

Beginning.

Then discover:

Ending.

God knows:

Both.

Spiritual Principle

Time unfolds to us.

It does not unfold unexpectedly to:

God.

LVII. GOD’S PURPOSE STANDS

People may:

Resist.

Delay.

Complicate.

God’s purpose:

Stands.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human rebellion can oppose God without overthrowing Him.

LVIII. GOD DOES ALL THAT HE PLEASES

His pleasure is:

Holy.

Wise.

Righteous.

Spiritual Principle

Sovereignty does not make God arbitrary because His character is:

Perfect.

LIX. THE BIRD OF PREY

Cyrus arrives:

Swiftly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can summon the instrument of change from far beyond the horizon of His people.

LX. A MAN FROM FAR AWAY

Distance does not:

Limit providence.

Spiritual Principle

God’s answer can come from:

Unexpected places.

LXI. “WHAT I HAVE SAID”

God links:

Word.

Action.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine speech is backed by divine power.

LXII. “WHAT I HAVE PLANNED”

Planning implies:

Purpose.

Spiritual Principle

History is not meaningless because the Lord of history has:

Purpose.

LXIII. STUBBORN HEARTS

The problem is not only:

Ignorance.

It is:

Resistance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some people are not far from righteousness because truth is unavailable, but because the heart resists it.

LXIV. RIGHTEOUSNESS COMES NEAR

God initiates:

Grace.

Spiritual Principle

The direction of salvation is ultimately:

From God toward sinners.

LXV. SALVATION WILL NOT DELAY

God’s appointed fulfillment is:

Certain.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is never late according to His own purpose.

LXVI. ZION RECEIVES SALVATION

The city that faced:

Judgment.

Will know:

Restoration.

Spiritual Principle

Discipline is not necessarily:

The final chapter.

LXVII. ISRAEL RECEIVES GLORY

God’s saving work displays:

His glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The restoration of God’s people ultimately points back to the greatness of God.

LXVIII. ISAIAH 44, 45, AND 46

Isaiah 44

Idols are made from:

Wood.

Isaiah 45

Idols cannot:

Save.

Isaiah 46

Idols must be:

Carried.

Key Truth

Isaiah progressively dismantles idolatry until nothing remains but a lifeless burden in contrast with the living God who creates, carries, predicts, purposes, rescues, and saves.

LXIX. ISAIAH 40 AND ISAIAH 46

Isaiah 40

God gives strength to:

The weary.

Isaiah 46

God carries His people to:

Old age.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who renews strength in youth remains faithful when youthful strength is gone.

LXX. ISAIAH 43 AND ISAIAH 46

Isaiah 43

God says:

> **“You are Mine.”**

Isaiah 46

God says:

> **“I will carry you.”**

Spiritual Principle

Belonging to God means being:

Held by God.

LXXI. CYRUS IN ISAIAH 41–46

Isaiah 41

The conqueror from the east is:

Introduced.

Isaiah 44

Cyrus is:

Named.

Isaiah 45

Cyrus is:

Commissioned.

Isaiah 46

Cyrus is:

Summoned as the man who fulfills God’s purpose.

Key Truth

The repeated Cyrus theme demonstrates not the independence of a great ruler but the sovereignty of the greater God who predicted, named, summoned, and directed him.

LXXII. ELEVEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 46

1. Idols Carried → God Carries

2. Idols Bow → God Reigns

3. Idols Captured → God Rescues

4. Lifeless Images → Living Lord

5. Human Weakness → Divine Sustaining Power

6. Aging People → Unchanging God

7. Manufactured Gods → Incomparable Creator

8. Silent Idols → Speaking God

9. Human Plans → Standing Divine Purpose

10. Stubborn Hearts → Near Righteousness

11. Captivity → Salvation

Key Truth

Isaiah 46 repeatedly contrasts the gods people must carry with the God who carries people from birth through old age and into deliverance.

LXXIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who are Bel and Nebo?

Prominent Babylonian deities represented by idols.

Question 2

How are their idols pictured?

Stooping, being loaded onto animals, and becoming heavy burdens.

Question 3

Can the idols rescue themselves?

No.

They themselves go into captivity.

Question 4

What contrast does God make with Israel?

Idols must be carried, but God carries His people.

Question 5

How long has God carried Israel?

From birth and from the womb.

Question 6

How long does He promise to sustain them?

Even into old age and gray hairs.

Question 7

What four assurances appear in verse 4?

God made them, will carry them, sustain them, and rescue them.

Question 8

Can anyone be compared adequately with God?

No.

Question 9

How are idols manufactured?

People provide gold and silver and hire craftsmen to make them.

Question 10

What happens after the idol is made?

People bow down and worship it.

Question 11

Can the idol move by itself?

No.

It must be carried and set in place.

Question 12

Can it answer prayer?

No.

Question 13

Can it save from trouble?

No.

Question 14

What does God command His rebellious people to do?

Remember and take truth to heart.

Question 15

What former truth are they to remember?

That the Lord alone is God and none is like Him.

Question 16

What does God know?

The end from the beginning.

Question 17

What does God say about His purpose?

It will stand.

Question 18

Who is the man from the east summoned to fulfill God’s purpose?

Cyrus.

Question 19

What does God promise concerning what He has spoken?

He will bring it about.

Question 20

How does God describe the people in verse 12?

Stubborn-hearted and far from righteousness.

Question 21

Does God abandon them because they are far away?

No.

He brings His righteousness near.

Question 22

What does God say about salvation?

It will not be delayed.

Question 23

Where will He grant salvation?

Zion.

Question 24

What does the chapter ultimately contrast?

Lifeless idols that must be carried with the living God who carries, sustains, rescues, speaks, plans, and saves.

LXXIV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 46 asks several searching questions.

What Am I Carrying That I Expect to Carry Me?

Money?

Reputation?

Career?

Possessions?

Political power?

Tradition?

Relationships?

Success?

Has something become:

A burden.

Because I made it:

An idol?

Am I trusting anything that cannot:

Hear?

Answer?

Move?

Save?

Do I believe God has carried me farther than I realize?

Can I trust Him with:

Old age?

Weakness?

Changing health?

Declining strength?

Do I believe:

“I will sustain you”?

Am I trying to hold myself together when God says:

“I will carry you”?

Have I forgotten:

What God has already done?

Am I remembering former things as evidence of His:

Faithfulness?

Do I believe God knows:

The end from the beginning?

Am I frightened because I cannot see:

The end?

Can I trust that God does?

Do I believe His purpose:

Stands?

Am I stubbornly trying to establish:

My own righteousness?

Do I believe God can bring:

Righteousness near?

Am I living as though salvation is:

Far away?

When God says:

It is near?

LXXV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Carry a God When the Living God Offers to Carry You”

Babylon loads its gods onto:

Animals.

God tells Israel:

> **“I have made you and I will carry you.”**

Principle:

Every idol ultimately becomes a burden, but the living God bears His people through every season of life.

LXXVI. FALSE GODS BECOME LUGGAGE

Bel and Nebo become:

Cargo.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A god reduced to luggage is no god at all.

LXXVII. WEARY ANIMALS CARRY FALSE RELIGION

The burden is:

Heavy.

Spiritual Principle

Idolatry eventually exhausts.

LXXVIII. FALSE GODS CANNOT RESCUE THEIR OWN IMAGES

Captivity exposes:

Powerlessness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When judgment comes, false gods need rescue as much as their worshipers.

LXXIX. GOD CARRIES FROM THE WOMB

Before Israel could:

Walk.

God carried.

Spiritual Principle

Grace begins before:

Human strength.

LXXX. GOD CARRIES TO GRAY HAIRS

After strength:

Declines.

Grace remains.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who carried you when you had no strength will not abandon you when strength fades again.

LXXXI. OLD AGE AND MINISTRY

Psalm 71 asks for strength to:

Tell the next generation.

Spiritual Principle

Old age is not spiritual:

Irrelevance.

LXXXII. THE MAKER CARRIES WHAT HE MADE

Unlike idols:

Humans make them.

Then carry them.

God makes:

Humans.

Then carries:

Them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The biblical order is Creator sustaining creation, not creation sustaining deity.

LXXXIII. INCOMPARABLE GOD

Comparisons fail.

Spiritual Principle

God is not the highest member of a class.

He is:

Unique.

LXXXIV. GOLD BECOMES GOD

People turn:

Wealth.

Into:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Anything valuable can become spiritually dangerous when value becomes ultimacy.

LXXXV. THE IDOL STAYS WHERE YOU PUT IT

It cannot:

Lead.

Spiritual Principle

A god that cannot take one step cannot guide yours.

LXXXVI. THE IDOL DOES NOT ANSWER

No voice.

No response.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not mistake lifeless silence for sacred mystery.

LXXXVII. THE IDOL CANNOT SAVE

The final verdict.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation reveals the true difference between:

God.

And:

Idol.

LXXXVIII. REMEMBER THIS

God says:

Remember.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The battle against idolatry is partly a battle against spiritual amnesia.

LXXXIX. STAND FIRM

Memory produces:

Stability.

Spiritual Principle

Conviction grows stronger when truth is:

Remembered.

XC. TAKE IT TO HEART

Information alone:

Not enough.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Truth that never reaches the heart rarely governs the life.

XCI. NONE LIKE GOD

No:

Equivalent.

Spiritual Principle

God’s uniqueness makes idolatry irrational.

XCII. END FROM BEGINNING

No uncertainty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You live forward one day at a time.

God sees the completed story.

XCIII. PURPOSE WILL STAND

Some plans collapse.

His:

Does not.

Spiritual Principle

The permanence of God’s purpose is stronger than the instability of circumstances.

XCIV. “I WILL DO”

God’s will includes:

Action.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s sovereignty is not merely theoretical control.

It produces actual fulfillment.

XCV. CYRUS AS BIRD OF PREY

Swift.

Powerful.

Historically significant.

Still:

Summoned.

Spiritual Principle

Even powerful conquerors remain:

Servants of providence.

XCVI. A FAR-OFF LAND

Distance does not hinder:

God’s summons.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can prepare deliverance in a place His people are not even watching.

XCVII. STUBBORN HEART

God identifies:

Resistance.

Spiritual Principle

The heart can remain far from righteousness even while surrounded by:

Religious truth.

XCVIII. GOD BRINGS RIGHTEOUSNESS NEAR

Nearness is:

Grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely diagnose spiritual distance.

He acts to overcome it.

XCIX. SALVATION IS NOT DELAYED

God’s timing may feel:

Slow.

Still:

Certain.

Spiritual Principle

Waiting is not evidence that the promise has failed.

C. ZION SAVED

The judged city becomes:

The saved city.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can write restoration over a place that once carried the marks of judgment.

CI. GLORY TO ISRAEL

The final word is not:

Babylon.

Idols.

Captivity.

It is:

Glory.

Spiritual Principle

God’s redemptive purpose moves toward:

Restoration.

CII. THE BURDEN TEST

Ask of anything you trust:

Does it:

Carry me?

Or do I constantly have to:

Carry it?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

An idol always demands maintenance.

The living God gives sustaining grace.

CIII. THE CRISIS TEST

Ask:

Can it save me in:

Trouble?

If not:

Do not make it your god.

CIV. THE AGING TEST

Human strength decreases.

What happens to:

Faith?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith does not depend on the permanence of youth because its object is the everlasting God.

CV. THE FUTURE TEST

Can your god:

Know tomorrow?

God says:

I declare the end from:

The beginning.

Spiritual Principle

Confidence in the future must rest in the One who is already Lord over it.

CVI. THE PURPOSE TEST

Can human opposition:

Overthrow God?

No.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s purpose is not fragile.

CVII. THE SALVATION TEST

Can an idol:

Save?

No.

Can God?

Yes.

Spiritual Principle

What cannot save should never receive worship.

CVIII. ISAIAH 46 IN THE FLOW OF THE BOOK

Isaiah 44:

God exposes the making of idols.

Isaiah 45:

God declares Himself the only Savior.

Isaiah 46:

God shows the idols being carried into captivity.

Then Isaiah 47 will turn directly toward:

The humiliation of Babylon itself.

Key Truth

The collapse of Babylon’s gods prepares for the announcement of Babylon’s own fall.

CIX. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 46

1. Babylon’s Gods Bow

Bel and Nebo stoop and become burdens.

2. The Idols Go into Captivity

They cannot save themselves.

3. God Reminds Israel That He Carries Them

From the womb onward.

4. God Promises Care Through Old Age

He will sustain, carry, and rescue.

5. God Declares Himself Incomparable

No idol or being is His equal.

6. Isaiah Exposes Manufactured Gods

They must be carried and cannot answer prayer.

7. God Commands His People to Remember

Past faithfulness grounds present trust.

8. God Declares the End from the Beginning

His purpose stands.

9. Cyrus Is Summoned to Fulfill Divine Purpose

History serves God’s plan.

10. God Brings Salvation Near

Righteousness comes to stubborn people, and Zion receives salvation.

Key Truth

Isaiah 46 moves from gods that must be carried to the God who carries, from idols that cannot speak to the Lord who declares the future, and from stubborn hearts far from righteousness to salvation brought near by divine grace.

CX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 46 opens with a strange picture.

Two famous Babylonian gods:

Bel.

Nebo.

Are:

Bent over.

Stooping.

Loaded onto:

Animals.

Imagine worshiping a god and then needing to:

Pick him up.

Carry him.

Transport him.

Protect him.

That is Isaiah’s point.

False gods eventually become:

Burdens.

Then God speaks to Israel.

And says:

Not Me.

You do not carry:

Me.

I carry:

You.

“I have upheld you since your birth.”

Then the promise becomes even more tender:

“Even to your old age I am He.”

Your hair may:

Gray.

Your body may:

Slow.

Your strength may:

Decrease.

Your memory may:

Change.

Your circumstances may:

Shift.

God says:

“I am He.”

You change.

He remains:

God.

Then:

“I will sustain you.”

“I will carry you.”

“I will rescue you.”

Maybe there are seasons when you feel:

I am not carrying life very well.

Isaiah 46 asks a different question:

Who said you were supposed to carry everything?

The living God says:

I will carry:

You.

Then Isaiah returns to idols.

People pour out:

Gold.

Silver.

Hire:

Craftsmen.

Make:

A god.

Then lift that god:

Onto their shoulders.

Set him down.

And:

He stays there.

Cry:

Nothing.

Ask:

Nothing.

Trouble comes:

No salvation.

So ask yourself:

What am I trusting?

Does it:

Hear me?

Can it:

Save me?

Can it:

Sustain me through old age?

Can it:

Know the future?

Can it:

Carry me?

Then God says:

Remember.

Remember what?

> **“I am God, and there is no other.”**

Then one of the greatest lines:

> **“I make known the end from the beginning.”**

You do not know:

The end.

God does.

You do not know:

How this circumstance finishes.

God does.

You do not know:

What next year holds.

God does.

You do not know:

How all the pieces fit.

God does.

And then:

“My purpose will stand.”

That is stronger than:

Your anxiety.

Stronger than:

An empire.

Stronger than:

Babylon.

Stronger than:

Cyrus.

Stronger than:

Human opposition.

Then God says:

“What I have said, that I will bring about.”

The God who carries also:

Plans.

The God who plans also:

Acts.

The God who acts also:

Saves.

Finally He speaks to:

Stubborn people.

Far from:

Righteousness.

And He does not say:

Find your own way back.

He says:

“I am bringing My righteousness near.”

That is grace.

They are:

Far.

God brings:

Near.

They are:

Stubborn.

God still speaks.

They are:

Guilty.

God still announces:

Salvation.

So Isaiah 46 leaves us with:

A choice.

You can carry:

Your god.

Or:

Let the living God carry you.

You can trust:

Something silent.

Or:

The God who speaks.

You can rely on:

Something motionless.

Or:

The God directing history.

You can fear:

Tomorrow.

Or:

Trust the God who already knows the end.

You can cling to:

Your plans.

Or:

Rest in the purpose that stands.

You can remain:

Far from righteousness.

Or:

Receive the salvation God brings near.

So when the burden becomes:

Heavy—

Remember:

God carries.

When age brings:

Weakness—

Remember:

God sustains.

When trouble comes—

Remember:

God rescues.

When the future feels:

Unknown—

Remember:

God knows the end from the beginning.

When circumstances look:

Out of control—

Remember:

His purpose will stand.

And when you feel:

Far—

Remember:

His salvation is:

Near.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You are:

The living God.

You do not need us to:

Carry You.

Support You.

Protect You.

Maintain You.

You carry:

Us.

Father, forgive us for every:

Idol.

Everything we have trusted to give us:

Security.

Meaning.

Identity.

Protection.

Salvation.

When it could not:

Hear.

Answer.

Move.

Save.

Expose every false god in:

Our hearts.

Thank You for carrying us:

From birth.

Thank You for Your promise to remain faithful through:

Old age.

Gray hairs.

Weakness.

Changing circumstances.

Father, when our strength fails:

Sustain us.

When our burdens feel heavy:

Carry us.

When danger comes:

Rescue us.

Thank You that You are:

Incomparable.

There is:

No other God.

Father, help us:

Remember.

Remember Your:

Faithfulness.

Your works.

Your promises.

Your deliverance.

Keep us from spiritual:

Forgetfulness.

Thank You that You know:

The end from the beginning.

When we cannot see:

Tomorrow.

Help us trust the One who already knows:

The end.

When our plans collapse:

Remind us:

Your purpose stands.

When the world appears chaotic:

Remind us:

History remains under Your hand.

Father, thank You that what You speak:

You accomplish.

What You plan:

You do.

Thank You for bringing:

Righteousness near.

Thank You for bringing:

Salvation.

Draw stubborn hearts:

To Yourself.

Bring back those far from:

Righteousness.

Let Your salvation be known in:

Zion.

Your church.

Our homes.

Our families.

Our communities.

Father, help us stop carrying what cannot:

Carry us.

Teach us to rest in:

Your everlasting arms.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"Even to your old age I am He, and to gray hairs I will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you." — Isaiah 46:4**

Central Truth

Babylon's lifeless idols must be made, carried, positioned, and protected, yet cannot answer or save; the living Lord, by contrast, made His people, carries them from birth through old age, sustains and rescues them, declares the end from the beginning, accomplishes His unchanging purpose through rulers such as Cyrus, and graciously brings righteousness and salvation near to those who are far from Him.

Isaiah 46 in One Sentence

Isaiah contrasts Babylon's helpless gods Bel and Nebo, which must be carried and themselves go into captivity, with the incomparable living God who carries Israel from the womb to old age, sustains and rescues His people, declares the end from the beginning, summons Cyrus to accomplish His purpose, and promises to bring His righteousness and salvation near to stubborn hearts and to display His glory in Israel.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 47 — The Fall of Babylon

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 47 turns directly toward:

Babylon.

Isaiah 46 exposed:

Babylon’s gods.

Bel bowed.

Nebo stooped.

The idols had to be:

Carried.

Now Isaiah 47 turns from:

The gods of Babylon.

To:

Babylon herself.

And the message is:

You will fall.

The chapter begins with Babylon pictured as:

A royal woman.

A queen.

A lady of kingdoms.

Comfortable.

Powerful.

Secure.

Accustomed to luxury.

But God commands:

“Come down and sit in the dust.”

The throne disappears.

Luxury disappears.

Dignity disappears.

Public honor disappears.

The queen becomes:

A servant.

The empire becomes:

Humiliated.

This is one of Isaiah’s most powerful reversals.

Babylon had conquered:

Others.

Now Babylon will be:

Conquered.

Babylon had carried:

Others into exile.

Now Babylon will face:

Humiliation.

Babylon had shown:

No mercy.

Now judgment will come without:

Human power being able to stop it.

The chapter explains why.

Babylon’s judgment is connected with:

Pride.

Cruelty.

False security.

Pleasure.

Wickedness.

Self-exaltation.

Sorcery.

Astrology.

False wisdom.

The misuse of power.

Babylon had been permitted to become an instrument of:

Judgment.

But being used within God’s providence did not mean:

God approved Babylon’s cruelty.

Verse 6 makes this especially clear.

God says:

> **“I was angry with My people.”**

And:

> **“I gave them into your hand.”**

Yet:

> **“You showed them no mercy.”**

This is a critical biblical principle.

God can use a nation as an instrument of judgment while still holding that nation accountable for:

Pride.

Violence.

Cruelty.

Motives.

Excess.

Babylon could not say:

“Because God allowed our victory, everything we did was righteous.”

No.

Divine sovereignty never erases:

Human responsibility.

Babylon’s pride reaches its climax in the repeated statement:

> **“I am, and there is no one besides me.”**

This language is deliberately shocking because in the surrounding chapters God repeatedly says:

> **“I am the Lord, and there is no other.”**

Babylon takes language belonging uniquely to:

God.

And applies it to:

Herself.

That is the heart of Babylonian pride.

The empire begins acting as though:

It is ultimate.

Permanent.

Unaccountable.

Unseen.

Unstoppable.

Babylon says:

I will be queen:

Forever.

God says:

No.

Babylon says:

No one sees me.

God says:

I see.

Babylon says:

I will never suffer loss.

God says:

Loss will come:

Suddenly.

Babylon turns to:

Sorcery.

Astrology.

Monthly predictions.

Diviners.

Counselors.

Yet none can:

Save.

The chapter repeatedly asks the real question:

Who can save?

Babylon’s gods cannot.

Babylon’s wisdom cannot.

Babylon’s occult practices cannot.

Babylon’s wealth cannot.

Babylon’s merchants cannot.

Babylon’s political greatness cannot.

Then, almost at the center of the chapter, comes the declaration:

> **“Our Redeemer—the Lord of Hosts is His name—the Holy One of Israel.”**

That is the contrast.

Babylon has:

Sorcerers.

Israel has:

A Redeemer.

Babylon has:

Astrologers.

Israel has:

The Lord of Hosts.

Babylon has:

False security.

Israel has:

The Holy One.

The central truth of Isaiah 47 is:

Babylon’s pride, cruelty, pleasure, false security, sorcery, and self-exaltation cannot prevent her sudden fall; although God used Babylon within His judgment against Israel, He holds Babylon accountable for merciless oppression and declares that only the Lord of Hosts, the Holy One of Israel, is the true Redeemer and Savior.

I. BABYLON COMES DOWN FROM HER THRONE

Isaiah 47:1 — “Sit in the Dust”

> **“Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground without a throne, daughter of the Chaldeans. Never again will you be called tender and delicate.”**

Babylon had:

A throne.

Prestige.

Luxury.

Power.

Now:

Dust.

No throne.

No delicacy.

No royal status.

Cross References

Revelation 18:7

The later imagery of Babylon speaks of a proud power boasting in royal security and refusing to imagine mourning or loss.

Lamentations 1:1

Jerusalem is also pictured as a formerly great city reduced from royal status into grief and humiliation, showing how swiftly worldly greatness can reverse.

Jeremiah 50:2

Babylon’s fall is proclaimed publicly, and her idols and national pride are exposed.

Spiritual Principle

Earthly thrones are:

Temporary.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A throne can become dust faster than pride believes possible.

II. THE QUEEN BECOMES A LABORER

Isaiah 47:2 — Grind Meal

> **“Take the millstones and grind meal; remove your veil, strip off your robe, bare your legs, and wade through the streams.”**

Babylon moves from:

Royal privilege.

To:

Common labor.

The imagery describes:

Humiliation.

Loss of status.

Forced vulnerability.

Cross References

Matthew 24:41

Jesus uses grinding grain as imagery from ordinary labor, showing the lowly and everyday nature of the task.

Jeremiah 25:10

God warns that judgment can silence ordinary life, celebration, and the sound of millstones.

Lamentations 5:13

Young men under conquest were forced into grinding and burdensome labor.

Spiritual Principle

Pride imagines status as:

Permanent.

Judgment reveals how temporary it was.

III. BABYLON’S SHAME WILL BE EXPOSED

Isaiah 47:3 — God Takes Vengeance

> **“Your nakedness will be exposed and your shame uncovered. I will take vengeance; I will spare no man.”**

Babylon’s humiliation becomes:

Public.

The empire that covered itself in:

Glory.

Now faces:

Exposure.

Cross References

Nahum 3:5

God uses similar imagery against Nineveh, exposing the shame of an arrogant and violent empire.

Ezekiel 16:37

Public exposure becomes imagery for judgment upon spiritual unfaithfulness and shame.

Revelation 18:6

The later Babylon imagery includes repayment according to deeds and divine judgment proportionate to oppression.

Spiritual Principle

Sin hidden behind greatness does not remain:

Hidden forever.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Power can conceal shame from people.

It cannot conceal it from God.

IV. THE REDEEMER STANDS ABOVE BABYLON

Isaiah 47:4 — The Lord of Hosts

> **“Our Redeemer—the Lord of Hosts is His name—the Holy One of Israel.”**

Suddenly Isaiah turns away from:

Babylon.

And names:

Israel’s Redeemer.

Three titles:

Redeemer.

Lord of Hosts.

Holy One of Israel.

Cross References

Isaiah 44:6

The Lord identifies Himself as Israel’s King and Redeemer, the First and the Last.

Job 19:25

Job expresses confidence that his Redeemer lives.

Isaiah 54:5

God is described as Maker, Husband, Redeemer, and Holy One whose name reaches beyond Israel.

Spiritual Principle

Babylon is:

Powerful.

Israel’s Redeemer is:

Greater.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The enemy may have an empire.

God’s people have a Redeemer.

V. THE LADY OF KINGDOMS IS SILENCED

Isaiah 47:5 — No More Royal Title

> **“Sit in silence, go into darkness, daughter of the Chaldeans. No longer will you be called the Lady of Kingdoms.”**

Babylon’s titles vanish.

“Lady of Kingdoms” becomes:

Silence.

Darkness.

Loss.

Cross References

Jeremiah 51:64

Babylon is pictured sinking under divine judgment and not rising again to former glory.

Revelation 18:23

The later symbolic Babylon loses light, celebration, and commerce under judgment.

Lamentations 2:10

Elders sit silently in grief and humiliation after devastation.

Spiritual Principle

Human titles do not survive:

Divine judgment.

VI. GOD USED BABYLON, BUT BABYLON ABUSED POWER

Isaiah 47:6 — “You Showed Them No Mercy”

> **“I was angry with My people; I desecrated My inheritance and gave them into your hand. But you showed them no mercy; even the aged you laid heavily under your yoke.”**

One of the chapter’s most important verses.

God allowed:

Judgment.

Babylon became:

The instrument.

But Babylon chose:

Cruelty.

God condemns:

That cruelty.

Cross References

Zechariah 1:15

God declares anger against nations that felt secure and went beyond what He intended when they intensified Israel’s suffering.

Jeremiah 50:17

Israel is pictured as a scattered sheep attacked by foreign powers, including Babylon.

Lamentations 4:16

Judgment included severe dishonor toward elders and religious leaders.

Spiritual Principle

Being used by God does not automatically mean:

Being approved by God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Providence may explain why a nation gained power.

It does not excuse how that nation used the power.

VII. POWER WITHOUT MERCY BECOMES GUILT

Babylon could have:

Shown restraint.

Instead:

No mercy.

Even:

The elderly.

Were oppressed.

Spiritual Principle

How we treat the weak reveals:

Character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God judges not only whether power was possessed, but how power was used.

VIII. “I WILL BE QUEEN FOREVER”

Isaiah 47:7 — Babylon Never Considered the End

> **“You said, ‘I will be queen forever.’ You did not take these things to heart, nor consider what would come after.”**

Babylon’s problem is:

Presumption.

She assumes:

Forever.

Yet never considers:

After.

Cross References

Revelation 18:7

Babylon’s later symbolic portrait similarly boasts in royal security and imagines she will never mourn.

Zephaniah 2:15

A proud city boasts in self-sufficiency and says there is no one beside her, only to become desolate.

Proverbs 16:18

Pride goes before destruction and arrogance before collapse.

Spiritual Principle

Pride rarely thinks seriously about:

The ending.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Arrogance loves the word “forever” when talking about temporary success.

IX. THINK ABOUT WHAT COMES AFTER

Babylon lived for:

Now.

Comfort.

Power.

Pleasure.

Spiritual Principle

Wisdom asks:

What comes after?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A life that never considers the end will eventually be surprised by it.

X. THE LOVER OF PLEASURE FEELS SECURE

Isaiah 47:8 — “There Is No One Besides Me”

> **“Now then, hear this, you lover of pleasure, lounging in your security, and saying in your heart, ‘I am, and there is no one besides me. I will never be a widow or suffer the loss of children.’”**

This is one of Babylon’s most arrogant statements.

> **“I am.”**

“There is no one besides me.”

God has repeatedly said:

There is no one besides:

Me.

Babylon steals:

Divine language.

Cross References

Revelation 18:7

Babylon boasts she sits as queen and will never know mourning.

Zephaniah 2:15

A proud city declares itself unrivaled, using language strikingly similar to Babylon’s self-exaltation.

Amos 6:1

Those living in complacent security are warned against assuming comfort means safety from judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Self-sufficiency becomes idolatry when the creature begins speaking as though:

It were God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The most dangerous throne is the one the human heart builds for itself.

XI. BABYLON’S PRIDE AND SATANIC PRIDE

Babylon’s language reflects the broader biblical pattern of:

Self-exaltation.

Creaturely pride.

Attempted autonomy from God.

That resembles the kind of pride associated elsewhere with:

Rebellion against God.

However, Isaiah 47 is directly speaking about:

Babylon.

We should not erase that historical meaning by turning every verse into a direct description of:

Satan.

Spiritual Principle

Human empires can display the same rebellious impulse:

To exalt self into the place belonging to God.

XII. LOSS WILL COME IN ONE DAY

Isaiah 47:9 — Sudden Reversal

> **“But both of these will overtake you in a single day—loss of children and widowhood. They will come upon you in full measure, despite your many sorceries and your countless enchantments.”**

Babylon says:

Never.

God says:

Suddenly.

Babylon trusts:

Sorcery.

God says:

It will not help.

Cross References

Revelation 18:8

The later Babylon imagery similarly emphasizes sudden judgment coming in a short time.

Lamentations 1:20

Jerusalem’s suffering includes grief, death, and sudden reversal under judgment.

Job 1:19

Job experienced the devastating sudden loss of children in a single catastrophic event.

Spiritual Principle

False security often collapses:

Suddenly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

“Never” is a dangerous word when spoken against a judgment God has already announced.

XIII. SORCERY CANNOT CANCEL JUDGMENT

Babylon possesses:

Many.

Countless.

Long-practiced occult arts.

Still:

Powerless.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual deception cannot manipulate:

The sovereign God.

XIV. “NO ONE SEES ME”

Isaiah 47:10 — Secret Wickedness and Misleading Wisdom

> **“You trusted in your wickedness and said, ‘No one sees me.’ Your wisdom and knowledge misled you when you said in your heart, ‘I am, and there is none besides me.’”**

Three problems:

Wickedness.

False secrecy.

Proud wisdom.

Babylon assumes:

No one sees.

But:

God does.

Cross References

Psalm 94:7

The wicked falsely imagine that God does not see or notice their actions.

Ezekiel 8:12

People committed hidden abominations while claiming that the Lord did not see them.

Zephaniah 2:15

Self-secure arrogance leads a city to act as though it alone matters.

Spiritual Principle

Secret sin depends on the illusion:

God is absent.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

“No one sees me” is never true when God is in the room.

XV. WISDOM CAN BECOME FOOLISHNESS

Babylon had:

Knowledge.

Learning.

Astrology.

Counsel.

But it became:

Misleading.

Spiritual Principle

Knowledge without truth can increase:

Pride.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Intelligence is not wisdom when it teaches you that you do not need God.

XVI. DISASTER CANNOT BE CHARMED AWAY

Isaiah 47:11 — Destruction Comes Suddenly

> **“Disaster will come upon you, and you will not know how to charm it away. Calamity will fall upon you that you cannot ward off. Destruction will come upon you suddenly, and you will not know it.”**

Babylon’s methods fail.

No spell.

No prediction.

No defense.

Cross References

1 Thessalonians 5:3

Paul warns that sudden destruction can overtake those boasting of peace and security.

Revelation 18:10

The later Babylon imagery again emphasizes the sudden collapse of apparent greatness.

Jeremiah 51:8

Babylon’s fall is announced as sudden and devastating.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment does not become less real because people fail to:

Predict it.

XVII. “KEEP ON WITH YOUR MAGIC SPELLS”

Isaiah 47:12 — Divine Irony

> **“Keep on, then, with your magic spells and with your many sorceries, which you have labored at since youth—perhaps you will succeed, perhaps you will cause terror.”**

The tone is:

Ironical.

Go ahead.

Try them.

See if they save:

You.

Cross References

Daniel 2:2

Babylonian kings summoned magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and astrologers for supernatural counsel.

Daniel 5:7

Belshazzar called for astrologers and diviners when confronted by the mysterious writing on the wall.

Exodus 7:11

Pharaoh likewise called magicians and sorcerers to imitate divine signs.

Spiritual Principle

Long practice does not make:

Falsehood true.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A lie does not become trustworthy because a culture has believed it for generations.

XVIII. THE COUNSELORS HAVE EXHAUSTED BABYLON

Isaiah 47:13 — “All the Advice Has Worn You Out”

> **“All the advice you have received has only worn you out! Let your astrologers come forward, those stargazers who make predictions month by month. Let them save you from what is coming upon you.”**

So much:

Advice.

So little:

Deliverance.

The counselors create:

Exhaustion.

Not salvation.

Cross References

Daniel 5:8

Babylon’s wise men were unable to interpret the writing that announced judgment.

Jeremiah 10:2

God’s people are warned not to be terrified by astrological signs as the nations are.

Daniel 2:27

Daniel says no human wise man, astrologer, magician, or diviner could reveal what the king demanded apart from God.

Spiritual Principle

Not all spiritual advice deserves:

Trust.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A thousand counselors without truth can leave you more exhausted than one word from God.

XIX. ASTROLOGY CANNOT SAVE

Babylon studied:

Stars.

But failed to know:

The One who made them.

Spiritual Principle

Creation should point us toward:

The Creator.

Not become a substitute for:

Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The stars can declare God’s glory.

They cannot govern your destiny as gods.

XX. THEY ARE LIKE STUBBLE

Isaiah 47:14 — The Fire Consumes Them

> **“Surely they are like stubble; the fire will burn them up. They cannot even save themselves from the power of the flame. These are not coals for warmth; this is no fire to sit by.”**

The advisers cannot:

Save Babylon.

They cannot even:

Save themselves.

Cross References

Malachi 4:1

The coming day of judgment is pictured as a furnace consuming the arrogant like stubble.

Nahum 1:10

God’s enemies are compared to dry stubble consumed under judgment.

Revelation 18:8

The later Babylon imagery includes fiery judgment and sudden destruction.

Spiritual Principle

The false savior eventually needs:

Saving.

XXI. THIS IS NOT A COMFORTABLE FIRE

Isaiah says:

Not warmth.

Not cooking.

Not comfort.

This is:

Judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The same imagery can mean comfort in one context and judgment in another; context determines the meaning.

XXII. BABYLON’S PARTNERS ABANDON HER

Isaiah 47:15 — “There Is No One Left to Save You”

> **“That is all they can do for you—those you have trafficked with and labored with since youth. Each wanders off in his own direction; there is no one left to save you.”**

The chapter ends:

Alone.

Merchants:

Gone.

Counselors:

Gone.

Sorcerers:

Gone.

Astrologers:

Gone.

No:

Savior.

Cross References

Revelation 18:9

Kings and merchants associated with Babylon mourn her fall from a distance but cannot rescue her.

Jeremiah 51:29

Babylon trembles under God’s announced purpose and cannot reverse the judgment.

Isaiah 44:9

Idols and those who value them are shown to be worthless and unable to save.

Spiritual Principle

False alliances disappear when:

Salvation is actually needed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If everyone you trust walks away when judgment arrives, you never had a savior—you had associates.

XXIII. THE GREAT QUESTION: WHO CAN SAVE?

Babylon’s chapter ends:

> **“There is no one left to save you.”**

Isaiah 45 said:

> **“Turn to Me and be saved.”**

Isaiah 46 said:

Idols cannot save.

Isaiah 47 says:

Babylon’s entire system cannot save.

Key Truth

The fall of Babylon is ultimately a salvation test: everything Babylon trusted fails when confronted by the judgment of the one true God.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 47 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

Babylon says:

I will be queen forever.

There is none besides me.

I will never suffer loss.

Spiritual Principle

Pride converts:

Temporary blessing.

Into:

Imagined permanence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride takes today’s success and writes “forever” across it.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 47 TEACHES ABOUT SELF-DEIFICATION

Babylon echoes language that belongs to:

God.

> **“There is none besides me.”**

Spiritual Principle

The highest form of pride is trying to occupy:

God’s place.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 47 TEACHES ABOUT CRUELTY

God condemns Babylon because:

It showed no mercy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Power without mercy becomes evidence in the courtroom of God.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 47 TEACHES ABOUT PROVIDENCE

God says:

I gave Israel into your hand.

Yet:

Babylon is judged.

Spiritual Principle

Sovereignty and responsibility operate:

Together.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s control of history never transforms human cruelty into innocence.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 47 TEACHES ABOUT FALSE SECURITY

Babylon lounges:

Comfortably.

Confidently.

Blindly.

Spiritual Principle

Comfort can become dangerous when it produces:

Spiritual sleep.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 47 TEACHES ABOUT PLEASURE

Pleasure itself is not automatically:

Sin.

But Babylon became:

A lover of pleasure.

Secure in luxury.

Forgetful of:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pleasure becomes spiritually dangerous when comfort trains the heart to believe accountability will never come.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 47 TEACHES ABOUT SECRET SIN

Babylon says:

“No one sees me.”

Spiritual Principle

Secret wickedness grows beneath the false theology:

God does not notice.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 47 TEACHES ABOUT WORLDLY WISDOM

Babylon’s wisdom:

Misled.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Knowledge becomes dangerous when it makes a person more confident in self and less conscious of God.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 47 TEACHES ABOUT THE OCCULT

Sorcery.

Magic.

Astrology.

Enchantments.

All fail.

Spiritual Principle

Forbidden spiritual substitutes promise:

Control.

But cannot provide:

Salvation.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 47 TEACHES ABOUT ASTROLOGY

Babylon studied:

Heavenly movements.

To predict:

Human destiny.

God says:

They cannot save.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The stars were created to display God’s glory, not to replace His guidance.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 47 TEACHES ABOUT SUDDEN JUDGMENT

One day.

Suddenly.

Unexpectedly.

Spiritual Principle

Delayed judgment should not be interpreted as:

Cancelled judgment.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 47 TEACHES ABOUT THE REDEEMER

Verse 4 interrupts the judgment oracle with:

> **“Our Redeemer.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

In a chapter filled with false saviors, God makes sure His people remember the true one.

XXXVI. THE FALL FROM THRONE TO DUST

Babylon begins:

Royal.

Ends:

Unable to save itself.

Spiritual Principle

Human glory can:

Reverse.

XXXVII. THE DELICATE DAUGHTER BECOMES A LABORER

Luxury:

Ends.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Comfort should never be mistaken for covenant with permanence.

XXXVIII. THE EXPOSED SHAME

What was hidden becomes:

Seen.

Spiritual Principle

Public greatness cannot permanently cover:

Private wickedness.

XXXIX. VENGEANCE BELONGS TO GOD

God says:

> **“I will take vengeance.”**

This is important.

Biblical vengeance belongs properly to:

God.

Because His judgment is:

Perfect.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Leave final vengeance to the Judge who knows every fact, every motive, and every heart.

XL. THE LORD OF HOSTS

Babylon commands:

Armies.

God is:

Lord of Hosts.

Spiritual Principle

Military power does not make an empire:

Ultimate.

XLI. SILENCE AND DARKNESS

The proud voice becomes:

Silent.

The glorious empire enters:

Darkness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The loudest boast becomes quiet when God speaks the final verdict.

XLII. NO LONGER “LADY OF KINGDOMS”

Titles disappear.

Spiritual Principle

Reputation has:

No eternal guarantee.

XLIII. GOD’S PEOPLE WERE DISCIPLINED

God says:

I was angry with:

My people.

Spiritual Principle

Israel’s suffering was not evidence that:

Babylon was morally superior.

XLIV. BABYLON ABUSED THE ASSIGNMENT

No mercy.

Heavy yoke.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Having permission to act within providence is not permission to sin.

XLV. EVEN THE AGED WERE OPPRESSED

The vulnerable suffered.

Spiritual Principle

God notices:

How societies treat those with less power.

XLVI. “FOREVER”

Babylon assumed:

Continuity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Only God can use “forever” without presumption.

XLVII. FAILURE TO CONSIDER THE END

Babylon did not ask:

Where does this lead?

Spiritual Principle

Wisdom lives today with:

Tomorrow in view.

XLVIII. “I AM”

The phrase reflects:

Self-exaltation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Whenever the creature begins speaking as though it is self-existent and ultimate, pride has become worship of self.

XLIX. “NO ONE BESIDES ME”

God says this truthfully.

Babylon says it:

Falsely.

Spiritual Principle

The same sentence can be worship when spoken of God and blasphemous pride when spoken of self.

L. WIDOWHOOD AND LOSS

Babylon says:

Never.

God says:

Both.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

False confidence predicts the future without possessing authority over it.

LI. MANY SORCERIES

Quantity does not produce:

Truth.

Spiritual Principle

A thousand false practices remain:

False.

LII. COUNTLESS ENCHANTMENTS

Babylon had:

Experience.

History.

Tradition.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Ancient error is still error.

LIII. “NO ONE SEES”

God’s answer is:

I do.

Spiritual Principle

The hidden life is lived before:

God.

LIV. WISDOM THAT MISLEADS

Babylon’s intellect became:

Self-deception.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The smartest person in the room can still be spiritually blind.

LV. DISASTER WITHOUT A SPELL

There will be no:

Escape formula.

Spiritual Principle

God cannot be manipulated by:

Techniques.

LVI. CALAMITY CANNOT BE WARDED OFF

The empire discovers:

Limits.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human control ends exactly where divine judgment begins.

LVII. SUDDEN DESTRUCTION

Preparedness matters.

Spiritual Principle

A person can feel safest immediately before:

Collapse.

LVIII. “KEEP ON”

Divine irony exposes:

Futility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes God’s judgment allows people to discover how powerless their idols really are.

LIX. LABORED SINCE YOUTH

Babylon had long practiced:

Occult arts.

Spiritual Principle

Length of practice does not equal:

Legitimacy.

LX. WORN OUT BY ADVICE

The counselors did not produce:

Peace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Counsel that never reaches truth eventually produces exhaustion.

LXI. STARGAZERS

Created heavens became:

Objects of divination.

Spiritual Principle

Worshiping creation always misses:

The Creator.

LXII. MONTH-BY-MONTH PREDICTIONS

Babylon wants:

Control of tomorrow.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The desire to know the future can become idolatrous when it replaces trust in the God who owns the future.

LXIII. “LET THEM SAVE YOU”

That is the test.

Spiritual Principle

Any spiritual system should be measured against:

Truth.

And:

Its ability to point to the true Savior.

LXIV. STUBBLE BEFORE FIRE

Apparent wisdom becomes:

Fuel.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What looks sophisticated may become weightless under divine judgment.

LXV. THEY CANNOT SAVE THEMSELVES

Like the idols in Isaiah 46.

Spiritual Principle

A savior who needs saving is:

No savior.

LXVI. THIS IS NO FIRE FOR WARMTH

A dramatic clarification.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not confuse judgment with ordinary hardship when Scripture clearly presents it as divine reckoning.

LXVII. MERCHANTS WANDER AWAY

Commercial relationships fail.

Spiritual Principle

Money can attract partners.

It cannot guarantee:

Loyalty.

LXVIII. NO ONE LEFT TO SAVE

The chapter ends with:

Emptiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When every substitute leaves, the question becomes unavoidable:

Why did you not trust the true Redeemer?

LXIX. ISAIAH 46 AND ISAIAH 47

Isaiah 46

Babylon’s gods fall.

Isaiah 47

Babylon herself falls.

Key Truth

A civilization cannot be more secure than the gods in which it ultimately places its trust.

LXX. ISAIAH 45–47

Isaiah 45

God says:

> **“There is no other.”**

Isaiah 46

Idols cannot:

Carry or save.

Isaiah 47

Babylon says:

> **“There is no one besides me.”**

And falls.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The tragedy of Babylon is that she takes God’s exclusive claim and applies it to herself.

LXXI. BABYLON IN ISAIAH AND REVELATION

Revelation later uses:

Babylon.

As a symbolic picture of:

Worldly arrogance.

Luxury.

False religion.

Oppressive economic power.

Hostility to God.

Isaiah 47 provides important Old Testament background for that imagery.

However:

Isaiah 47 first concerns the historical Babylonian empire.

Spiritual Principle

Historical Babylon becomes a biblical pattern of:

Proud human civilization organized in opposition to God.

LXXII. BABYLON AND SATANIC PRIDE

There is a broader biblical resemblance between Babylon’s self-exaltation and:

Creaturely rebellion.

But this chapter’s direct subject remains:

Babylon.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Good interpretation begins with what the passage directly says before drawing wider theological parallels.

LXXIII. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 47

1. Pride Leads to Humiliation

Principle:

The empire that says “forever” can be brought into the dust.

---

2. God Judges Cruelty

Principle:

Power never excuses merciless treatment of the weak.

---

3. Providence Does Not Erase Responsibility

Principle:

Babylon was used by God yet still judged for its sinful motives and excesses.

---

4. False Security Is Dangerous

Principle:

Comfort can hide coming accountability.

---

5. Secret Sin Is Seen by God

Principle:

“No one sees” is always false before the all-knowing Lord.

---

6. Human Wisdom Can Mislead

Principle:

Knowledge detached from God can produce arrogance rather than truth.

---

7. Sorcery Cannot Save

Principle:

Occult power cannot overturn divine judgment.

---

8. Astrology Cannot Control the Future

Principle:

The Creator, not the stars, governs history.

---

9. Sudden Judgment Is Possible

Principle:

Delay should never be mistaken for immunity.

---

10. Only God Is Redeemer

Principle:

When every substitute fails, the Lord of Hosts remains the true Savior.

LXXIV. TWELVE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 47

1. Throne → Dust

2. Queen → Laborer

3. Luxury → Humiliation

4. Lady of Kingdoms → Silence

5. Power → Accountability

6. Cruelty → Judgment

7. “Forever” → Sudden Fall

8. “No One Sees” → God Sees

9. Wisdom → Deception

10. Sorcery → Powerlessness

11. Astrologers → Stubble

12. False Saviors → True Redeemer

Key Truth

Babylon loses everything she treated as permanent because she mistook temporary power for ultimate sovereignty.

LXXV. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What happens to Babylon at the beginning of the chapter?

She is commanded to come down from royal status and sit in the dust.

Question 2

What does the absence of a throne represent?

The loss of political power, dignity, and royal status.

Question 3

What does grinding meal symbolize?

A fall from luxury and privilege into humiliating servitude.

Question 4

What will happen to Babylon’s hidden shame?

It will be exposed.

Question 5

Who is identified as Israel’s Redeemer?

The Lord of Hosts, the Holy One of Israel.

Question 6

Why did God give His people into Babylon’s hand?

As part of discipline because of Israel’s sin.

Question 7

Did this excuse Babylon’s cruelty?

No.

God condemns Babylon because it showed no mercy.

Question 8

Whom did Babylon especially oppress?

Even the aged were heavily burdened.

Question 9

What arrogant claim did Babylon make?

> **“I will be queen forever.”**

Question 10

What had Babylon failed to consider?

What would happen afterward.

Question 11

What other arrogant statement did Babylon make?

> **“I am, and there is no one besides me.”**

Question 12

Why is that statement especially serious?

Because surrounding chapters reserve that kind of exclusive claim for the Lord alone.

Question 13

What losses did Babylon say would never happen?

Widowhood and loss of children.

Question 14

What does God say?

Both would come suddenly.

Question 15

Could sorcery prevent the judgment?

No.

Question 16

What secret thought encouraged Babylon’s wickedness?

> **“No one sees me.”**

Question 17

What misled Babylon?

Its own wisdom and knowledge.

Question 18

Could Babylon charm disaster away?

No.

Question 19

Who did Babylon rely upon for supernatural counsel?

Magicians, sorcerers, astrologers, and stargazers.

Question 20

Could the astrologers save Babylon?

No.

Question 21

What happened to them under judgment?

They became like stubble before fire.

Question 22

Could they even save themselves?

No.

Question 23

What happened to Babylon’s commercial partners?

They scattered in different directions.

Question 24

How does the chapter end?

> **“There is no one left to save you.”**

Question 25

What is the central contrast?

Every false source of security fails, while the Lord alone remains the true Redeemer.

LXXVI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 47 asks several searching questions.

Have I Become Too Comfortable?

Does comfort make me assume:

Nothing can change?

Have I Written “Forever” Across Something Temporary?

Career?

Health?

Money?

Influence?

Position?

Government?

Success?

Am I Using Power Mercifully?

How do I treat:

The elderly?

Weak?

Poor?

Dependent?

Those with less influence?

Have I Mistaken God’s Permission for His Approval?

Do I assume:

“No one sees”?

Is there anything in my private life I would live differently if I consciously remembered:

God sees?

Has my knowledge made me:

Humble?

Or:

Proud?

Am I trying to control the future through:

Superstition?

Astrology?

Occult practices?

Signs?

Predictions?

Do I seek God’s Word for guidance?

What false security would collapse if:

Trouble came suddenly?

Who do I expect to:

Save me?

When every substitute fails, is the Lord truly:

My Redeemer?

LXXVII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Pride Writes ‘Forever’ Across Things God Has Already Marked ‘Temporary’”

Babylon says:

> **“I will be queen forever.”**

God says:

Come down.

Sit in:

Dust.

Principle:

The safest response to success is humility, because everything we possess remains under the authority of the God who gave it, allows it, and can remove it.

LXXVIII. THE THRONE IS NOT PERMANENT

Babylon believed:

Royal status.

Could not end.

Spiritual Principle

Every earthly throne is:

Borrowed.

LXXIX. DUST IS A GREAT EQUALIZER

Kings.

Queens.

Poor.

Rich.

All remain:

Mortal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Dust eventually reminds every human being that no one was born divine.

LXXX. THE MILLSTONE

Royal hands become:

Working hands.

Spiritual Principle

Status can disappear before ability does.

LXXXI. SHAME EXPOSED

Reputation cannot hide:

Reality.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What matters most is not what people call us, but what God knows us to be.

LXXXII. “OUR REDEEMER”

A sudden word of:

Hope.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people should define themselves by:

Their Redeemer.

Not:

Their oppressor.

LXXXIII. LORD OF HOSTS

Babylon had:

Armies.

God commands:

Hosts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse military superiority with ultimate sovereignty.

LXXXIV. HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL

God’s judgment is:

Holy.

Spiritual Principle

Divine justice is never:

Corrupt revenge.

LXXXV. DARKNESS AFTER GLORY

Babylon goes from:

Spotlight.

To:

Darkness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fame is a poor substitute for faithfulness because public visibility can vanish overnight.

LXXXVI. GOD’S ANGER WITH ISRAEL

Israel was:

Responsible.

Spiritual Principle

Election does not eliminate:

Discipline.

LXXXVII. BABYLON’S CRUELTY

Babylon was:

Also responsible.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Two parties can both be morally accountable within the same historical event.

LXXXVIII. THE AGED UNDER THE YOKE

God mentions them:

Specifically.

Spiritual Principle

God notices the suffering of:

The vulnerable.

LXXXIX. “QUEEN FOREVER”

Arrogance makes:

Predictions.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride is often a false prophet about its own future.

XC. “YOU DID NOT TAKE IT TO HEART”

Babylon had facts.

But lacked:

Reflection.

Spiritual Principle

Failure to think morally about power can become part of:

Judgment.

XCI. “WHAT WOULD COME AFTER”

A vital question.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Wisdom studies consequences before consequences arrive.

XCII. LOVER OF PLEASURE

Pleasure became:

Identity.

Spiritual Principle

Pleasure is a gift when received under God.

It becomes an idol when it becomes:

Master.

XCIII. LOUNGING IN SECURITY

Comfort can anesthetize:

Conscience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The most dangerous sleep may happen while everything feels safe.

XCIV. THE FALSE “I AM”

Babylon copies:

Divine language.

Spiritual Principle

Self-exaltation reaches its peak when the human heart becomes its own:

God.

XCV. LOSS IN ONE DAY

Human confidence:

Collapses.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Speed of judgment is not limited by length of prosperity.

XCVI. MANY SORCERIES, NO DELIVERANCE

Babylon has:

Many practices.

No Savior.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual activity is not proof of:

Spiritual truth.

XCVII. “NO ONE SEES”

The theology of secret sin.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every hidden sin depends on temporarily forgetting the omniscience of God.

XCVIII. KNOWLEDGE MISLED HER

Education without:

Humility.

Spiritual Principle

Knowledge can illuminate.

Or inflate.

XCIX. DISASTER WITHOUT WARNING

Babylon is:

Unprepared.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The person most confident there will be no judgment may be the least prepared for it.

C. SPELLS FROM YOUTH

Tradition can reinforce:

Error.

Spiritual Principle

Inherited beliefs still require:

Truth-testing.

CI. ADVICE THAT WEARIES

More voices.

Less clarity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Noise is not wisdom.

CII. ASTROLOGERS AND STARGAZERS

They observe:

Creation.

But miss:

Creator.

Spiritual Principle

Knowledge about the heavens is not the same as knowing:

The God of heaven.

CIII. MONTHLY PREDICTIONS

A continual attempt to:

Control uncertainty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith entrusts the unknown future to God rather than seeking forbidden ways to master it.

CIV. STUBBLE BEFORE FIRE

The sophisticated advisers become:

Fragile.

Spiritual Principle

Intellectual reputation cannot shield anyone from:

Truth.

CV. NO COALS FOR WARMTH

Judgment is not:

Comfort.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not domesticate divine judgment into something harmless.

CVI. COMMERCIAL RELATIONSHIPS FAIL

Babylon’s network:

Disperses.

Spiritual Principle

A marketplace cannot become:

A redeemer.

CVII. “NO ONE LEFT TO SAVE”

The final line destroys:

Every substitute.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Anything less than God will eventually prove too small for the burden of salvation.

CVIII. ISAIAH 44–47

Isaiah 44

Idols are:

Made.

Isaiah 45

God alone is:

Savior.

Isaiah 46

Idols must be:

Carried.

Isaiah 47

The civilization trusting those idols:

Falls.

Key Truth

Isaiah does not merely dismantle false gods intellectually; he shows the historical consequences of building a society on false security.

CIX. ISAIAH 47 AND REVELATION 18

Both contain themes of:

Pride.

Luxury.

Queenly boasting.

Sudden judgment.

Commerce.

Sorcery.

Loss.

Mourning.

The later biblical use of Babylon builds upon:

This prophetic background.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Scripture often turns historical places into theological patterns without erasing their original historical meaning.

CX. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 47

1. Babylon Is Brought Down

The royal city sits in dust.

2. Babylon Is Humiliated

Luxury gives way to labor and exposure.

3. Israel’s Redeemer Is Declared

The Lord of Hosts stands above Babylon.

4. Babylon’s Cruelty Is Exposed

She abused the power God permitted her to wield.

5. Babylon’s Pride Is Condemned

She imagined herself queen forever.

6. Babylon Claims Divine-Like Self-Sufficiency

> **“I am, and there is none besides me.”**

7. Sudden Judgment Is Announced

Loss comes despite sorcery.

8. False Wisdom Is Exposed

Babylon’s knowledge misled her.

9. Occult Counsel Fails

Astrologers, magicians, and sorcerers cannot save.

10. Babylon Ends Without a Savior

Every substitute abandons her.

Key Truth

Isaiah 47 moves from royal arrogance to total helplessness, exposing the collapse of every false security and demonstrating that only the Lord is Redeemer.

CXI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 47 begins with a queen:

On a throne.

And ends with:

No one left to save her.

That is the movement of:

Pride.

Babylon thought:

Her position was permanent.

God says:

> **“Come down.”**

Babylon thought:

Her luxury was secure.

God says:

Take the:

Millstones.

Babylon thought:

Her honor could never disappear.

God says:

Your shame will be:

Exposed.

Then comes one of the most important verses:

> **“Our Redeemer—the Lord of Hosts is His name.”**

That is where hope stands.

Not in:

Babylon.

Not in:

Politics.

Not in:

Military power.

Not in:

Economic strength.

Not in:

Astrology.

Not in:

Sorcery.

Not in:

Human wisdom.

In:

The Redeemer.

Then God explains Babylon’s guilt.

Yes:

I gave My people into your hand.

But:

You showed no mercy.

That matters.

Never assume:

“God allowed me to succeed, therefore everything I did must have been right.”

Babylon had:

Providential success.

And:

Moral guilt.

Those can exist:

Together.

Then Babylon says:

“I will be queen forever.”

How many people live as though:

Health will last forever.

Money will last forever.

Influence will last forever.

Comfort will last forever.

Life itself will last forever.

Isaiah says:

Consider what comes:

After.

Then Babylon says:

“I am, and there is no one besides me.”

That is no longer ordinary confidence.

That is:

Self-deification.

God alone can truthfully say:

There is no other.

Babylon takes God’s words and gives them to:

Herself.

That is what pride ultimately does.

It places:

Self.

Where:

God.

Belongs.

Then Babylon says:

“No one sees me.”

Maybe those are the four most dangerous words in:

Secret sin.

No one sees.

But:

God sees.

Then Babylon turns to:

Sorcery.

Magic.

Astrology.

Predictions.

Why?

Because people desperately want:

Control.

They want to know:

Tomorrow.

Manage:

Tomorrow.

Manipulate:

Tomorrow.

God says:

None of it can:

Save.

Then the astrologers become:

Stubble.

The counselors:

Scatter.

The merchants:

Leave.

The final sentence:

> **“There is no one left to save you.”**

What a contrast with the chapter’s center:

> **“Our Redeemer—the Lord of Hosts is His name.”**

That is the choice.

False saviors:

Leave.

The Redeemer:

Remains.

So:

Do not trust your throne.

Do not worship your success.

Do not write “forever” across temporary blessings.

Do not use power without mercy.

Do not believe hidden sin is unseen.

Do not let knowledge turn into pride.

Do not seek forbidden spiritual shortcuts to control the future.

Do not confuse prosperity with immunity from accountability.

Instead:

Remember your Redeemer.

When worldly kingdoms rise:

God remains.

When worldly kingdoms fall:

God remains.

When human wisdom fails:

God remains.

When false spiritual systems collapse:

God remains.

When everyone else walks away:

The Lord of Hosts is still:

Redeemer.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You alone are:

God.

You alone are:

Redeemer.

You alone deserve:

Glory.

Father, protect us from:

Pride.

Keep us from looking at temporary blessings and saying:

“Forever.”

Teach us to remember:

Everything we possess is:

Temporary.

Except what is rooted in:

You.

Father, forgive us for every way we have misused:

Power.

Influence.

Authority.

Opportunity.

Teach us to show:

Mercy.

Especially to:

The weak.

The vulnerable.

The elderly.

Those who cannot repay us.

Father, keep us from the pride of Babylon.

Do not let us say in our hearts:

“I need no one.”

“I answer to no one.”

“No one sees me.”

Remind us:

You see.

You know.

You judge:

Righteously.

Father, deliver us from:

False wisdom.

Sorcery.

Occult practices.

Astrology.

Superstition.

Any attempt to control the future apart from:

Trusting You.

Teach us to seek:

Your Word.

Your wisdom.

Your guidance.

Father, when human counsel becomes confusing:

Lead us into truth.

When false security collapses:

Be our Rock.

When worldly strength disappears:

Be our strength.

When every substitute fails:

Remind us:

You remain.

Thank You for the declaration:

> **“Our Redeemer—the Lord of Hosts is His name—the Holy One of Israel.”**

Be:

Our Redeemer.

Our hope.

Our security.

Our salvation.

May our confidence never rest in:

Wealth.

Comfort.

Government.

Human wisdom.

Success.

But in:

You.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“Our Redeemer—the Lord of Hosts is His name—the Holy One of Israel.” — Isaiah 47:4**

Central Truth

Babylon’s fall demonstrates that pride, cruelty, luxury, secret wickedness, worldly wisdom, sorcery, astrology, wealth, and political power cannot provide lasting security or salvation; although God sovereignly used Babylon in the discipline of His people, He judged Babylon’s merciless arrogance and revealed that the Lord of Hosts, the Holy One of Israel, alone is the true Redeemer.

Isaiah 47 in One Sentence

Isaiah announces the humiliation and fall of proud Babylon, exposing her cruelty toward God’s people, her boast of permanent supremacy, her belief that no one saw her wickedness, and her reliance upon sorcery, astrology, wisdom, and commerce, all of which fail under sudden divine judgment, while declaring that Israel’s true hope is the Lord of Hosts, the Holy One of Israel, the only Redeemer who can truly save.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 48 — Stubborn Israel and the Faithful Redeemer

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 48 confronts one of the most painful realities in Israel’s history:

They bore:

God’s name.

They belonged to:

The holy city.

They invoked:

The God of Israel.

Yet their hearts were:

Stubborn.

Their worship was not always:

True.

Their obedience was not:

Faithful.

The chapter begins with religious language:

Israel.

Judah.

The Lord.

The holy city.

But God immediately exposes the problem:

> **“Not in truth or righteousness.”**

That phrase is the issue.

Israel had:

Religious identity.

Religious vocabulary.

Religious heritage.

But God wanted:

Truth.

Righteousness.

Faithfulness.

Isaiah 48 therefore speaks powerfully against:

Empty religion.

Nominal faith.

External profession without inward obedience.

God then explains why He repeatedly announced events:

Before they happened.

Israel was:

Obstinate.

Stiff-necked.

Hard-headed.

The people might have tried to say:

Our idols did this.

Our images caused this.

Our gods predicted this.

So God declares events beforehand in order to establish:

Who actually controls history.

Again the theme of prophecy appears.

God says:

I announced.

I acted.

It happened.

Then He announces:

New things.

Hidden things.

Why?

So Israel cannot claim:

“I already knew.”

The Lord is dismantling:

Human pride.

Idolatrous pride.

Spiritual pride.

Then comes another strong statement:

“For My name’s sake I defer My anger.”

Israel survives not because:

Israel deserves survival.

But because:

God is faithful to His name.

He restrains:

Judgment.

He refines:

His people.

He protects:

His glory.

This does not mean God’s concern for His name is:

Selfish vanity.

God’s name represents:

His character.

Truth.

Holiness.

Faithfulness.

Covenant integrity.

If God’s name could fail, then:

His promises could fail.

But they cannot.

Therefore God says:

> **“For My own sake, for My own sake, I do this.”**

The chapter then moves into one of Isaiah’s strongest statements of:

Divine identity.

> **“I am the First and I am the Last.”**

The God speaking is:

Creator.

Lord of history.

The One who calls Cyrus.

The One whose purpose against Babylon succeeds.

Then verse 16 becomes especially important.

The speaker says:

> **“And now the Lord God has sent Me, and His Spirit.”**

This verse has long drawn theological attention because the speaker who has been speaking in divine terms now says:

The Lord God has sent:

Me.

And:

His Spirit.

At minimum, the verse distinguishes:

The Lord God.

The sent speaker.

The Spirit.

Christian readers naturally see significant Trinitarian resonance here.

We should be careful not to force later theology backward carelessly, yet the verse unquestionably contains:

A remarkable personal distinction.

Then the chapter turns toward:

Obedience.

God identifies Himself as:

Redeemer.

Teacher.

Guide.

He says:

> **“If only you had paid attention to My commands.”**

What would obedience have brought?

Peace:

Like a river.

Righteousness:

Like waves of the sea.

Fruitfulness:

Like sand.

This does not mean obedience earns:

Salvation.

It means obedience brings:

Covenant blessing.

Then comes deliverance:

“Leave Babylon!”

God’s people are called to:

Come out.

Flee captivity.

Proclaim redemption.

Sing.

Declare to the ends of the earth:

“The Lord has redeemed His servant Jacob.”

And just as God once gave water from:

The rock.

He will provide again in:

The wilderness.

The chapter ends with a solemn contrast:

“There is no peace for the wicked.”

So Isaiah 48 contrasts:

Religious profession with truth.

Stubbornness with obedience.

Idols with the living God.

Affliction with refinement.

Babylon with redemption.

Peace like a river with:

No peace for the wicked.

The central truth of Isaiah 48 is:

Israel's religious identity could not hide its stubborn rebellion, yet the faithful Redeemer preserved, refined, taught, guided, and delivered His people for the sake of His holy name; He alone declares the future, rules history, calls Cyrus, provides in the wilderness, and offers the peace of obedience while warning that persistent wickedness cannot produce true peace.

I. CALLED ISRAEL, BUT NOT WALKING IN TRUTH

Isaiah 48:1 — Religious Identity Without Righteousness

> **"Hear this, O house of Jacob, you who are called by the name of Israel, who came forth from the waters of Judah, who swear by the name of the Lord and invoke the God of Israel—but not in truth or righteousness."**

Israel had:

The right name.

The right ancestry.

The right vocabulary.

But God says:

Not in truth.

Not in righteousness.

Cross References

Jeremiah 4:2

God says that invoking His name must be done in truth, justice, and righteousness rather than hypocritically.

Micah 3:11

Religious leaders claimed dependence on the Lord while practicing corruption and presuming God's favor.

Matthew 15:8

Jesus speaks of people honoring God with their lips while their hearts remain far from Him.

Spiritual Principle

Religious language cannot substitute for:

A truthful heart.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Knowing the right words about God is not the same as walking rightly with God.

II. RELYING ON THE HOLY CITY

Isaiah 48:2 — External Privilege Is Not Enough

> **“They call themselves citizens of the holy city and rely on the God of Israel—the Lord of Hosts is His name.”**

Jerusalem was:

Holy.

But living near holy things does not automatically make:

The heart holy.

Cross References

Nehemiah 11:1

Jerusalem is identified as the holy city in connection with those dwelling there after restoration.

Isaiah 52:1

Zion is called the holy city and summoned to awaken to God’s restoring work.

Matthew 5:35

Jesus refers to Jerusalem as the city of the great King.

Spiritual Principle

Sacred geography does not replace:

Sacred character.

III. GOD DECLARED THE FORMER THINGS

Isaiah 48:3 — Prophecy Followed by Fulfillment

> **“Long ago I declared the former things; they went out from My mouth, and I made them known; then suddenly I acted, and they came to pass.”**

The pattern:

God spoke.

God acted.

It happened.

Cross References

Isaiah 42:9

God points to former fulfilled events and announces new ones before they appear.

Isaiah 46:9

God calls His people to remember former things and recognize that He alone is God.

Isaiah 46:10

The Lord declares the end from the beginning and announces His purpose before fulfillment.

Spiritual Principle

Fulfilled prophecy demonstrates:

God’s authority over history.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s Word is not commentary after the event.

He can speak before the event and still be right afterward.

IV. ISRAEL WAS OBSTINATE

Isaiah 48:4 — Iron Neck, Bronze Forehead

> **“Because I knew you were obstinate, your neck like iron, and your forehead like bronze,”**

This is strong imagery.

Neck like iron:

Unbending.

Forehead like bronze:

Hard.

Unyielding.

Cross References

Exodus 32:9

God describes Israel as a stiff-necked people during the golden calf rebellion.

Deuteronomy 9:6

Israel is reminded that covenant blessing did not come because of inherent righteousness; they were stubborn.

Isaiah 46:12

God previously addressed stubborn-hearted people far from righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

Stubbornness is not:

Strength.

It is resistance to:

God.

V. GOD SPOKE BEFOREHAND SO IDOLS COULD NOT TAKE CREDIT

Isaiah 48:5 — No Glory for Images

> **“Therefore I told you these things beforehand. Before they came to pass I announced them to you, so that you could not say, ‘My idol did them; my carved image and my molten image commanded them.’”**

God removes:

Excuses.

Idols cannot claim:

Credit.

Cross References

Isaiah 42:8

God says He will not give His glory or praise to idols.

Isaiah 45:21

The Lord challenges false gods and demonstrates that He alone declared the future and saves.

Habakkuk 2:18

A carved image cannot teach truth because it is itself the product of human craftsmanship and deception.

Spiritual Principle

God’s glory will not be:

Transferred.

VI. GOD ANNOUNCES NEW THINGS

Isaiah 48:6 — Hidden Things Revealed

> **“You have heard these things—now look at them all! Will you not admit them? From now on I announce to you new things, hidden things you have not known.”**

God says:

Look.

Admit.

Listen.

He reveals what Israel could not:

Discover independently.

Cross References

Isaiah 42:9

God announces new things before they spring into being.

Jeremiah 33:3

God invites His people to call upon Him and promises to reveal great and hidden things they do not know.

Daniel 2:22

God reveals deep and hidden things and knows what lies in darkness.

Spiritual Principle

Revelation depends upon:

God making truth known.

VII. “YOU CANNOT SAY, ‘I KNEW IT’”

Isaiah 48:7 — Pride Is Removed

> **“They are created now, not long ago; before today you had not heard of them, so you cannot say, ‘Yes, I knew them.’”**

God eliminates:

Boasting.

Israel cannot say:

We predicted it.

Cross References

Isaiah 42:9

The Lord announces future things before they occur.

Isaiah 44:7

God challenges all rivals to declare future events accurately.

Isaiah 46:10

God alone declares the end from the beginning.

Spiritual Principle

Divine revelation leaves no room for:

Human self-congratulation.

VIII. REBELLIOUS FROM THE BEGINNING

Isaiah 48:8 — Closed Ears

> **“You have neither heard nor understood; from of old your ear has not been open. For I knew you would deal treacherously; you were called a rebel from birth.”**

The issue is:

Deep.

Not merely:

One bad decision.

Cross References

Psalm 58:3

The psalmist describes humanity’s early tendency toward sin and falsehood.

Isaiah 43:27

Isaiah already traced sin through Israel’s early history and leadership.

Jeremiah 6:28

Rebellion is described as widespread and deeply rooted.

Spiritual Principle

Human rebellion requires:

More than behavioral adjustment.

It requires:

Grace.

IX. GOD DEFERS ANGER FOR HIS NAME’S SAKE

Isaiah 48:9 — Mercy and Restraint

> **“For My name’s sake I defer My anger; for the sake of My praise I restrain it for you, so that I do not cut you off.”**

Israel survives because:

God restrains.

Why?

His name.

His praise.

His covenant faithfulness.

Cross References

Ezekiel 20:9

God acts for His name’s sake so it will not be profaned among the nations.

Ezekiel 20:14

Again God restrains complete judgment in order to protect the holiness of His name.

Psalm 106:8

God saved His people for His name’s sake, to make His mighty power known.

Spiritual Principle

Grace rests ultimately in:

God’s character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Our strongest hope is not:

“We deserve another chance.”

It is:

“God is faithful to His name.”

X. THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION

Isaiah 48:10 — Refined Through Suffering

> **“Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.”**

Affliction becomes:

Furnace.

Testing.

Refining.

But the wording “not as silver” reminds us:

God’s refining purpose is not a simple mechanical analogy.

Cross References

Isaiah 1:25

God promises to turn His hand against impurity and remove dross from His people.

Malachi 3:3

The Lord is pictured as a refiner purifying His people like silver and gold.

1 Peter 1:7

Faith tested by trials is shown to be more precious than gold that perishes.

Spiritual Principle

Affliction can become:

A refining place.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The furnace is painful, but God can use heat to expose what comfort allowed to remain hidden.

XI. “FOR MY OWN SAKE”

Isaiah 48:11 — God Protects His Glory

> **“For My own sake, for My own sake, I do this. For how could My name be profaned?**
> **I will not yield My glory to another.”**

Repeated:

For My own sake.

Why?

His name.

His glory.

Cross References

Isaiah 42:8

God refuses to give His glory to another or His praise to idols.

Ezekiel 36:22

God says Israel’s restoration is not primarily because of Israel’s merit but for the holiness of His own name.

Isaiah 43:25

God blots out transgression for His own sake.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation magnifies:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace is most secure when its foundation is God’s character rather than ours.

XII. THE FIRST AND THE LAST

Isaiah 48:12 — The Eternal Lord

> **“Listen to Me, Jacob, Israel whom I have called: I am He; I am the First and I am the Last.”**

This is divine identity language.

He is:

First.

Last.

Unchanging.

Cross References

Isaiah 41:4

The Lord declares Himself the First and present with the last generation.

Isaiah 44:6

Israel’s King and Redeemer identifies Himself as First and Last, with no God besides Him.

Revelation 1:17

Christ identifies Himself as the First and the Last.

Spiritual Principle

History exists between:

God’s eternal authority.

XIII. THE CREATOR SUMMONS CREATION

Isaiah 48:13 — Earth and Heavens Stand at His Command

> **“My hand laid the foundation of the earth, and My right hand spread out the heavens. When I summon them, they all stand up together.”**

The universe responds to:

His command.

Cross References

Isaiah 45:12

God says He made the earth, created humanity, stretched out the heavens, and marshaled the stars.

Psalm 102:25

The earth and heavens are described as works of God’s hands.

Job 38:4

God asks Job where he was when the earth’s foundations were laid.

Spiritual Principle

The Creator’s authority reaches:

Everywhere.

XIV. WHICH IDOL PREDICTED CYRUS?

Isaiah 48:14 — God’s Purpose Against Babylon

> **“Gather together, all of you, and listen: Which of the idols has foretold these things? The Lord’s chosen will carry out His purpose against Babylon; His arm will be against the Chaldeans.”**

The challenge:

Which idol predicted this?

Answer:

None.

The appointed ruler will act against:

Babylon.

The context continues to point toward:

Cyrus.

Cross References

Isaiah 44:28

Cyrus is explicitly named as God’s shepherd who will carry out His purpose.

Isaiah 46:11

God summons from the east the man who will fulfill His plan.

Jeremiah 50:25

God opens His armory and brings out instruments of judgment against Babylon.

Spiritual Principle

Babylon’s fall is:

Predicted.

Directed.

Under divine sovereignty.

XV. GOD CALLED HIM, BROUGHT HIM, AND WILL PROSPER HIS MISSION

Isaiah 48:15 — Cyrus Succeeds Under Providence

> **“I, even I, have spoken; yes, I have called him, I have brought him, and he will succeed in his mission.”**

Three divine actions:

Called.

Brought.

Succeeded.

Cross References

Isaiah 45:1

Cyrus is identified as God’s appointed instrument whose path God prepares.

Isaiah 44:28

Cyrus is named as the one who will carry out God’s purpose regarding Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 36:22

God moves Cyrus to issue the proclamation allowing restoration.

Spiritual Principle

Human success can exist within:

Divine assignment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The mission succeeds because God’s purpose stands behind it.

XVI. “THE LORD GOD HAS SENT ME, AND HIS SPIRIT”

Isaiah 48:16 — A Remarkable Personal Distinction

> **“Come near to Me and listen to this: From the beginning I have not spoken in secret; from the time it came to be, I was there. And now the Lord God has sent Me, and His Spirit.”**

This is one of the most intriguing verses in the chapter.

The speaker has been speaking with:

Divine authority.

Then says:

The Lord God sent:

Me.

And:

His Spirit.

At minimum we see a distinction between:

The Lord God.

The sent speaker.

The Spirit.

Cross References

John 18:20

Jesus says He taught openly and not secretly.

Isaiah 45:19

The Lord says He did not speak in secret or tell His people to seek Him in vain.

Luke 4:18

Jesus says the Spirit of the Lord is upon Him because He has been anointed and sent for a saving mission.

Spiritual Principle

God’s saving work is:

Personal.

Commissioned.

Spirit-associated.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah 48:16 should be handled with humility, but Christian readers rightly recognize powerful resonance with the later revelation of Father, Son, and Spirit.

XVII. THE REDEEMER TEACHES AND LEADS

Isaiah 48:17 — “The Way You Should Go”

> **“This is what the Lord says—your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: ‘I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.’”**

God does not merely:

Rescue.

He teaches.

Directs.

Leads.

Cross References

Isaiah 43:14

God identifies Himself as Israel’s Redeemer and Holy One.

Psalm 32:8

God promises instruction, teaching, and counsel concerning the way His people should go.

Isaiah 30:21

God’s people hear guidance behind them saying:

This is the way.

Walk in it.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption includes:

Direction.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Redeemer who saves you also knows the road that is best for you.

XVIII. “IF ONLY YOU HAD PAID ATTENTION”

Isaiah 48:18 — Peace Like a River

> **“If only you had paid attention to My commands, your peace would have been like a river, your righteousness like the waves of the sea.”**

One of Scripture’s great statements about:

Obedience.

Peace.

Righteousness.

Israel missed:

Blessing.

Why?

They did not:

Pay attention.

Cross References

Psalm 81:13

God longs for His people to listen so He may bless and defend them.

Deuteronomy 5:29

God expresses desire that Israel would fear Him and keep His commands so things would go well with them and their descendants.

Isaiah 66:12

God later promises peace flowing like a river in restoration.

Spiritual Principle

Disobedience often costs:

Peace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s commands are not barriers around joy.

They are banks that help the river of peace flow in the right direction.

XIX. RIGHTEOUSNESS LIKE WAVES

Waves continue:

One after another.

Spiritual Principle

Obedience produces a life marked by:

Continuing alignment with God’s ways.

XX. DESCENDANTS LIKE SAND

Isaiah 48:19 — Missed Covenant Blessing

> **“Your descendants would have been like the sand, your offspring like its countless grains; their name would never be cut off nor destroyed from before Me.”**

The imagery reaches back to:

Abrahamic promises.

Cross References

Genesis 22:17

God promised Abraham descendants multiplied like stars and sand.

Genesis 32:12

Jacob reminds God of the promise that his offspring would become as numerous as sand.

Jeremiah 33:22

God again uses innumerable heavenly and earthly imagery for covenant multiplication.

Spiritual Principle

Obedience has:

Generational consequences.

XXI. “LEAVE BABYLON!”

Isaiah 48:20 — Redemption Must Be Announced

> **“Leave Babylon! Flee from the Chaldeans! With a voice of singing, proclaim it, declare it to the ends of the earth; say, ‘The Lord has redeemed His servant Jacob.’”**

Deliverance requires:

Departure.

Babylon is not:

Home.

The redeemed must:

Leave.

Then:

Sing.

Proclaim.

Declare.

Cross References

Jeremiah 50:8

God’s people are commanded to flee from Babylon and move out of the land of the Chaldeans.

Jeremiah 51:6

The people are urged to flee Babylon so they are not caught in its judgment.

Revelation 18:4

A later divine call tells God’s people to come out of symbolic Babylon so they do not share in its sins and judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption calls people:

Out.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

It is inconsistent to celebrate freedom while refusing to leave the place of bondage.

XXII. REDEMPTION SHOULD BECOME A SONG

The command is not merely:

Leave quietly.

But:

Sing.

Declare.

Spiritual Principle

Grace should become:

Testimony.

XXIII. GOD PROVIDES IN THE DESERT

Isaiah 48:21 — Water from the Rock

> **“They did not thirst when He led them through the deserts; He made water flow from the rock for them; He split the rock and water gushed out.”**

The new deliverance recalls:

The Exodus.

The same God who provided:

Then.

Can provide:

Again.

Cross References

Exodus 17:6

God commands Moses to strike the rock, and water comes out for thirsty Israel.

Psalm 105:41

God opened the rock and water flowed like a river through dry places.

1 Corinthians 10:4

Paul connects Israel’s wilderness provision with spiritual imagery centered in Christ.

Spiritual Principle

The God who leads into wilderness also:

Provides there.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If God leads you through the desert, He already knows where the water will come from.

XXIV. NO PEACE FOR THE WICKED

Isaiah 48:22 — The Final Warning

> **“‘There is no peace,’ says the Lord, ‘for the wicked.’”**

This chapter spoke of:

Peace like a river.

Now:

No peace.

The contrast is:

Obedience.

Wickedness.

Cross References

Isaiah 57:21

Isaiah later repeats the same warning that there is no peace for the wicked.

Isaiah 59:8

Those walking in crooked ways do not know the path of peace.

Romans 3:17

Paul describes fallen humanity as not knowing the way of peace.

Spiritual Principle

Sin promises:

Freedom.

But destroys:

Peace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot reject the Prince of truth and manufacture lasting peace from rebellion.

XXV. TRUE RELIGION VERSUS EMPTY PROFESSION

Israel said:

Lord.

Holy city.

God of Israel.

But God said:

Not in truth.

Spiritual Principle

Profession must be joined by:

Reality.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The name “Israel” on the lips means little if rebellion rules the heart.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 48 TEACHES ABOUT HYPOCRISY

External identity:

Can conceal inward rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

God examines:

Truth.

Not merely:

Labels.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 48 TEACHES ABOUT PROPHECY

God announces:

Former things.

New things.

Hidden things.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prophecy prevents idols and human pride from stealing credit for what belongs to God.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 48 TEACHES ABOUT STUBBORNNESS

Iron neck.

Bronze forehead.

Closed ear.

Spiritual Principle

Persistent resistance eventually becomes:

Character.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 48 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S NAME

God delays:

Anger.

Preserves:

People.

Acts:

For His name.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s name is the guarantee that grace will never become detached from truth, holiness, or faithfulness.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 48 TEACHES ABOUT AFFLICTION

Affliction is called:

A furnace.

Spiritual Principle

Suffering can become:

Refining.

But suffering itself is not automatically:

Sanctifying.

The heart must:

Respond.

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 48 TEACHES ABOUT GLORY

God says:

> **“I will not yield My glory to another.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every work of redemption ultimately returns praise to:

God.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 48 TEACHES ABOUT CREATION

Earth.

Heavens.

All respond to:

God.

Spiritual Principle

The Creator cannot be:

Outvoted by creation.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 48 TEACHES ABOUT CYRUS

God:

Calls.

Brings.

Uses.

Prospers his mission.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Cyrus remains the instrument.

God remains the Author of the larger purpose.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 48 TEACHES ABOUT GUIDANCE

God teaches:

What is best.

Directs:

The way.

Spiritual Principle

God’s commands are:

Guidance.

Not arbitrary restriction.

XXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 48 TEACHES ABOUT OBEDIENCE

Obedience connects with:

Peace.

Righteousness.

Generational blessing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Many lost blessings begin with the sentence:

“If only you had listened.”

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 48 TEACHES ABOUT REDEMPTION

Redemption means:

Leaving Babylon.

Spiritual Principle

Deliverance changes:

Location.

Allegiance.

Direction.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 48 TEACHES ABOUT TESTIMONY

The redeemed are told:

Proclaim.

Declare.

Sing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption was never intended to remain a private secret.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 48 TEACHES ABOUT PROVISION

Desert:

No water.

Rock:

Water.

Spiritual Principle

God’s provision does not depend on:

Ordinary sources.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 48 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE

Peace is not:

Mere absence of trouble.

It is linked with:

Right relationship.

Obedience.

Righteousness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True peace is not found by removing God’s commands but by walking within God’s wisdom.

XL. GOD KNEW ISRAEL’S HEART

Nothing surprised:

Him.

Spiritual Principle

God’s grace is not based on:

Naivety.

XLI. OBSTINATE PEOPLE STILL RECEIVE PROPHECY

Why keep speaking?

Because:

Mercy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s repeated warnings are evidence that He has not stopped calling the stubborn heart.

XLII. IDOLS CANNOT TAKE CREDIT

God predicts first.

Spiritual Principle

Revelation protects:

Glory.

XLIII. “HIDDEN THINGS”

God knows what we:

Do not.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Mystery belongs to our limitations, not to a lack of knowledge in God.

XLIV. “YOU WERE A REBEL FROM BIRTH”

Strong language.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is not merely:

Bad environment.

It is a problem deep within:

Human nature.

XLV. GOD RESTRAINS ANGER

Judgment deserved.

Mercy extended.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every delayed judgment is an opportunity to recognize:

Mercy.

XLVI. REFINED, NOT DESTROYED

The furnace could have:

Consumed.

God uses it to:

Refine.

Spiritual Principle

Discipline can be redemptive rather than merely:

Destructive.

XLVII. GOD’S OWN SAKE

Repeated twice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The repetition tells us to stop looking for the final reason in Israel and look to:

God.

XLVIII. THE FIRST AND LAST

No rival:

Before.

After.

Spiritual Principle

God’s identity is:

Eternal.

XLIX. EARTH AND HEAVENS STAND UP

Creation is pictured as:

Responding to command.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The universe is more obedient to its Creator than stubborn hearts often are.

L. WHICH IDOL FORETOLD THIS?

Answer:

None.

Spiritual Principle

False gods are always:

Late to history.

LI. CYRUS AGAIN

Isaiah keeps returning to:

Cyrus.

Why?

To prove:

God governs international events.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Repeated prophecy is repeated evidence of sovereignty.

LII. “HE WILL SUCCEED”

The outcome rests on:

God’s purpose.

Spiritual Principle

A divine assignment cannot fail because of a human obstacle unless God permits it.

LIII. “COME NEAR AND LISTEN”

God is still:

Speaking.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who rebukes also invites people closer to hear.

LIV. “I HAVE NOT SPOKEN IN SECRET”

God’s revelation is:

Public.

Spiritual Principle

The Lord does not hide truth in order to:

Trick seekers.

LV. THE LORD GOD, THE SENT ONE, AND THE SPIRIT

A remarkable triadic pattern.

Spiritual Principle

The verse prepares Christian readers to appreciate the later fullness of revelation concerning:

Father.

Son.

Spirit.

LVI. THE REDEEMER IS A TEACHER

God does not only:

Forgive.

He instructs.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A salvation that refuses God’s instruction has misunderstood the Redeemer.

LVII. “WHAT IS BEST FOR YOU”

God’s commands flow from:

Wisdom.

Spiritual Principle

God knows what leads to:

Life.

LVIII. “THE WAY YOU SHOULD GO”

There is:

A way.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who knows the destination also knows the road.

LIX. “IF ONLY”

Few phrases are more:

Tragic.

Spiritual Principle

Disobedience creates:

Unnecessary sorrow.

LX. PEACE LIKE A RIVER

Steady.

Flowing.

Abundant.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Obedience does not guarantee an easy life, but it protects the heart from many self-created storms.

LXI. RIGHTEOUSNESS LIKE WAVES

Continuous.

Powerful.

Spiritual Principle

A righteous life is not:

One isolated act.

It is repeated movement in:

God’s direction.

LXII. DESCENDANTS LIKE SAND

Obedience affects:

Generations.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Today’s faithfulness may become tomorrow’s inheritance.

LXIII. LEAVE BABYLON

Freedom demands:

Movement.

Spiritual Principle

You cannot fully embrace redemption while clinging to captivity.

LXIV. FLEE THE CHALDEANS

Urgency.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God opens the door out of bondage, do not decorate the prison cell.

LXV. VOICE OF SINGING

Redemption should sound:

Joyful.

Spiritual Principle

Grace produces:

Praise.

LXVI. DECLARE IT TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

The message expands:

Globally.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God does for His people becomes testimony to:

The world.

LXVII. “THE LORD HAS REDEEMED”

Not:

Cyrus has redeemed.

The Lord:

Has.

Spiritual Principle

The human instrument must never receive the glory belonging to:

God.

LXVIII. DESERT PROVISION

Deliverance does not mean:

No wilderness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Freedom may lead through hard terrain, but the Redeemer provides along the way.

LXIX. WATER FROM ROCK

Impossible source.

Real provision.

Spiritual Principle

God is not restricted to:

Expected supply lines.

LXX. “NO PEACE”

The chapter ends:

Sharply.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The peace God offers cannot be separated from the God who offers it.

LXXI. ISAIAH 47 AND ISAIAH 48

Isaiah 47

Babylon:

Falls.

Isaiah 48

Israel is told:

Leave Babylon.

Key Truth

God does not merely judge the place of captivity; He calls His people to come out of it.

LXXII. ISAIAH 46–48

Isaiah 46

Idols cannot carry.

Isaiah 47

Babylon cannot save.

Isaiah 48

God redeems and leads His people out.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The collapse of false gods and false empires prepares the way for the call to trust the true Redeemer.

LXXIII. ISAIAH 43 AND ISAIAH 48

Isaiah 43

God says:

> **“I am doing a new thing.”**

Isaiah 48

God says:

> **“I announce new things.”**

Spiritual Principle

God’s new work is never separated from:

God’s revealed purpose.

LXXIV. ISAIAH 45 AND ISAIAH 48

Isaiah 45

Cyrus is:

Called.

Isaiah 48

Cyrus succeeds in:

His mission.

Key Truth

What God announces in one chapter becomes the basis for confidence in the next.

LXXV. ELEVEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 48

1. Religious Name → Unrighteous Heart

2. Prophetic Truth → Idolatrous Claims

3. Open Revelation → Closed Ears

4. Rebellion → Restrained Anger

5. Affliction → Refinement

6. Human Glory → God’s Glory

7. Idols → First and Last

8. Babylon → Redemption

9. Disobedience → Peace Like a River

10. Wilderness → Water from the Rock

11. Righteous Peace → No Peace for the Wicked

Key Truth

Isaiah 48 exposes the difference between outward religion and inward faithfulness while showing that God remains Redeemer, Teacher, Guide, Provider, and sovereign Lord despite Israel’s stubbornness.

LXXVI. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What problem does God identify in verse 1?

Israel invokes His name but not in truth or righteousness.

Question 2

What does Israel rely upon outwardly?

Its connection to the holy city and the God of Israel.

Question 3

Why did God declare events beforehand?

So Israel could not credit idols for what God accomplished.

Question 4

How does God describe Israel’s stubbornness?

Like an iron neck and bronze forehead.

Question 5

What does God announce in verses 6–7?

New and hidden things Israel had not previously known.

Question 6

Why does God reveal new things?

So Israel cannot boast that it already knew them.

Question 7

How does God describe Israel from early history?

As treacherous and rebellious.

Question 8

Why does God defer His anger?

For His name’s sake and the sake of His praise.

Question 9

Where does God say He refined Israel?

In the furnace of affliction.

Question 10

Whose glory will God not give to another?

His own.

Question 11

How does God identify Himself in verse 12?

As the First and the Last.

Question 12

What did God create?

Earth and heavens.

Question 13

Who carries out God’s purpose against Babylon?

The ruler God has called, in context pointing to Cyrus.

Question 14

Why will Cyrus succeed?

Because God has called and brought him for that mission.

Question 15

What is significant about verse 16?

It speaks of the Lord God, a sent speaker, and the Spirit in a remarkable personal distinction.

Question 16

How does God identify Himself in verse 17?

As Redeemer, Holy One, Lord, Teacher, and Guide.

Question 17

What does God teach His people?

What is best for them.

Question 18

What could Israel have experienced through obedience?

Peace like a river and righteousness like waves of the sea.

Question 19

What command is given in verse 20?

Leave Babylon.

Question 20

How should redemption be announced?

With singing and proclamation to the ends of the earth.

Question 21

Who is the true Redeemer?

The Lord.

Question 22

How did God provide in the wilderness?

He brought water from the rock.

Question 23

What does the chapter say about the wicked?

There is no peace for them.

Question 24

What is the central warning of the chapter?

Religious identity without truth and obedience cannot substitute for genuine faithfulness.

LXXVII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 48 asks several searching questions.

Do I Use Christian Language Without Walking in Truth?

Do I say:

Lord.

Faith.

Bible.

Church.

Prayer.

While resisting:

God’s commands?

Am I relying on:

Religious heritage?

A church background?

A title?

A reputation?

Instead of:

Present obedience?

Is my neck:

Stiff?

Am I refusing to bend where God has clearly spoken?

Is there something God has repeatedly warned me about that I still:

Resist?

Do I remember that God knows:

My heart?

Am I giving credit to:

Luck?

Fate?

Politics?

People?

When God deserves:

Glory?

How have trials been:

Refining me?

Am I learning in the furnace?

Or merely:

Enduring heat?

Do I care more about:

My reputation?

Or:

God’s glory?

Do I trust the God who says:

“I am the First and I am the Last”?

Do I believe He knows:

What is best for me?

Am I allowing Him to:

Teach?

Direct?

Correct?

What peace have I forfeited through:

Disobedience?

What would it look like to:

Pay attention now?

Is God calling me to:

Leave Babylon?

Some environment?

Habit?

Bondage?

Compromise?

Am I celebrating redemption while still emotionally living in:

Captivity?

Do I trust God to provide:

Water in the desert?

Am I seeking peace while continuing in:

Wickedness?

LXXVIII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Redeemer Does Not Only Break Chains—He Teaches You How to Walk Free”

God says:

> **“I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.”**

Principle:

Redemption is not merely release from captivity; it is a new life of listening, learning, following, and walking in the way of the Redeemer.

LXXIX. HOLY LANGUAGE, UNHOLY HEART

Israel’s lips:

Right.

Heart:

Wrong.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Orthodox vocabulary cannot compensate for disobedient living.

LXXX. THE HOLY CITY COULD NOT SAVE THEM

Jerusalem had:

Privilege.

Spiritual Principle

Being close to sacred things is not the same as:

Being close to God.

LXXXI. GOD SPOKE BEFORE HE ACTED

Prophecy establishes:

Authority.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When fulfillment arrives, faith can look back and say:

God told us.

LXXXII. THE IRON NECK

Refusal to:

Turn.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance requires:

Bending.

LXXXIII. THE BRONZE FOREHEAD

Unashamed resistance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A hardened heart can eventually become proud of what should produce repentance.

LXXXIV. IDOLS STEAL CREDIT

God prevents:

That theft.

Spiritual Principle

False worship tries to assign God’s work to:

Created substitutes.

LXXXV. NEW THINGS

God reveals:

More.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Past revelation should make us humbler before what only God can still reveal.

LXXXVI. “I KNEW IT”

Human pride loves:

Retrospective certainty.

Spiritual Principle

God’s prophecy removes:

That boast.

LXXXVII. REBEL FROM BIRTH

The need for grace is:

Deep.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Humanity needs more than better information; it needs a changed heart.

LXXXVIII. DEFERRED ANGER

Judgment:

Delayed.

Spiritual Principle

Delay is:

Mercy.

LXXXIX. FURNACE OF AFFLICTION

Heat reveals:

Content.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The furnace may show us what comfort kept hidden.

XC. NOT AS SILVER

Israel is not merely:

Metal.

Spiritual Principle

God’s refining work is:

Personal.

Covenantal.

Moral.

XCI. GOD’S NAME

His reputation among:

Nations.

His covenant identity.

His holiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s commitment to His name is a commitment to be truly who He has revealed Himself to be.

XCII. FIRST AND LAST

Nothing exists:

Outside.

Spiritual Principle

Every empire fits between:

God’s beginning and end.

XCIII. HEAVENS STAND TOGETHER

Creation obeys:

Immediately.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The stars do not argue with their Creator.

Humans often do.

XCIV. IDOLS CANNOT PREDICT

Again:

Silence.

Spiritual Principle

False gods always fail the test of:

Sovereign knowledge.

XCV. GOD’S CHOSEN INSTRUMENT AGAINST BABYLON

Cyrus remains:

Instrument.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can use one empire to bring down another while remaining Lord over both.

XCVI. “I HAVE CALLED HIM”

Initiative belongs to:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Divine purpose precedes:

Human movement.

XCVII. “I HAVE BROUGHT HIM”

Providence creates:

Location.

Opportunity.

Timing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God not only calls instruments; He places them where His purpose requires.

XCVIII. “HE WILL SUCCEED”

Not because:

He is invincible.

Because:

God’s assignment will be fulfilled.

Spiritual Principle

Success is ultimately measured by:

Divine purpose.

XCIX. “COME NEAR”

The God of infinite greatness invites:

Listening.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The sovereign God is not inaccessible to the humble listener.

C. THE SENT ONE

Verse 16 contains:

Mission.

Spiritual Principle

God’s saving work involves:

Sending.

CI. THE SPIRIT

The Spirit is:

Present.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s redemptive mission is inseparable from the work of His Spirit.

CII. THE REDEEMER AS TEACHER

Some want:

Rescue.

Not:

Instruction.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation includes:

Formation.

CIII. THE REDEEMER AS GUIDE

Direction belongs to:

Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One who bought you has the right to lead you.

CIV. “WHAT IS BEST”

We often assume:

We know.

Spiritual Principle

Obedience begins by trusting:

God’s wisdom.

CV. PEACE LIKE A RIVER

Not:

A stagnant pond.

A river.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s peace is meant to flow through a life aligned with His truth.

CVI. RIGHTEOUSNESS LIKE THE SEA

Abundant.

Continuing.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness is meant to become:

A pattern.

CVII. GENERATIONAL BLESSING

Children and descendants are mentioned.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Obedience never concerns only the individual.

CVIII. LEAVE BABYLON

God’s command is:

Clear.

Spiritual Principle

There is a time to stop negotiating with bondage and:

Leave.

CIX. SING WHILE LEAVING

Redemption is:

Joyful.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The sound of freedom should be praise.

CX. DECLARE TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

God’s saving work becomes:

Mission.

Spiritual Principle

Personal redemption creates public:

Witness.

CXI. WATER IN THE DESERT

Provision follows:

Leading.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s route may be dry, but His resources are not.

CXII. ROCK SPLIT OPEN

Hard place.

Life-giving water.

Spiritual Principle

God can bring provision from what looks:

Completely unproductive.

CXIII. NO PEACE FOR WICKEDNESS

The chapter refuses:

Cheap peace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not promise peace to a path He calls wicked.

CXIV. ISAIAH 48 AND THE GOSPEL PATTERN

Rebellion.

Mercy.

Refining.

Revelation.

Redemption.

Departure from bondage.

Provision.

Peace.

Spiritual Principle

The chapter’s movement anticipates the larger biblical pattern:

God rescues people not merely from judgment, but into a life of listening and walking with Him.

CXV. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 48

1. Israel’s Hypocrisy Is Exposed

They invoke God without truth and righteousness.

2. God Defends His Prophetic Glory

He announced events beforehand so idols could not claim credit.

3. Israel’s Stubbornness Is Revealed

Iron neck, bronze forehead, rebellious heart.

4. God Restrains Judgment

For His name and praise.

5. God Refines His People

The furnace of affliction becomes a place of testing.

6. God Declares His Eternal Identity

First, Last, Creator, Sovereign.

7. God Directs Cyrus Against Babylon

The appointed instrument fulfills His purpose.

8. The Redeemer Teaches and Guides

God reveals the way that is best.

9. Obedience Is Linked with Peace

Peace like a river and righteousness like waves.

10. God Calls His People Out of Babylon

Redemption is proclaimed, wilderness provision follows, and wickedness is denied true peace.

Key Truth

Isaiah 48 moves from religious hypocrisy to divine faithfulness, from stubborn rebellion to refining grace, and from Babylonian bondage to a redeemed life of listening, obeying, following, and proclaiming the Lord.

CXVI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 48 begins with:

Religious people.

They know:

The right names.

They say:

Israel.

Judah.

The Lord.

Holy city.

God of Israel.

But God says:

> **“Not in truth or righteousness.”**

That should:

Stop us.

It is possible to say:

Christian.

Church.

Bible.

Jesus.

Prayer.

Salvation.

And still resist:

God.

Religion can become:

A label.

God wants:

Reality.

Then God says:

I knew you were:

Stubborn.

An iron neck.

A bronze forehead.

Yet:

He kept speaking.

That itself is:

Grace.

God keeps announcing:

Truth.

Why?

Because stubborn people still need:

Truth.

Then:

“For My name’s sake I defer My anger.”

Israel’s survival rests on:

God.

Not:

Israel.

That is both:

Humbling.

Comforting.

Then comes:

The furnace.

Maybe you are walking through:

Affliction.

Do not automatically assume:

Every suffering is direct punishment.

But do ask:

What can God refine here?

What is:

Being exposed?

What should:

Change?

Then God says:

“For My own sake.”

That means your hope is not finally:

How strong you are.

How consistent you are.

How impressive your record is.

Your hope is:

God’s faithfulness.

Then:

“I am the First and I am the Last.”

The world may feel:

Unstable.

He is not.

Babylon may rise.

Babylon may fall.

Cyrus may come.

History may shift.

God remains:

First.

Last.

Then verse 16 gives us that remarkable line:

“The Lord God has sent Me, and His Spirit.”

There is mystery here.

But there is also a beautiful truth:

God’s saving work is not:

Impersonal.

He sends.

He speaks.

His Spirit works.

Then He says:

“I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you.”

How often do we think:

God’s command is stopping me from something good?

He says:

No.

I teach:

What is best.

Then one of the saddest phrases:

“If only.”

If only:

You had listened.

If only:

You had obeyed.

If only:

You had paid attention.

How many regrets begin with:

If only.

God says peace could have been:

Like a river.

Righteousness:

Like waves.

Sometimes the peace we are praying for is connected with obedience we are:

Avoiding.

Then God says:

“Leave Babylon!”

Do not merely:

Celebrate redemption.

Leave:

Captivity.

Sometimes we want God to:

Free us.

Without changing our location.

Our habit.

Our relationship.

Our compromise.

Our pattern.

But redemption says:

Come out.

Then:

Sing.

Tell:

The world.

“The Lord has redeemed His servant Jacob.”

And if the road out leads through:

Desert—

God knows how to bring:

Water from rock.

The chapter ends:

“There is no peace for the wicked.”

That is not cruelty.

It is reality.

Sin cannot manufacture:

Shalom.

Rebellion cannot create:

Rest.

So if you want:

Peace like a river—

Listen.

If you want:

Direction—

Follow.

If you want:

Freedom—

Leave Babylon.

If you want:

Provision—

Trust the Redeemer in the desert.

If you want:

Grace—

Stop pretending your religious label is enough.

Come to God:

In truth.

In righteousness.

In repentance.

And remember:

The stubbornness of Israel never made the Redeemer:

Unfaithful.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are:

The First.

The Last.

The Creator.

The Redeemer.

The Holy One of Israel.

Forgive us when we use:

Religious words.

Without:

Religious reality.

Keep us from honoring You with:

Lips.

While resisting You with:

Hearts.

Father, break every:

Iron neck.

Soften every:

Bronze forehead.

Open:

Closed ears.

Make us responsive to:

Your Word.

Thank You for Your:

Patience.

Thank You for restraining:

Judgment.

Thank You that Your mercy rests on:

Your faithful name.

Father, use even:

Affliction.

To refine us.

Remove:

Pride.

Idolatry.

Hypocrisy.

Self-reliance.

Anything that dishonors:

You.

Protect:

Your glory.

Father, thank You that You are:

First.

Last.

Creator of:

Earth.

Heavens.

History.

You remain sovereign over:

Kings.

Nations.

Babylon.

Cyrus.

Everything.

Thank You for Your:

Spirit.

Thank You for Your:

Revealed Word.

Thank You for the Redeemer who:

Teaches.

Guides.

Directs.

Father, teach us:

What is best.

Lead us:

In the way we should go.

Give us grace to:

Listen.

Obey.

Respond.

May our peace become:

Like a river.

May righteousness roll through our lives like:

Waves.

Father, when You call us:

Out of Babylon—

Give us courage to:

Leave.

Do not let us cling to:

Bondage.

When the road goes through:

Desert—

Provide:

Water.

When the rock looks:

Hard—

Remind us You can make it:

Flow.

And keep us from seeking peace in:

Wickedness.

Let our peace come from:

You.

May our lives declare to the ends of the earth:

> **“The Lord has redeemed His servant.”**

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“This is what the Lord says—your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: ‘I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.’” — Isaiah 48:17**

Central Truth

Although Israel bore God’s name while remaining stubborn and rebellious, the faithful Redeemer preserved and refined His people for His own name’s sake, declared the future so idols could not steal His glory, revealed Himself as the First and the Last and sovereign Creator, directed Cyrus against Babylon, taught His people the way of peace, called them out of captivity, provided for them in the wilderness, and warned that lasting peace can never be found in wickedness.

Isaiah 48 in One Sentence

Isaiah confronts Israel’s empty religious profession and stubborn rebellion, explains that God foretells history so idols cannot claim His glory, shows that He restrains judgment and refines His people for His name’s sake, reveals Him as the eternal Creator who directs Cyrus against Babylon, calls attention to the sent One and the Spirit, identifies the Lord as Redeemer, Teacher, and Guide, urges Israel to leave Babylon in joyful testimony, promises wilderness provision, and concludes that peace belongs to those who heed God while the wicked cannot possess true peace.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 49 — The Servant of the Lord: Salvation to the Ends of the Earth

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 49 is one of the great Servant passages of Isaiah.

The chapter opens with a voice speaking far beyond:

Jerusalem.

Judah.

Israel.

The Servant calls:

Coastlands.

Distant peoples.

Nations.

To listen.

His mission is:

Global.

He says:

> **“The Lord called Me from the womb.”**

His mission was not:

Accidental.

Improvised.

Late.

It belonged to:

God’s purpose.

The Servant’s mouth is compared to:

A sharp sword.

He is compared to:

A polished arrow.

His mission operates through:

God’s Word.

God’s purpose.

God’s strength.

God’s timing.

Verse 3 creates an important interpretive question:

> **“You are My servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.”**

Yet in verses 5–6 the Servant is commissioned to:

Bring Jacob back.

Restore Israel.

Therefore the Servant cannot simply be identical with unfaithful national Israel in every respect.

The best way to understand the passage is that the Servant represents and fulfills:

Israel’s true calling.

He is the faithful representative of Israel who accomplishes what Israel as a nation failed to accomplish.

This points ultimately to:

Jesus Christ.

The New Testament repeatedly connects this Servant mission with:

Christ.

His salvation.

His light to the Gentiles.

His worldwide gospel.

The Servant’s mission begins with:

Israel.

But does not end with:

Israel.

God says:

“It is too small a thing.”

Restoring Jacob alone is:

Too small.

The Servant will become:

A light to the nations.

So that:

“My salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.”

That is one of the greatest missionary declarations in the Old Testament.

The Servant who is:

Despised.

Rejected.

Humbled.

Will ultimately be:

Honored.

Kings will rise.

Princes will bow.

The Lord’s faithfulness will vindicate:

His chosen Servant.

Then Isaiah moves from the Servant’s mission to:

The day of salvation.

Prisoners are told:

Come out.

Those in darkness are told:

Show yourselves.

The redeemed are:

Fed.

Guided.

Protected.

Led beside:

Springs of water.

Mountains become:

Roads.

Highways rise.

People return from:

Every direction.

Heaven.

Earth.

Mountains.

Are commanded to:

Sing.

Why?

Because:

> **“The Lord comforts His people and will have compassion on His afflicted ones.”**

Yet Zion responds:

> **“The Lord has forsaken me.”**

That is one of the great emotional tensions of the chapter.

God promises:

Restoration.

Zion feels:

Forgotten.

God answers with one of Scripture’s tenderest pictures:

> **“Can a mother forget her nursing child?”**

Even if such a thing happened:

> **“I will not forget you.”**

Then:

> **“I have engraved you on the palms of My hands.”**

This is covenant remembrance expressed in vivid language.

Zion’s broken walls are:

Always before God.

The devastated city will become:

Crowded.

The barren place will overflow.

Children return.

Nations assist.

Kings serve.

Those who wait on God will:

Not be ashamed.

Finally the chapter asks:

Can captives be rescued from:

Powerful warriors?

God answers:

Yes.

He Himself will:

Contend.

Deliver.

Save.

The chapter ends with universal recognition:

> **“Then all mankind will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior, your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”**

The central truth of Isaiah 49 is:

The Servant of the Lord, fulfilled ultimately in Jesus Christ, is called and prepared by God to restore Israel and carry salvation to the ends of the earth; through Him prisoners are released, darkness is overcome, the scattered are gathered, Zion is assured that God has not forgotten her, and the Lord demonstrates His power as Savior, Redeemer, and Mighty One by rescuing His people from every oppressor.

I. THE SERVANT CALLS THE NATIONS TO LISTEN

Isaiah 49:1 — Called from the Womb

> **“Listen to Me, O coastlands; pay attention, you peoples from afar. The Lord called Me from the womb; from the body of My mother He named My name.”**

The audience is:

Global.

Coastlands.

Distant peoples.

The Servant’s calling begins:

Before birth.

Cross References

Jeremiah 1:5

God told Jeremiah that before he was formed in the womb, God knew him and appointed him for prophetic service.

Luke 1:31

Mary was told before Jesus’ birth what His name would be, showing that His identity and mission were established by God beforehand.

Galatians 1:15

Paul describes himself as set apart by God from his mother’s womb and called by grace for divine service.

Spiritual Principle

God’s purposes often begin before:

Human awareness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The mission may appear in history at one moment, but it can belong to God’s purpose long before that moment arrives.

II. THE SERVANT’S MOUTH IS A SHARP SWORD

Isaiah 49:2 — Hidden and Prepared

> **“He made My mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand He hid Me. He made Me a polished arrow; in His quiver He concealed Me.”**

Two images:

Sword.

Arrow.

Both describe:

Precision.

Effectiveness.

Penetrating power.

The Servant’s primary weapon is:

His mouth.

His Word.

Cross References

Revelation 1:16

Christ is pictured with a sharp sword proceeding from His mouth, symbolizing the authority and power of His Word.

Hebrews 4:12

God’s Word is living, active, sharper than a two-edged sword, penetrating deeply into the human heart.

Ephesians 6:17

The Word of God is called the sword of the Spirit.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant advances God’s mission through:

Truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s Servant does not need a carnal sword when divine truth comes from His mouth.

III. THE POLISHED ARROW

An arrow must be:

Prepared.

Straightened.

Sharpened.

Held.

Released.

Spiritual Principle

Hidden preparation is still:

Preparation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may conceal a servant before He publicly releases the servant into the assignment.

IV. “YOU ARE MY SERVANT, ISRAEL”

Isaiah 49:3 — The Servant Who Embodies Israel’s Calling

> **“He said to Me, ‘You are My servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.’”**

This verse requires careful reading.

The Servant is called:

Israel.

Yet later the Servant restores:

Israel.

Therefore He represents:

Israel.

Embodies:

Israel’s true mission.

Fulfills:

What Israel failed to fulfill.

Cross References

Isaiah 44:21

National Israel had already been identified as God’s servant.

John 17:4

Jesus says He glorified the Father on earth by completing the work given to Him.

Isaiah 42:1

The earlier Servant passage describes the chosen Spirit-anointed Servant in whom God delights.

Spiritual Principle

The faithful Servant succeeds where:

The unfaithful servant nation failed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus does not merely come from Israel; He fulfills Israel’s God-given mission in perfect faithfulness.

V. THE SERVANT FEELS THE WEIGHT OF APPARENT FUTILITY

Isaiah 49:4 — “I Have Labored in Vain”

> **“But I said, ‘I have labored in vain; I have spent My strength for nothing and in futility; yet surely My justice is with the Lord, and My reward is with My God.’”**

The Servant speaks from the experience of:

Apparent rejection.

Apparent failure.

Apparent fruitlessness.

Yet He does not conclude:

God failed.

He says:

My cause is with:

The Lord.

My reward is with:

God.

Cross References

Philippians 2:16

Paul speaks of wanting his labor not to have been in vain as he holds out the word of life.

Isaiah 40:27

Israel had complained that its way was hidden from the Lord and its cause disregarded, but God knew and saw.

Galatians 4:11

Paul expresses concern that his labor among the Galatians might prove fruitless because of their spiritual regression.

Spiritual Principle

Visible results are not the final measure of:

Faithfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What looks wasted from earth may still be rewarded in heaven.

VI. THE SERVANT TRUSTS GOD WITH THE OUTCOME

The Servant does not deny:

Discouragement.

But He refuses to let discouragement define:

The final verdict.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness can continue even when results appear:

Small.

VII. FORMED TO BRING JACOB BACK

Isaiah 49:5 — The Servant Restores Israel

> **“And now the Lord says—He who formed Me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob back to Him, so that Israel might be gathered—For I am honored in the eyes of the Lord, and My God has been My strength.”**

This verse confirms the distinction:

The Servant is called Israel.

Yet the Servant brings:

Israel back.

His mission includes:

Restoration.

Gathering.

Cross References

John 6:38

Jesus says He came down from heaven not to do His own will but the will of the One who sent Him.

Isaiah 42:6

The Servant is called and upheld by God and made a covenant and light.

Philippians 2:7

Christ took the form of a servant and humbled Himself in His mission.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant restores people:

To God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The goal of redemption is not merely return to land.

It is return to:

The Lord.

VIII. “MY GOD HAS BEEN MY STRENGTH”

The Servant’s mission is not grounded in:

Self-sufficiency.

Spiritual Principle

Even the Servant’s work unfolds in dependence upon:

God’s strength.

IX. “IT IS TOO SMALL A THING”

Isaiah 49:6 — Salvation to the Ends of the Earth

> **“He said, ‘It is too small a thing for You to be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and restore the preserved of Israel; I will also make You a light for the nations, that My salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.’”**

This is one of Isaiah’s greatest missionary texts.

Restoring Israel is:

Not unimportant.

But the mission is:

Larger.

The nations must receive:

Light.

The ends of earth must receive:

Salvation.

Cross References

Luke 2:32

Simeon identifies Jesus as a light for revelation to the Gentiles and glory to Israel.

Acts 13:47

Paul and Barnabas apply Isaiah’s light-to-the-nations mission to gospel proclamation among the Gentiles.

Acts 26:23

Paul testifies that the Messiah would suffer, rise, and proclaim light to both Israel and the Gentiles.

Spiritual Principle

God’s redemptive purpose is:

Global.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The gospel was never meant to stop at one border.

X. SALVATION REACHES THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

This includes:

Every ethnicity.

Language.

Nation.

People.

Spiritual Principle

Christ’s mission is:

Universal in invitation.

XI. THE DESPISED SERVANT WILL BE HONORED

Isaiah 49:7 — Kings Will Rise

> **“This is what the Lord says—the Redeemer of Israel and His Holy One—to Him who was despised and abhorred by the nations, to the servant of rulers: ‘Kings shall see You and rise up, princes shall bow down, because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen You.’”**

First:

Despised.

Later:

Honored.

This anticipates themes developed further in:

Isaiah 52–53.

Cross References

Isaiah 52:15

Kings will be astonished by the Servant when the significance of His work is revealed.

Isaiah 53:3

The Servant is described as despised and rejected by people.

Philippians 2:10

Every knee will bow at the name of Jesus.

Spiritual Principle

Human rejection does not cancel:

Divine choice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One people despise may still be the One before whom kings ultimately bow.

XII. THE LORD IS FAITHFUL TO HIS SERVANT

The Servant’s vindication rests upon:

God’s faithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

Human rejection cannot overturn:

Divine approval.

XIII. THE TIME OF FAVOR

Isaiah 49:8 — The Day of Salvation

> **“This is what the Lord says: ‘In the time of favor I will answer You, in the day of salvation I will help You. I will keep You and make You a covenant for the people, to restore the land and to reassign its desolate inheritances,’”**

The Servant is:

Answered.

Helped.

Kept.

Given as:

A covenant.

Cross References

2 Corinthians 6:2

Paul quotes this verse and declares that now is the favorable time and now is the day of salvation.

Isaiah 42:6

The Servant is again described as being made a covenant for the people.

Luke 4:19

Jesus announces the favorable time of the Lord as part of His Spirit-anointed mission.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation comes according to:

God’s appointed time.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s saving hour is not controlled by human calendars but by divine purpose.

XIV. THE SERVANT AS COVENANT

The Servant is not merely:

A messenger about covenant.

He is given as:

A covenant.

Spiritual Principle

God’s saving promises are embodied in:

The Servant.

XV. “COME OUT”

Isaiah 49:9 — Prisoners Released

> **“To say to the prisoners, ‘Come out,’ and to those in darkness, ‘Show yourselves.’**
> **They will feed along the roads, and find pasture on every barren height.”**

Captivity gives way to:

Freedom.

Darkness gives way to:

Visibility.

Barren heights give way to:

Pasture.

Cross References

Isaiah 42:7

The Servant opens blind eyes and releases prisoners from darkness.

Luke 4:18

Jesus proclaims liberty to captives and freedom to the oppressed.

Zechariah 9:12

Prisoners of hope are called to return to the stronghold under God’s restoring promise.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant does not decorate:

Prisons.

He opens:

Them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God says “Come out,” captivity no longer has the final claim.

XVI. PASTURE ON BARREN HEIGHTS

Places that appear:

Unproductive.

Become:

Provision.

Spiritual Principle

God can feed His people in places that look:

Empty.

XVII. NO HUNGER OR THIRST

Isaiah 49:10 — Compassion Guides Them

> **“They will neither hunger nor thirst, nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down; for He who has compassion on them will guide them and lead them beside springs of water.”**

Who guides?

> **“He who has compassion.”**

Guidance flows from:

Compassion.

Cross References

Revelation 7:16

God’s redeemed people are pictured as no longer suffering hunger, thirst, or scorching heat.

Psalm 121:6

God protects His people from destructive exposure by day and night.

John 4:14

Jesus promises water that becomes a spring of eternal life within the one who receives it.

Spiritual Principle

God’s guidance is:

Compassionate.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who leads you knows your thirst before He chooses the road.

XVIII. SPRINGS OF WATER

God’s provision is not merely:

Enough to survive.

It becomes:

Refreshment.

Spiritual Principle

The Redeemer guides toward:

Life.

XIX. MOUNTAINS BECOME ROADS

Isaiah 49:11 — Raised Highways

> **“I will turn all My mountains into a road, and My highways will be raised up.”**

Obstacles become:

Paths.

Cross References

Isaiah 40:3

A highway is prepared for the Lord through the wilderness.

Isaiah 35:8

A highway of holiness is promised for God’s redeemed people.

Isaiah 62:10

God’s people are commanded to prepare and raise a highway for returning people.

Spiritual Principle

God can transform:

Barrier.

Into:

Route.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The mountain you thought blocked the journey may become part of the road God uses to bring you home.

XX. THE SCATTERED RETURN FROM AFAR

Isaiah 49:12 — North, West, and Sinim

> **“See, they will come from afar—some from the north and from the west, and some from the land of Sinim.”**

The emphasis is:

Distance.

Scattered people return from:

Many directions.

The precise identification of “Sinim” has been debated.

The text’s central point is clear:

God gathers from distant regions.

Cross References

Isaiah 43:5

God promises to bring His people from east and gather them from west.

Isaiah 43:6

North and south are commanded to release God’s sons and daughters.

Zechariah 8:7

God promises to rescue His people from east and west and restore them.

Spiritual Principle

No distance is:

Too far.

XXI. ALL CREATION REJOICES

Isaiah 49:13 — God Comforts His Afflicted Ones

> **“Shout for joy, O heavens; rejoice, O earth; burst into song, O mountains! For the Lord comforts His people and will have compassion on His afflicted ones.”**

Heavens.

Earth.

Mountains.

All:

Sing.

Why?

Comfort.

Compassion.

Cross References

Isaiah 44:23

Creation is called to sing because God has redeemed Jacob.

Psalm 96:11

Heaven and earth rejoice in God’s righteous reign.

Isaiah 52:9

Jerusalem’s ruins are called to sing because God has comforted and redeemed His people.

Spiritual Principle

God’s compassion deserves:

Cosmic praise.

XXII. ZION FEELS FORGOTTEN

Isaiah 49:14 — “The Lord Has Forsaken Me”

> **“But Zion said, ‘The Lord has forsaken me; my Lord has forgotten me.’”**

What a contrast.

Verse 13:

God comforts.

Verse 14:

Zion says:

I am forgotten.

This shows that:

Feelings can contradict:

Promises.

Cross References

Isaiah 40:27

Israel had previously complained that its way was hidden from God.

Psalm 77:9

The psalmist asks whether God has forgotten mercy during a season of deep anguish.

Lamentations 5:20

The suffering community asks why God seems to have forgotten and forsaken them so long.

Spiritual Principle

Feeling forgotten does not mean:

Being forgotten.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never let the silence of the moment become louder than the promise of God.

XXIII. CAN A MOTHER FORGET HER CHILD?

Isaiah 49:15 — “I Will Not Forget You”

> **“Can a mother forget her nursing child, and have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even if she may forget, I will not forget you!”**

God chooses one of humanity’s strongest natural bonds:

A nursing mother and child.

Then says:

My remembrance is stronger.

Cross References

Isaiah 44:21

God had already promised Israel:

> **“I will not forget you.”**

Psalm 27:10

Even if father and mother forsake, the Lord receives and cares for His servant.

Hosea 11:8

God speaks with profound covenant compassion and reluctance to give His people up.

Spiritual Principle

God’s covenant remembrance exceeds:

Human affection.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The strongest human love is still only an illustration of a faithfulness greater than itself.

XXIV. ENGRAVED ON GOD’S HANDS

Isaiah 49:16 — Zion Is Ever Before Him

> **“See, I have engraved you on the palms of My hands; your walls are ever before Me.”**

Not written:

Lightly.

Engraved.

The picture is:

Permanent remembrance.

Cross References

Isaiah 43:1

God says He has called His people by name and claimed them as His own.

Psalm 102:14

God’s servants cherish Zion’s stones and grieve over its ruins.

John 10:28

Jesus says His sheep are secure in His care and will not be ultimately snatched away.

Spiritual Principle

Zion’s ruins are not:

Out of sight.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The walls may be broken on earth while remaining fully present before God.

XXV. “YOUR WALLS ARE EVER BEFORE ME”

God sees:

What is broken.

Spiritual Principle

God never confuses:

Ruins.

With:

Abandonment.

XXVI. THE CHILDREN RETURN

Isaiah 49:17 — Destroyers Depart

> **“Your children will hasten back, while those who destroyed you will depart.”**

A reversal:

Children:

Return.

Destroyers:

Leave.

Cross References

Isaiah 60:14

Those associated with former oppression will eventually acknowledge God’s work in Zion.

Ezra 1:5

Families and leaders rose to return and rebuild Jerusalem after exile.

Nehemiah 2:17

Nehemiah calls the returned community to rebuild Jerusalem’s broken walls.

Spiritual Principle

God can reverse:

Departure.

Destruction.

Loss.

XXVII. ZION WEARS HER CHILDREN LIKE JEWELS

Isaiah 49:18 — Restoration as Bridal Ornament

> **“Lift up your eyes and look around: all your children gather and come to you. As surely as I live,’ declares the Lord, ‘you will wear them all as ornaments; you will put them on like a bride.’”**

Children become:

Adornment.

The city once humiliated becomes:

Beautiful.

Cross References

Isaiah 60:4

Zion is told to lift her eyes and see sons and daughters returning from afar.

Isaiah 61:10

Salvation and righteousness are pictured like beautiful garments and bridal adornment.

Revelation 21:2

The holy city is pictured like a bride beautifully prepared.

Spiritual Principle

God can transform:

Shame.

Into:

Beauty.

XXVIII. DESOLATION BECOMES OVERCROWDING

Isaiah 49:19 — Too Small for the Inhabitants

> **“Though you were ruined and made desolate and your land laid waste, now you will be too small for your inhabitants, and those who devoured you will be far away.”**

The contrast is remarkable.

Before:

Empty.

After:

Too full.

Cross References

Isaiah 54:1

The barren woman is called to sing because her children will become unexpectedly numerous.

Isaiah 54:3

God promises expansion to the right and left as descendants inherit nations.

Zechariah 2:4

Jerusalem is pictured expanding beyond walls because of its growing population.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration can exceed:

Replacement.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can fill the place that grief convinced you would always remain empty.

XXIX. “MAKE ROOM FOR US”

Isaiah 49:20 — Growth Beyond Expectation

> **“The children born during your bereavement will yet say in your hearing, ‘This place is too small for us; make room for us to live here.’”**

Bereavement produces:

Children.

Loss gives way to:

Growth.

Cross References

Isaiah 54:1

The barren one receives more children than expected under God’s restoration.

Galatians 4:27

Paul quotes Isaiah’s barren-woman imagery in relation to God’s expanding people.

Isaiah 54:2

The tent must be enlarged to make room for unexpected increase.

Spiritual Principle

God may require:

Expanded expectations.

XXX. “WHERE DID THESE COME FROM?”

Isaiah 49:21 — Zion Astonished by Grace

> **“Then you will say in your heart, ‘Who has borne me these children? I was bereaved and barren, exiled and rejected. Who brought them up? I was left all alone, but these —where have they come from?’”**

Zion is:

Astonished.

Grace exceeds:

Expectation.

Cross References

Isaiah 54:1

The barren woman’s unexpected fruitfulness becomes a picture of restoration.

Isaiah 66:8

Zion’s sudden birth and multiplication are presented as astonishing acts of God.

Romans 11:11

Paul describes Israel’s history as serving within God’s wider saving purpose toward the Gentiles.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration may become so great that the healed person asks:

How did this happen?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace sometimes answers emptiness with abundance so surprising that all you can do is wonder.

XXXI. GOD BECKONS TO THE NATIONS

Isaiah 49:22 — Sons and Daughters Carried Home

> **“This is what the Sovereign Lord says: ‘See, I will beckon to the nations, I will lift up My banner to the peoples; they will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders.’”**

The nations become:

Instruments of restoration.

Cross References

Isaiah 66:20

The nations are pictured bringing God’s scattered people back as an offering to the Lord.

Romans 15:12

Paul quotes Isaiah concerning the nations placing their hope in the messianic Root of Jesse.

Isaiah 60:9

Ships and nations assist in bringing Zion’s sons home.

Spiritual Principle

God can use former outsiders as:

Helpers in restoration.

XXXII. KINGS BECOME GUARDIANS

Isaiah 49:23 — Those Who Hope in God Will Not Be Ashamed

> **“Kings will be your guardians, and their queens your nursing mothers. They will bow down before you with their faces to the ground; they will lick the dust at your feet. Then you will know that I am the Lord; those who hope in Me will not be put to shame.”**

Human authority is:

Reversed.

Kings now:

Serve.

The central promise:

Hope in God will not end in:

Final shame.

Cross References

Isaiah 60:16

Zion receives support from nations and kings and learns that the Lord is Savior and Redeemer.

Psalm 72:11

Kings and nations are pictured bowing before the righteous king.

Revelation 21:24

The kings of the earth bring their glory into the redeemed city.

Spiritual Principle

Hope in God is:

Never wasted.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Waiting on God may feel humiliating for a season, but God says the final outcome of faith will not be shame.

XXXIII. CAN THE WARRIOR’S CAPTIVES BE RESCUED?

Isaiah 49:24 — The Humanly Impossible Question

> **“Can plunder be taken from warriors, or captives rescued from the fierce?”**

Human answer:

Probably not.

Divine answer:

Yes.

Cross References

Matthew 12:29

Jesus speaks of binding the strong man before plundering his house, illustrating superior authority over the enemy.

Luke 11:21

A strong man may guard possessions until someone stronger comes and overcomes him.

Colossians 2:15

Christ is pictured triumphing over hostile powers and exposing them openly.

Spiritual Principle

The strength of the captor does not determine:

The power of the Redeemer.

XXXIV. GOD ANSWERS: “YES”

Isaiah 49:25 — God Contends for His People

> **“But this is what the Lord says: ‘Yes, captives will be taken from warriors, and plunder retrieved from the fierce. I will contend with those who contend with you, and I will save your children.’”**

God personally says:

I will contend.

I will save.

Cross References

Genesis 12:3

God promised to bless those who blessed Abraham and oppose those who treated him with contempt.

Jeremiah 50:33

Israel and Judah are oppressed by captors, yet their Redeemer is strong enough to plead their cause.

Psalm 68:18

God is pictured ascending in victory and leading captives in triumph.

Spiritual Principle

God does not merely:

Watch conflict.

He contends for:

His people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Your enemy may be stronger than you.

He is not stronger than your Redeemer.

XXXV. “I WILL SAVE YOUR CHILDREN”

This promise returns to the chapter’s:

Generational theme.

Spiritual Principle

God’s saving concern extends beyond:

One generation.

XXXVI. OPPRESSORS FACE JUDGMENT

Isaiah 49:26 — All Humanity Will Know the Savior

> **“I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh; they will be drunk on their own blood as with wine. Then all mankind will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior, your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”**

The language is:

Severe.

Judgment imagery describes:

Self-destruction.

Violent collapse.

Divine retribution.

It should not be read as:

God delighting in cruelty.

It announces the decisive overthrow of:

Oppression.

Cross References

Ezekiel 39:17

Severe feast imagery is used symbolically to describe catastrophic judgment upon hostile forces.

Revelation 16:6

Those who shed innocent blood are judged with imagery of receiving blood to drink, expressing justice corresponding to their violence.

Genesis 49:24

Jacob’s Mighty One is associated with the Shepherd and Rock who preserves and strengthens His people.

Spiritual Principle

Oppression does not:

Escape judgment forever.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The same God who tenderly remembers Zion also powerfully confronts those who destroy her.

XXXVII. “ALL MANKIND WILL KNOW”

The goal reaches beyond:

Israel.

The nations will recognize:

Lord.

Savior.

Redeemer.

Mighty One.

Spiritual Principle

Deliverance becomes:

Revelation.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 49 TEACHES ABOUT THE SERVANT

Called from:

The womb.

Prepared.

Hidden.

Sent.

Rejected.

Vindicated.

Global in mission.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant is prepared in God’s purpose before He is recognized by the world.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 49 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

The Servant:

Restores Israel.

Brings light to nations.

Carries salvation to earth’s ends.

Is despised.

Is later honored.

Becomes covenant.

Releases captives.

These themes converge powerfully in:

Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Principle

Christ fulfills the Servant mission not only by saving individuals but by advancing God’s redemptive purpose among:

The nations.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 49 TEACHES ABOUT MISSION

> **“Too small a thing.”**

God’s vision is:

Larger.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A church that only looks inward has forgotten the Servant whose light reaches the ends of the earth.

XLI. WHAT ISAIAH 49 TEACHES ABOUT APPARENT FAILURE

The Servant says:

I labored in vain.

Yet:

God holds His reward.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness and immediate visible success are not:

Identical.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 49 TEACHES ABOUT REJECTION

Despised first.

Honored later.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human rejection cannot cancel divine election.

XLIII. WHAT ISAIAH 49 TEACHES ABOUT THE DAY OF SALVATION

There is:

An appointed time.

Spiritual Principle

Grace has:

A divine season.

XLIV. WHAT ISAIAH 49 TEACHES ABOUT FREEDOM

Prisoners hear:

Come out.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption changes status from captive to free.

XLV. WHAT ISAIAH 49 TEACHES ABOUT GUIDANCE

Compassion guides.

Spiritual Principle

God’s leadership is not cold:

Management.

It flows from:

Mercy.

XLVI. WHAT ISAIAH 49 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S LOVE

A mother might:

Forget.

God:

Will not.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s faithfulness is not merely equal to the strongest human love.

It exceeds it.

XLVII. WHAT ISAIAH 49 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S MEMORY

“I have engraved you.”

Spiritual Principle

God’s covenant remembrance is:

Intentional.

Persistent.

XLVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 49 TEACHES ABOUT RESTORATION

Desolate land becomes:

Overfilled.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can restore beyond the size of the wound.

XLIX. WHAT ISAIAH 49 TEACHES ABOUT HOPE

“Those who hope in Me will not be put to shame.”

Spiritual Principle

Biblical hope rests in:

God’s character.

Not:

Circumstances.

L. WHAT ISAIAH 49 TEACHES ABOUT OPPRESSION

God says:

I will contend.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The oppressed may lack power, but they are not necessarily without a Defender.

LI. WHAT ISAIAH 49 TEACHES ABOUT GOD AS SAVIOR

The final titles:

Savior.

Redeemer.

Mighty One.

Spiritual Principle

God possesses both:

Compassion to save.

Power to save.

LII. LISTEN, COASTLANDS

The Servant addresses:

Distant lands.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The gospel begins with a voice that already expects the nations to listen.

LIII. CALLED BEFORE BIRTH

The Servant’s identity precedes:

Public ministry.

Spiritual Principle

Calling is rooted in:

God’s purpose.

LIV. NAMED FROM THE WOMB

Identity comes from:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The world may later debate who the Servant is, but God knows the Servant before the world sees Him.

LV. SHARP SWORD MOUTH

Truth can:

Pierce.

Judge.

Expose.

Heal.

Spiritual Principle

God’s Word is never:

Blunt.

LVI. HIDDEN IN GOD’S HAND

Protection.

Preparation.

Timing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Being hidden is not the same as being forgotten.

LVII. POLISHED ARROW

Prepared for:

Precision.

Spiritual Principle

God does not waste:

Preparation.

LVIII. CONCEALED IN THE QUIVER

The release waits for:

Timing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may hold an instrument back until the exact moment of purpose.

LIX. “IN WHOM I WILL BE GLORIFIED”

The Servant’s purpose is:

God’s glory.

Spiritual Principle

True ministry ends with:

God glorified.

LX. “I HAVE LABORED IN VAIN”

The Servant knows:

Discouragement.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Feeling that your labor was wasted is not proof that God agrees.

LXI. “MY REWARD IS WITH MY GOD”

The final evaluation belongs to:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness trusts:

God’s accounting.

LXII. BRING JACOB BACK

Redemption is:

Return.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant does not merely gather crowds; He brings people back to God.

LXIII. “MY GOD HAS BEEN MY STRENGTH”

The Servant’s honor and strength are:

God-centered.

Spiritual Principle

Divine mission requires:

Divine strength.

LXIV. “TOO SMALL A THING”

What a phrase.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s vision for salvation is larger than the borders of our natural concern.

LXV. LIGHT TO THE NATIONS

Light travels:

Outward.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s mission cannot remain:

Hidden.

LXVI. SALVATION TO EARTH’S ENDS

Global.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No nation is beyond the intended reach of God’s saving message.

LXVII. DESPISED SERVANT

The world sees:

Weakness.

God sees:

Chosen One.

Spiritual Principle

Popularity is a poor measure of:

Divine approval.

LXVIII. KINGS RISE

The rejected becomes:

Honored.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can reverse the verdict of history.

LXIX. “THE LORD IS FAITHFUL”

Why does vindication come?

God:

Faithful.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s confidence rests in:

The Sender.

LXX. TIME OF FAVOR

God determines:

The hour.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s delays are not evidence that His appointed time does not exist.

LXXI. DAY OF SALVATION

Salvation is not:

Theory.

It enters:

History.

Spiritual Principle

Grace acts in:

Time.

LXXII. COVENANT FOR THE PEOPLE

The Servant embodies:

Promise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s covenant faithfulness comes to us personally through the Servant.

LXXIII. PRISONERS HEAR A COMMAND

“Come out.”

Spiritual Principle

Grace calls for:

Response.

LXXIV. DARKNESS LOSES ITS CAPTIVES

Those hidden in darkness:

Appear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant brings people out of the places where darkness told them to stay hidden.

LXXV. PASTURE ON BARREN HEIGHTS

Unexpected:

Provision.

Spiritual Principle

God can feed His people where conditions say:

Nothing grows.

LXXVI. NO HUNGER

Sustaining grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who frees also feeds.

LXXVII. NO THIRST

Living supply.

Spiritual Principle

Deliverance includes:

Provision.

LXXVIII. COMPASSIONATE GUIDE

He guides because:

He cares.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s direction is never detached from God’s heart.

LXXIX. SPRINGS OF WATER

The destination includes:

Refreshment.

Spiritual Principle

God knows when His people need:

Water.

LXXX. MOUNTAINS INTO ROAD

Obstacle becomes:

Infrastructure.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can use the very thing you thought was blocking the journey to help complete it.

LXXXI. FROM AFAR

Distance conquered.

Spiritual Principle

God’s gathering reach is:

Unlimited.

LXXXII. HEAVENS, EARTH, MOUNTAINS SING

Creation recognizes:

Grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When redemption becomes too large for one voice, Isaiah recruits creation into the choir.

LXXXIII. ZION SAYS “FORSAKEN”

Feelings can be:

Powerful.

Spiritual Principle

Pain interprets silence quickly.

Faith waits for:

God’s answer.

LXXXIV. ZION SAYS “FORGOTTEN”

God answers:

Impossible.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The feeling of abandonment must be tested against the promise of remembrance.

LXXXV. THE NURSING MOTHER

Deepest natural tenderness.

Spiritual Principle

God borrows human love as:

An illustration.

Then exceeds it.

LXXXVI. “I WILL NOT FORGET YOU”

Not:

Might not.

Will:

Not.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s remembrance does not depend on Zion’s ability to feel remembered.

LXXXVII. ENGRAVED, NOT WRITTEN

Writing could:

Fade.

Engraving suggests:

Permanence.

Spiritual Principle

God’s remembrance is not:

Casual.

LXXXVIII. WALLS BEFORE GOD

Even ruins remain:

Seen.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The broken place you think God stopped looking at may still be constantly before Him.

LXXXIX. CHILDREN HASTEN BACK

Restoration gains:

Momentum.

Spiritual Principle

God can reverse:

Scattering.

XC. DESTROYERS LEAVE

Oppressors are not:

Permanent residents.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The destroyer may have occupied the scene, but he does not own the final chapter.

XCI. BRIDAL ORNAMENT

Restored people become:

Beauty.

Spiritual Principle

Grace adorns what grief once emptied.

XCII. TOO SMALL FOR INHABITANTS

Desolation becomes:

Crowding.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can turn “too empty” into “make room.”

XCIII. BEREAVEMENT BECOMES FRUITFULNESS

A miracle of:

Restoration.

Spiritual Principle

God can bring future life after:

Past grief.

XCIV. “WHERE DID THESE COME FROM?”

The question of:

Amazed grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some blessings arrive so far beyond expectation that the only reasonable response is wonder.

XCV. GOD BECKONS TO NATIONS

He commands:

International movement.

Spiritual Principle

Nations can become instruments in:

God’s gathering work.

XCVI. BANNER TO THE PEOPLES

Public signal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoration is not ashamed to become visible.

XCVII. SONS IN ARMS

Tender image.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration is:

Personal.

XCVIII. DAUGHTERS ON SHOULDERS

Careful transport.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can use others to carry what has become too weary to walk alone.

XCIX. KINGS AS GUARDIANS

Power reversed into:

Service.

Spiritual Principle

God can make earthly authority serve:

Redemptive purpose.

C. “YOU WILL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD”

Restoration becomes:

Knowledge.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The goal of blessing is not merely changed circumstances but deeper recognition of God.

CI. HOPE WILL NOT BE ASHAMED

Waiting can feel:

Risky.

Spiritual Principle

Hope in God is:

Never ultimately foolish.

CII. THE STRONG CAPTOR

Humanly:

Too strong.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Your captivity may be beyond your strength without being beyond God’s.

CIII. “YES”

God’s answer to impossible rescue.

Spiritual Principle

Divine possibility begins where human possibility ends.

CIV. “I WILL CONTEND”

God enters:

The conflict.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely sympathize with His people’s battle; He can take up their cause.

CV. “I WILL SAVE YOUR CHILDREN”

Again:

Generations.

Spiritual Principle

God’s promises create reasons to pray beyond:

Our lifetime.

CVI. JUDGMENT ON OPPRESSORS

Severe.

Just.

Final.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s compassion toward the oppressed requires that oppression will not be tolerated forever.

CVII. ALL MANKIND WILL KNOW

God’s saving identity becomes:

Public.

Spiritual Principle

Deliverance has:

Missionary value.

CVIII. SAVIOR, REDEEMER, MIGHTY ONE

Three titles.

One God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is willing to save, able to redeem, and mighty enough to finish what He begins.

CIX. ISAIAH 48 AND ISAIAH 49

Isaiah 48

Israel is called:

Stubborn.

Isaiah 49

The faithful Servant appears:

Called.

Prepared.

Obedient.

Sent.

Key Truth

The contrast between stubborn Israel and the faithful Servant helps explain why God’s saving purpose advances through the Servant who fulfills Israel’s calling.

CX. ISAIAH 42 AND ISAIAH 49

Isaiah 42

The Servant:

Brings justice.

Is gentle.

Is light to the nations.

Isaiah 49

The Servant:

Restores Israel.

Is light to the nations.

Carries salvation to earth’s ends.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant’s mission keeps expanding as Isaiah reveals more of His identity and work.

CXI. ISAIAH 49 AND JESUS

The New Testament links this chapter’s themes to:

Christ.

Light to Gentiles.

Salvation.

Servanthood.

Worldwide mission.

Paul also applies the Servant’s mission language to the church’s gospel proclamation.

Spiritual Principle

Christ fulfills the mission uniquely, and His people participate in proclaiming the salvation He brings.

CXII. TEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 49

1. Hidden Servant → Worldwide Mission

2. Apparent Futility → Divine Reward

3. Israel Alone → Ends of the Earth

4. Despised Servant → Honored Servant

5. Prison → Freedom

6. Darkness → Visibility

7. Barren Heights → Pasture

8. Forsaken Feeling → Unfailing Remembrance

9. Desolation → Overflowing Population

10. Powerful Captor → Mighty Redeemer

Key Truth

Isaiah 49 is a chapter of divine reversal in which apparent failure becomes global salvation, desolation becomes abundance, forgotten Zion becomes remembered Zion, and captivity gives way to redemption.

CXIII. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 49

1. God’s Servant Is Called by Divine Purpose

Principle:

The mission begins with God’s initiative.

2. The Servant Speaks God’s Powerful Word

Principle:

Truth is central to His mission.

3. The Servant Embodies Faithful Israel

Principle:

He fulfills the calling national Israel failed to fulfill.

4. Apparent Failure Is Not Final Failure

Principle:

The Servant entrusts reward to God.

5. Salvation Is Global

Principle:

The Servant is light to the nations.

6. Rejection Will Become Vindication

Principle:

The despised Servant will be honored.

7. Salvation Brings Freedom

Principle:

Prisoners are called out of captivity.

8. God Guides with Compassion

Principle:

The Redeemer leads beside springs of water.

9. God Does Not Forget Zion

Principle:

His remembrance exceeds a mother’s love.

10. God Restores Beyond Expectation

Principle:

Desolation becomes overcrowding.

11. Those Who Hope in God Will Not Be Finally Ashamed

Principle:

Waiting on God has a faithful ending.

12. God Defeats Oppression

Principle:

No captor is too strong for the Mighty One of Jacob.

CXIV. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who is speaking at the beginning of Isaiah 49?

The Servant of the Lord.

Question 2

Who is called to listen?

The coastlands and distant peoples.

Question 3

When was the Servant called?

From the womb.

Question 4

What is His mouth compared to?

A sharp sword.

Question 5

What is He compared to besides a sword?

A polished arrow hidden in God’s quiver.

Question 6

Why is the Servant called “Israel”?

He embodies and fulfills Israel’s true servant mission.

Question 7

How do we know the Servant is distinguished from national Israel?

Because He is sent to bring Jacob back and restore Israel.

Question 8

What does the Servant say about apparent failure?

He says He has labored in vain, yet entrusts His cause and reward to God.

Question 9

What is the Servant’s mission toward Israel?

To bring Jacob back and gather Israel.

Question 10

Is restoring Israel the entire mission?

No.

God says that would be too small.

Question 11

What additional mission does the Servant receive?

To be a light to the nations.

Question 12

How far will God’s salvation reach?

To the ends of the earth.

Question 13

How is the Servant treated initially?

He is despised and abhorred.

Question 14

What will eventually happen?

Kings will rise and princes will bow in recognition of God’s vindication.

Question 15

What happens in the day of salvation?

God answers, helps, keeps, restores, and releases.

Question 16

What are prisoners told?

> **“Come out.”**

Question 17

What are those in darkness told?

> **“Show yourselves.”**

Question 18

Who guides the redeemed?

The One who has compassion on them.

Question 19

Where does He lead them?

Beside springs of water.

Question 20

What happens to mountains?

God turns them into roads.

Question 21

From where do the scattered return?

From distant regions in multiple directions.

Question 22

Why does creation sing?

Because God comforts and has compassion on His afflicted people.

Question 23

What does Zion believe?

That God has forsaken and forgotten her.

Question 24

How does God answer?

He says even if a nursing mother forgot her child, He would not forget Zion.

Question 25

What does the engraving on God’s palms symbolize?

Permanent covenant remembrance.

Question 26

What happens to Zion’s children?

They return and gather.

Question 27

What happens to Zion’s desolation?

It becomes so full that more room is needed.

Question 28

Who assists in the restoration?

Nations, kings, and queens.

Question 29

What promise is given to those who hope in God?

They will not ultimately be put to shame.

Question 30

Can the warrior’s captives be rescued?

Yes.

God Himself says He will contend and save.

Question 31

Who is ultimately revealed through the deliverance?

The Lord, Savior, Redeemer, and Mighty One of Jacob.

CXV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 49 asks several searching questions.

Am I Listening to the Servant?

The chapter begins:

> **“Listen to Me.”**

Am I listening to:

Christ?

Do I believe God's calling has purpose even before I understand it?

Do I trust God during hidden seasons?

Am I discouraged because my labor appears:

Fruitless?

Can I say:

> **"My reward is with My God"?**

Is my vision too:

Small?

Am I concerned only about:

My circle?

My church?

My community?

Or do I share God's concern for:

The nations?

Do I recognize Jesus as:

Light to the nations?

Do I believe God can vindicate faithfulness after:

Rejection?

Is there a prison God is saying:

> **"Come out"**

from?

Is there darkness where He is saying:

> **"Show yourself"?**

Can I trust God to guide me because:

He has compassion?

Am I facing a mountain that seems to block:

The road?

Do I feel:

Forgotten?

Forsaken?

Abandoned?

Have I allowed my feelings to overrule:

God’s promise?

Do I believe:

“I will not forget you”?

Can I imagine the place of desolation becoming:

Too small for blessing?

Am I willing to:

Make room?

Am I waiting on God without:

Shame?

Is there a captor I think is:

Too strong?

Have I forgotten:

The Mighty One of Jacob?

CXVI. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The God Who Engraved You on His Hands Has Not Lost Sight of Your Broken Walls”

Zion says:

> **“The Lord has forgotten me.”**

God says:

> **“I have engraved you on the palms of My hands; your walls are ever before Me.”**

Principle:

God’s silence is not forgetfulness, broken walls are not evidence of abandonment, and the Redeemer can remember His people even while they are still staring at ruins.

CXVII. THE SERVANT’S GLOBAL VOICE

He speaks to:

Faraway peoples.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant’s first recorded audience in Isaiah 49 is already larger than Israel.

CXVIII. THE SWORD AND THE ARROW

Both require:

Skill.

Direction.

Purpose.

Spiritual Principle

God’s Word is:

Precise.

CXIX. THE SERVANT HIDDEN

Preparation may occur in:

Silence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not despise the season when God keeps you in the quiver.

CXX. “IN WHOM I WILL BE GLORIFIED”

Ministry exists for:

God.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant does not seek:

Self-glory.

CXXI. LABOR IN VAIN?

The Servant feels:

The question.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not confuse visible rejection with divine rejection.

CXXII. THE REWARD IS WITH GOD

Human applause:

Unreliable.

Spiritual Principle

God’s evaluation is:

Final.

CXXIII. JACOB BROUGHT BACK

The mission is:

Restorative.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus does not merely expose wandering; He brings wanderers home.

CXXIV. LIGHT FOR NATIONS

The Servant becomes:

God’s worldwide light.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation is meant to:

Spread.

CXXV. “TOO SMALL”

A challenge to:

Narrow vision.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes what we call a big ministry is still smaller than God’s heart.

CXXVI. DESPISED BEFORE HONORED

Cross before:

Crown.

Humiliation before:

Exaltation.

Spiritual Principle

God’s path to glory does not always bypass:

Rejection.

CXXVII. TIME OF FAVOR

God answers:

At the right time.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Waiting does not mean the favorable time is imaginary.

CXXVIII. COVENANT SERVANT

The Servant is central to:

Restoration.

Spiritual Principle

God’s promises come together in:

Him.

CXXIX. “COME OUT”

Captivity hears:

Authority.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Freedom begins when the captive believes the Redeemer’s command more than the prison’s claim.

CXXX. “SHOW YOURSELVES”

Darkness hides.

Grace reveals.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption removes:

Shameful hiding.

CXXXI. PASTURE ON HEIGHTS

Provision where expected:

Barrenness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can put pasture on the hill everyone else calls barren.

CXXXII. COMPASSION GUIDES

The Shepherd’s heart governs:

The Shepherd’s path.

Spiritual Principle

Divine direction is loving direction.

CXXXIII. MOUNTAINS BECOME HIGHWAYS

What seemed:

Against you.

Can become:

Under God.

A path.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can turn resistance into roadway.

CXXXIV. FROM NORTH AND WEST

God gathers:

Widely.

Spiritual Principle

Scattering does not exceed:

God’s reach.

CXXXV. CREATION BURSTS INTO SONG

Why?

Compassion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s mercy is worthy of more celebration than human speech can contain.

CXXXVI. ZION’S FALSE CONCLUSION

Pain says:

Forgotten.

Spiritual Principle

Suffering can produce conclusions God never:

Spoke.

CXXXVII. GOD’S ANSWER IS PERSONAL

Not merely:

A theological explanation.

He says:

> **“I will not forget you.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes the answer to fear is not an explanation of circumstances but a promise of relationship.

CXXXVIII. ENGRAVED HANDS

The imagery is:

Permanent.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people remain:

Before Him.

CXXXIX. BROKEN WALLS STILL SEEN

God has not:

Looked away.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Your ruins may be evidence of what was lost, but they are also the place God can begin rebuilding.

CXL. CHILDREN RETURN

Loss does not get:

Final possession.

Spiritual Principle

God can restore what scattering removed.

CXLI. MAKE ROOM

Blessing requires:

Expansion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not pray for increase while refusing to enlarge the tent.

CXLII. ASTONISHED ZION

> **“Where have they come from?”**

Spiritual Principle

Grace can exceed:

Memory.

CXLIII. NATIONS CARRY THE CHILDREN HOME

Formerly distant peoples become:

Participants.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can use unexpected hands to carry home what He loves.

CXLIV. KINGS BOW

Political power recognizes:

Divine sovereignty.

Spiritual Principle

No earthly rank is:

Too high.

CXLV. HOPE WITHOUT SHAME

Delay:

Yes.

Final disgrace:

No.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Hope in God may be tested, but it will not ultimately be exposed as foolish.

CXLVI. WARRIORS AND CAPTIVES

Captivity looks:

Legal.

Secure.

Permanent.

Spiritual Principle

God is not intimidated by:

The captor.

CXLVII. “YES”

God answers the impossible question:

Yes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never answer “impossible” before the Redeemer has spoken.

CXLVIII. GOD CONTENDS

The Defender steps forward.

Spiritual Principle

The battle is not:

Yours alone.

CXLIX. SAVE YOUR CHILDREN

The heart of God extends:

Generationally.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pray as though God’s redemptive concern reaches people who will live after you are gone.

CL. MIGHTY ONE OF JACOB

The God who remembers tenderly is also:

Mighty.

Spiritual Principle

Divine compassion is not:

Weakness.

CLI. ISAIAH 49 AND THE GOSPEL

Called Servant.

Despised Servant.

Light to nations.

Salvation to earth’s ends.

Freedom for prisoners.

Compassion for afflicted.

Gathering of scattered.

Victory over captors.

All these themes converge in:

The gospel of Christ.

Key Truth

Isaiah 49 shows that the mission of the Servant is nothing less than the worldwide advance of God’s salvation through the One who restores, liberates, gathers, comforts, and ultimately triumphs.

CLII. ELEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 49

1. The Servant Is Called

From the womb for divine purpose.

2. The Servant Is Prepared

Like a sword and polished arrow.

3. The Servant Entrusts Apparent Failure to God

His reward remains with the Lord.

4. The Servant Restores Israel

Jacob is gathered back.

5. The Mission Expands to the Nations

Salvation reaches earth’s ends.

6. The Despised Servant Is Vindicated

Kings and princes honor Him.

7. Prisoners Are Released

Darkness gives way to freedom.

8. The Redeemed Are Guided and Provided For

Compassion leads them beside water.

9. Zion Is Assured She Is Not Forgotten

She is engraved on God’s hands.

10. Desolation Becomes Abundance

The land becomes too small for its restored population.

11. God Defeats Oppressors

The Savior and Redeemer rescues captives from the fierce.

Key Truth

Isaiah 49 moves from the Servant’s hidden calling to worldwide salvation, from Zion’s sense of abandonment to overflowing restoration, and from captivity to the public victory of the Mighty Redeemer.

CLIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 49 begins with:

A voice.

> **“Listen to Me.”**

The voice belongs to:

The Servant.

He was called:

Before birth.

Prepared:

Like a sword.

Polished:

Like an arrow.

Hidden:

Until God’s time.

That teaches us something immediately.

God’s work does not begin when:

People notice it.

Sometimes God prepares:

In secret.

Then the Servant says something surprising:

> **“I have labored in vain.”**

Even the Servant’s mission passes through a place where visible results can look:

Disappointing.

But He does not say:

Therefore God failed.

He says:

> **“My reward is with My God.”**

That is faithfulness.

When you have:

Preached.

Taught.

Prayed.

Served.

Loved.

Witnessed.

Worked.

And the results seem:

Small—

Remember:

God keeps the final account.

Then God says something breathtaking:

“It is too small a thing.”

Restoring Israel alone is not:

Large enough.

The Servant will become:

Light.

To:

Nations.

Salvation must reach:

The ends of earth.

That means the heart of God is:

Missionary.

The gospel is:

Global.

Christ belongs to:

No single culture.

Nation.

Race.

Language.

Then the Servant is:

Despised.

But kings will:

Rise.

Princes will:

Bow.

Human opinion changes.

God’s choice:

Does not.

Then comes:

The day of salvation.

Prisoners hear:

“Come out.”

Those in darkness hear:

“Show yourselves.”

God does not merely tell captives:

Try harder.

He announces:

Freedom.

Then the journey begins.

Will there be:

Roads?

God says:

I can turn mountains into:

Roads.

Will there be:

Water?

God says:

I will lead beside:

Springs.

Will the scattered return?

Yes.

From:

Far away.

Then all creation begins:

Singing.

But Zion says:

“The Lord has forsaken me.”

How human.

God is announcing:

Restoration.

Zion is still feeling:

Abandonment.

Maybe that is where you are.

God says:

I am working.

You say:

I feel forgotten.

Then God answers:

Can a mother forget:

Her baby?

You know how strong:

That bond.

Can be.

Then God says:

Even if she could—

“I will not forget you.”

And then:

“I have engraved you on the palms of My hands.”

Not:

Written in pencil.

Not:

Placed on a temporary list.

Engraved.

Then God says:

Your walls are:

Before Me.

That means God sees:

The broken place.

He has not ignored:

The ruin.

He has not forgotten:

The city.

Then suddenly:

Children return.

The city fills.

The barren place becomes:

Crowded.

And Zion says:

Where did all these come from?

That is restoration so large it surprises:

The restored.

Then comes one final question:

Can captives be taken from:

A warrior?

Maybe the captor is:

Too strong.

Maybe the chain is:

Too old.

Maybe the bondage looks:

Permanent.

God says:

“Yes.”

What a word.

Yes.

Captives can be:

Freed.

Plunder can be:

Recovered.

Children can be:

Saved.

Oppressors can be:

Defeated.

Why?

Not because the captive became:

Stronger.

Because the Redeemer is:

Mighty.

So Isaiah 49 says:

When your labor looks wasted—

Trust:

God’s reward.

When your vision becomes small—

Remember:

The ends of the earth.

When you feel rejected—

Remember:

The Servant was despised.

When you feel trapped—

Hear:

“Come out.”

When you cannot see the road—

Remember:

Mountains can become highways.

When you feel forgotten—

Hear:

“I will not forget you.”

When you see broken walls—

Remember:

They are still before God.

When your life feels empty—

Prepare to:

Make room.

When the enemy looks too strong—

Wait for God’s:

“Yes.”

Because the God of Isaiah 49 is:

Savior.

Redeemer.

Mighty One of Jacob.

And the Servant He sends brings:

Salvation.

To:

The ends of the earth.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for:

Your Servant.

Thank You for:

Jesus Christ.

The One called.

Sent.

Prepared.

Rejected.

Vindicated.

The Light of the nations.

Thank You that Your salvation reaches:

The ends of the earth.

Father, when our labor feels:

Fruitless.

Teach us to say:

“My reward is with my God.”

Keep our vision from becoming:

Small.

Give us a heart for:

The lost.

The nations.

The distant.

Those still sitting in:

Darkness.

Thank You that through Christ prisoners hear:

“Come out.”

Lead people from:

Bondage.

Darkness.

Fear.

Sin.

Shame.

Father, when the journey is difficult:

Feed us.

When we thirst:

Lead us to springs.

When mountains rise:

Make roads.

When distance separates:

Gather.

Father, when we feel:

Forgotten—

Speak again:

“I will not forget you.”

When we look at:

Broken walls—

Remind us they are still:

Before You.

When our lives seem:

Empty—

Give us faith to believe You can fill them again.

When we wonder where the blessing could come from:

Amaze us with:

Grace.

Father, teach us to:

Hope in You.

Keep us from:

Shame.

Contend with those things that:

Contend against Your purpose.

Rescue:

Captives.

Save:

Children.

Defeat:

Oppression.

And let the world know:

You are:

Savior.

Redeemer.

Mighty One.

May Jesus Christ be proclaimed as:

Light.

Hope.

Salvation.

To every:

Nation.

People.

Language.

And land.

In His name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“I will also make You a light for the nations, that My salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.” — Isaiah 49:6**

Central Truth

The Lord’s faithful Servant, fulfilled ultimately in Jesus Christ, is called and prepared by God to restore Israel and bring salvation to the ends of the earth; through Him prisoners are released, darkness is overcome, the scattered are gathered, the afflicted are guided with compassion, Zion is assured that God will never forget her, desolation becomes abundance, and captives are rescued by the Lord who reveals Himself as Savior, Redeemer, and Mighty One of Jacob.

Isaiah 49 in One Sentence

Isaiah presents the divinely called Servant who fulfills Israel’s mission by restoring Jacob and becoming light and salvation to the nations, shows the despised Servant ultimately vindicated, announces freedom for prisoners and guidance for the redeemed, assures forgotten Zion that she is engraved on God’s hands, promises restoration so abundant that desolate places overflow, and

concludes that the Lord Himself will rescue captives, defeat oppressors, and make all humanity know Him as Savior, Redeemer, and Mighty One of Jacob.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 50 — The Obedient Servant of the Lord

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 50 presents a powerful contrast between:

Disobedient Israel.

And:

The obedient Servant of the Lord.

The chapter begins with God answering an accusation that may have been forming in the hearts of His people.

Israel had experienced:

Separation.

Exile.

Defeat.

Loss.

Captivity.

They might have wondered:

Has God abandoned us?

Was He unable to save us?

Did some greater power defeat Him?

God answers:

No.

The problem was not:

God’s weakness.

The problem was:

Israel’s sin.

God asks:

“Is My hand too short to redeem you?”

The answer is:

No.

The God who can:

Dry up the sea.

Turn rivers into desert.

Darken the heavens.

Certainly possesses power to:

Redeem.

The issue is not:

Divine inability.

It is:

Human rebellion.

Then beginning in verse 4, another voice appears:

The Servant.

And what a contrast He provides.

Israel had:

Closed ears.

The Servant says:

“He opens My ear to listen like a disciple.”

Israel had been:

Rebellious.

The Servant says:

“I was not rebellious.”

Israel turned:

Away.

The Servant says:

“Nor did I turn away.”

The Servant willingly gives:

His back to beating.

His cheeks to abuse.

His face to:

Mocking.

Spitting.

The passage points unmistakably toward the suffering experienced by:

Jesus Christ.

The Gospel accounts describe Him being:

Beaten.

Mocked.

Struck.

Spat upon.

Yet the Servant does not retreat.

Why?

Because:

“The Sovereign Lord helps Me.”

Then comes the striking statement:

“I have set My face like flint.”

This is not:

Coldness.

Stubbornness.

Pride.

It is:

Holy determination.

The Servant is committed to:

Obedience.

Even when obedience leads through:

Suffering.

Luke tells us Jesus resolutely set His face toward:

Jerusalem.

He knew what awaited Him.

Yet:

He went.

The Servant's confidence does not come from:

Human approval.

He knows:

God will vindicate Him.

Accusers may:

Speak.

Enemies may:

Mock.

Violence may:

Come.

But the Servant asks:

> **"Who then can condemn Me?"**

His confidence rests in:

The Sovereign Lord.

The chapter closes by presenting two kinds of people.

The first fears the Lord and obeys the voice of:

His Servant.

Yet that person may still walk through:

Darkness.

This is important.

Obedience does not guarantee that every season feels:

Bright.

A faithful believer can experience:

Confusion.

Sorrow.

Uncertainty.

Darkness.

What should he do?

> **“Trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God.”**

The second group refuses to trust in:

God’s light.

Instead they create:

Their own fire.

Their own sparks.

Their own torches.

Their own illumination.

God says:

Walk in it.

And see where it leads.

The end is:

Torment.

So Isaiah 50 ultimately gives us a choice:

Trust God in the darkness.

Or create your own light.

Follow the obedient Servant.

Or follow:

Self.

The central truth of Isaiah 50 is:

Israel’s separation resulted from sin rather than any weakness in God’s saving power, while the Servant of the Lord—fulfilled ultimately in Jesus Christ—listens perfectly, obeys without

rebellion, willingly endures humiliation and suffering, trusts the Father for vindication, and calls those walking in darkness to rely upon the Lord rather than the self-made fires of human wisdom and independence.

I. ISRAEL'S SEPARATION WAS NOT GOD'S FAILURE

Isaiah 50:1 — Sin Caused the Separation

> **"This is what the Lord says: 'Where is your mother's certificate of divorce, with which I sent her away? Or to which of My creditors did I sell you? No, it was because of your sins you were sold, and because of your transgressions your mother was sent away.'"**

God uses two legal and social pictures:

Divorce.

Debt slavery.

But He asks:

Where is the certificate?

Who is My creditor?

The point is that Israel's condition cannot be explained by:

God being forced into debt.

God losing ownership.

God becoming powerless.

Their sins brought:

Judgment.

Cross References

Jeremiah 3:8

Jeremiah uses marriage and divorce imagery to describe the seriousness of Israel's persistent covenant unfaithfulness.

Deuteronomy 24:1

The Mosaic law included provisions concerning a certificate of divorce, providing the legal imagery Isaiah uses here.

Isaiah 52:3

God later tells His people that they were sold for nothing and would be redeemed without money, emphasizing that their captivity did not result from God owing a creditor.

Spiritual Principle

Sin has:

Consequences.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When sin creates distance, do not blame the weakness of the Redeemer.

II. GOD OWES NO CREDITOR

The imagery is important.

God did not sell Israel because:

He needed money.

He was not:

Bankrupt.

Overpowered.

Forced.

Spiritual Principle

God’s sovereignty remained intact even during:

Israel’s exile.

III. “WHEN I CALLED, WHY DID NO ONE ANSWER?”

Isaiah 50:2 — The Problem Was Human Unresponsiveness

> **“When I came, why was there no one to respond? When I called, why was there no one to answer? Is My hand too short to redeem you? Do I lack the power to deliver? By My rebuke I dry up the sea, I turn rivers into desert; their fish rot for lack of water and die of thirst.”**

God had:

Called.

But Israel did not:

Answer.

The issue was not that God failed to:

Come.

Speak.

Call.

The people failed to:

Respond.

Cross References

John 1:11

Christ came to His own people, yet many of His own did not receive Him.

Numbers 11:23

When Moses questioned whether God could provide for the enormous congregation, the Lord asked whether His power had somehow become too limited to fulfill His Word.

Exodus 14:21

God demonstrated His power by driving back the sea and providing a path for Israel through the waters.

Spiritual Principle

Divine invitation requires:

Human response.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The problem is never that God’s arm became too short.

The problem is often that our hearts became too hard.

IV. “IS MY HAND TOO SHORT?”

No.

The hand that:

Created.

Delivered.

Opened seas.

Judged Egypt.

Cannot suddenly become:

Powerless.

Spiritual Principle

Present difficulty does not indicate:

Reduced divine ability.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never measure God’s arm by the size of your present circumstances.

V. GOD CAN DRY THE SEA

The Exodus stands behind:

The imagery.

The sea that appeared:

Uncrossable.

Became:

A road.

Spiritual Principle

Creation obeys:

The Creator.

VI. GOD CLOTHES THE HEAVENS WITH DARKNESS

Isaiah 50:3 — Cosmic Authority

> **“I clothe the heavens with darkness and cover them with sackcloth.”**

God controls:

Heaven.

Light.

Darkness.

Creation itself.

Cross References

Isaiah 13:10

Isaiah previously used darkened heavenly imagery in connection with divine judgment.

Revelation 6:12

The imagery of cosmic darkness appears again in scenes of divine judgment.

Joel 2:31

The prophet speaks of the sun being darkened in connection with the day of the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

The God who governs the heavens is not:

Too weak to redeem.

VII. THE SERVANT SPEAKS

A major transition occurs.

The rebellious people give way to:

The obedient Servant.

Key Contrast

Israel:

Would not listen.

The Servant:

Listens morning by morning.

Israel:

Rebelled.

The Servant:

Was not rebellious.

Israel:

Turned away.

The Servant:

Did not turn away.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Where Israel failed as servant, the faithful Servant obeys perfectly.

VIII. THE TONGUE OF ONE WHO IS TAUGHT

Isaiah 50:4 — A Word for the Weary

> **“The Sovereign Lord has given Me the tongue of one who is taught, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning He awakens Me; He opens My ear to listen like a disciple.”**

The Servant has:

A taught tongue.

An opened ear.

Before He speaks:

He listens.

His words sustain:

The weary.

Cross References

Luke 4:22

Those hearing Jesus marveled at the gracious words coming from His mouth.

Isaiah 61:1

The Spirit-anointed Servant is commissioned to proclaim good news to the broken and afflicted.

John 7:16

Jesus explains that His teaching is not independent self-invention but comes from the One who sent Him.

Spiritual Principle

The person who speaks for God must first:

Listen to God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A taught tongue begins with an opened ear.

IX. THE SERVANT SUSTAINS THE WEARY

Notice the purpose of:

His speech.

Not:

To impress.

To dominate.

To showcase knowledge.

But:

To sustain the weary.

Spiritual Principle

God-given truth should:

Strengthen burdened people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The best Bible teacher is not merely the one who knows many words, but the one who knows how to give the right word to the weary.

X. “MORNING BY MORNING”

The Servant’s listening is:

Regular.

Continual.

Disciplined.

Spiritual Principle

Yesterday’s listening does not replace:

Today’s listening.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A fresh word for weary people grows out of a fresh ear toward God.

XI. THE EAR OF A DISCIPLE

The Servant is:

Teachable.

Attentive.

Responsive.

Spiritual Principle

True obedience begins with:

Listening.

XII. THE SERVANT IS NOT REBELLIOUS

Isaiah 50:5 — Perfect Obedience

> **“The Sovereign Lord has opened My ear, and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away.”**

Two negatives:

Not rebellious.

Did not turn away.

This is a direct contrast with:

Israel.

Cross References

John 8:29

Jesus says He always does what pleases the Father.

Hebrews 10:7

Christ is presented as coming to do the will of God according to Scripture.

Philippians 2:8

Jesus humbled Himself and became obedient even to death on a cross.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s obedience is:

Complete.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The faithful Servant does not merely hear God’s will.

He does it.

XIII. HE DID NOT TURN AWAY

The path ahead contained:

Pain.

Rejection.

Humiliation.

Still:

He continued.

Spiritual Principle

True obedience is tested when the road becomes:

Costly.

XIV. THE SUFFERING SERVANT GIVES HIS BACK

Isaiah 50:6 — Mocking, Beating, and Spitting

> **“I gave My back to those who beat Me, and My cheeks to those who pulled out My beard; I did not hide My face from mocking and spitting.”**

The Servant’s obedience leads into:

Suffering.

He does not suffer because:

He rebelled.

He suffers while:

Obeying.

That distinction is crucial.

Cross References

Matthew 26:67

Jesus was spat upon, struck, and mocked during His trial.

Matthew 27:26

Jesus was scourged before being delivered for crucifixion.

Mark 14:65

Jesus was spat upon, blindfolded, struck, and mocked by His captors.

Spiritual Principle

Suffering is not always evidence of:

Disobedience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes the hardest suffering comes not because you left God’s will, but because you stayed in it.

XV. THE SERVANT VOLUNTARILY SUBMITS

The wording says:

> **“I gave My back.”**

He is not pictured merely as:

Helpless.

He willingly submits to:

The path of obedience.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s suffering is connected with:

Voluntary obedience.

XVI. HIS CHEEKS ARE ABUSED

Humiliation becomes:

Personal.

Physical.

Public.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus understands humiliation not as an observer, but as One who endured it.

XVII. HE DID NOT HIDE HIS FACE

Mocking.

Spitting.

Shame.

Yet:

No retreat.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant does not abandon His mission when:

Despised.

XVIII. THE LORD HELPS THE SERVANT

Isaiah 50:7 — His Face Is Set Like Flint

> **“But the Sovereign Lord helps Me; therefore I will not be disgraced. I have set My face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame.”**

This is confidence.

Not:

Self-confidence.

God-confidence.

Because:

The Sovereign Lord helps Me.

Therefore:

I continue.

Cross References

Luke 9:51

As the time approached for His mission to reach its climactic stage, Jesus resolutely set His face toward Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 3:8

God strengthens Ezekiel’s face and resolve against stubborn opposition.

Philippians 1:20

Paul expresses confidence that through courage Christ will be honored and he will not ultimately be put to shame.

Spiritual Principle

Determination rooted in God is different from:

Human stubbornness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Israel had a stiff neck against God.

The Servant has a flint face toward obedience.

XIX. STUBBORNNESS AND STEADFASTNESS ARE NOT THE SAME

Israel’s stubbornness says:

I will not obey.

The Servant’s steadfastness says:

I will not turn away from obedience.

Spiritual Principle

The same outward firmness can come from:

Rebellion.

Or:

Faithfulness.

XX. “I KNOW I WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME”

The Servant sees beyond:

Immediate humiliation.

To:

Final vindication.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Present shame does not determine God’s final verdict.

XXI. THE VINDICATOR IS NEAR

Isaiah 50:8 — The Accusers Are Challenged

> **“He who vindicates Me is near. Who then will bring charges against Me? Let us face each other. Who is My accuser? Let him confront Me.”**

The Servant enters:

Courtroom language.

Accusers exist.

But the Judge who vindicates is:

Near.

Cross References

Romans 8:33

Paul asks who can bring a successful charge against those God has justified.

Romans 8:34

The ultimate condemnation is overturned because Christ died, was raised, and intercedes.

Isaiah 54:17

God promises that accusations raised against His servants will ultimately fail under His vindication.

Spiritual Principle

The verdict that finally matters belongs to:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

An accusation is not the same as a conviction when God is the Judge.

XXII. “LET HIM CONFRONT ME”

The Servant does not:

Fear examination.

Spiritual Principle

Integrity gives courage before:

Accusation.

XXIII. THE SOVEREIGN LORD HELPS HIM

Isaiah 50:9 — Human Opposition Wears Out

> **“See, the Sovereign Lord helps Me. Who then can condemn Me? They will all wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.”**

Again:

Help.

Again:

Confidence.

His enemies appear:

Strong.

But are:

Temporary.

Cross References

Psalm 102:26

Creation itself will wear out like a garment, while God remains.

Hebrews 1:11

The heavens are described as eventually wearing out like clothing, while the Son remains.

Isaiah 51:8

Human opponents can be consumed like garments by moths, while God’s righteousness and salvation endure.

Spiritual Principle

Opposition is:

Temporary.

God’s vindication is:

Enduring.

XXIV. “WHO CAN CONDEMN ME?”

The Servant’s confidence anticipates the New Testament language of:

Justification.

Vindication.

Resurrection.

Spiritual Principle

God’s final verdict outweighs:

Human condemnation.

XXV. THE MOTH-EATEN GARMENT

The enemy appears:

Impressive.

But time exposes:

Fragility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not fear temporary voices as though they possess eternal authority.

XXVI. THE FAITHFUL MAY STILL WALK IN DARKNESS

Isaiah 50:10 — Trust When You Cannot See

> **“Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the voice of His servant? Though he walks in darkness and has no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God.”**

This verse destroys a dangerous assumption.

A person can:

Fear God.

Obey the Servant.

And still experience:

Darkness.

The darkness here is not necessarily:

Wickedness.

It can describe:

Uncertainty.

Distress.

A season without visible answers.

Cross References

John 12:35

Jesus warns about the seriousness of spiritual darkness and calls people to respond to the light while it is present.

Micah 7:8

The prophet says that though he sits in darkness, the Lord will be his light.

Psalm 23:4

Even through the valley of deepest darkness, the believer can refuse fear because God is present.

Spiritual Principle

Faith is sometimes trusting God without:

Visible light.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Walking in darkness is not the same as walking without God.

XXVII. FEAR THE LORD AND OBEY THE SERVANT

Notice the connection:

Fear the Lord.

Obey:

His Servant.

Spiritual Principle

The proper response to the Servant is:

Obedience.

XXVIII. DARKNESS DOES NOT ALWAYS MEAN DISOBEDIENCE

This is important.

Verse 10 describes a person who:

Fears God.

Obeys.

Yet walks in:

Darkness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not automatically interpret every dark season as proof that you are outside God’s will.

XXIX. TRUST THE NAME OF THE LORD

When circumstances provide:

No light.

God’s name still reveals:

His character.

Spiritual Principle

Faith rests upon:

Who God is.

XXX. “RELY ON HIS GOD”

Not:

His emotions.

His understanding.

His circumstances.

His own torch.

But:

His God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When you cannot rely on what you see, rely on the One you know.

XXXI. THE DANGER OF SELF-MADE FIRE

Isaiah 50:11 — Human Light Versus Divine Trust

> **“But now, all you who light fires and surround yourselves with sparks, walk in the light of your own fire and of the torches you have set ablaze. This is what you will receive from My hand: you will lie down in torment.”**

Verse 10:

No light.

Trust God.

Verse 11:

Make your own light.

Trust self.

The difference is:

Faith.

Self-reliance.

Cross References

Proverbs 1:31

Those who reject wisdom eventually eat the fruit of their own chosen ways.

Isaiah 65:13

Isaiah contrasts God’s servants with rebels who seek life apart from Him and experience the opposite of what they sought.

Jeremiah 2:13

God condemns His people for abandoning the fountain of living water and digging broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

Spiritual Principle

When God does not provide immediate light, the temptation is to:

Manufacture it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

It is better to walk with God in the dark than to walk away from God carrying your own torch.

XXXII. SELF-MADE LIGHT IS STILL DARKNESS

Human beings can produce:

Plans.

Explanations.

Schemes.

Shortcuts.

But if they replace:

Trust in God.

They become:

False light.

Spiritual Principle

Not everything that glows:

Guides.

XXXIII. “WALK IN THE LIGHT OF YOUR OWN FIRE”

The words carry:

Judicial irony.

God allows them to experience:

The end of their choice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes judgment is God allowing us to discover where our self-made light actually leads.

XXXIV. THE END OF SELF-RELIANCE

The chapter concludes:

Not with comfort for the self-sufficient.

But:

Torment.

Spiritual Principle

Self-salvation fails.

XXXV. THE GREAT CONTRAST: ISRAEL AND THE SERVANT

Israel

Called.

But:

Did not answer.

Stubborn.

Rebellious.

Sinful.

The Servant

Listens.

Obeys.

Does not rebel.

Does not turn away.

Accepts suffering.

Trusts God.

Perseveres.

Key Truth

The obedient Servant succeeds precisely where disobedient Israel failed.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

The Servant:

Speaks truth to the weary.

Listens to God.

Perfectly obeys.

Gives His back to beating.

Endures mocking.

Endures spitting.

Sets His face toward His mission.

Trusts God for vindication.

These themes converge powerfully in:

Jesus Christ.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah 50 does not merely tell us Christ suffered; it shows us that His suffering took place within perfect obedience.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT SIN

Israel was not separated because:

God became weak.

It was because:

Sin.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is never:

Harmless.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT REDEMPTION

God asks:

> **“Is My hand too short to redeem you?”**

Answer:

No.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No depth of captivity exceeds the reach of the Redeemer’s arm.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT LISTENING

The Servant’s ear is:

Opened.

Spiritual Principle

Obedience begins before action.

It begins with:

Hearing.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT TEACHING

The Servant receives:

A taught tongue.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We should never be more eager to speak for God than we are to listen to God.

XLI. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT THE WEARY

The Servant has a word:

For them.

Spiritual Principle

God’s truth is not only:

Correct.

It is:

Strengthening.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT OBEDIENCE

> **“I was not rebellious.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Perfect obedience does not ask whether God’s will is painless before deciding whether to obey.

XLIII. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT SUFFERING

The Servant suffers while:

Faithful.

Spiritual Principle

Not all suffering is:

Punitive.

Some suffering is experienced in the path of:

Obedience.

XLIV. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT SHAME

The Servant experiences:

Mocking.

Spitting.

Yet knows:

Final shame will not be His.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

People may shame the servant publicly while God prepares vindication eternally.

XLV. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT DETERMINATION

“My face like flint.”

Spiritual Principle

Holy determination is:

Obedience refusing to retreat.

XLVI. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT VINDICATION

The Servant entrusts:

His cause.

To:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You do not have to win every argument when God controls the final verdict.

XLVII. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT DARKNESS

A believer may walk:

In darkness.

And still:

Fear the Lord.

Obey.

Trust.

Spiritual Principle

Darkness is sometimes:

A test of faith.

Not:

Evidence of divine rejection.

XLVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT FAITH

Faith relies on:

God.

When eyesight offers:

Nothing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith is not pretending the darkness is light.

It is trusting God while the darkness is still dark.

XLIX. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT SELF-RELIANCE

Human beings naturally:

Light their own fires.

Spiritual Principle

Self-reliance becomes dangerous when it replaces:

Dependence on God.

L. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT FALSE LIGHT

A torch may:

Glow.

Yet lead:

Wrongly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A bright idea is not automatically divine guidance.

LI. THE CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE

God challenges:

Assumptions.

Spiritual Principle

Before accusing God of abandonment, Israel must examine:

Its own rebellion.

LII. THE CREDITOR THAT DOES NOT EXIST

God owes:

No one.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No power purchased Israel from God because God lost control.

LIII. SOLD BECAUSE OF SIN

The responsibility is:

Moral.

Spiritual Principle

God takes human sin:

Seriously.

LIV. “WHEN I CAME”

God had not:

Abandoned communication.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The tragedy was not that God never called.

It was that people refused to answer.

LV. “WHY WAS THERE NO ONE?”

The emptiness reveals:

Unresponsiveness.

Spiritual Principle

Grace may knock and still be:

Rejected.

LVI. THE REDEEMER’S ARM

Not:

Short.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You can be too weak to rescue yourself without being too far away for God to rescue you.

LVII. THE SEA DRIES UP

God controls:

The impossible.

Spiritual Principle

Nature itself yields to:

His command.

LVIII. DARKENED HEAVENS

Cosmic authority.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who can clothe heaven with darkness is not intimidated by human captivity.

LIX. THE TAUGHT TONGUE

Speech shaped by:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Words can become:

Ministry.

LX. A WORD FOR THE WEARY

Not:

Ten thousand unnecessary words.

A:

Word.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The weary often need truth they can carry, not another burden of speech.

LXI. MORNING-BY-MORNING DISCIPLESHIP

Daily:

Listening.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness is built:

Repeatedly.

LXII. GOD OPENS THE EAR

Spiritual hearing is:

Grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before asking God to use your mouth, ask Him to open your ear.

LXIII. “I WAS NOT REBELLIOUS”

The Servant differs fundamentally from:

Israel.

Spiritual Principle

He fulfills the obedience God’s people failed to render.

LXIV. “NOR DID I TURN AWAY”

Suffering does not:

Reverse His obedience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The cost of the path does not alter the Servant’s commitment to the Sender.

LXV. THE BACK GIVEN TO BEATING

The suffering becomes:

Physical.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s obedience enters:

The body.

LXVI. THE CHEEKS OFFERED TO ABUSE

Personal humiliation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Christ’s suffering included not only pain, but deliberate degradation.

LXVII. MOCKING AND SPITTING

Human contempt reaches:

Its ugly expression.

Spiritual Principle

The sinless Servant knows what it means to be:

Despised.

LXVIII. “BUT THE SOVEREIGN LORD HELPS ME”

One word changes:

Everything.

> **“But.”**

Suffering:

Real.

Help:

Also real.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s help does not always prevent the trial; sometimes it enables faithfulness inside it.

LXIX. FACE LIKE FLINT

Jerusalem lies:

Ahead.

Spiritual Principle

Purpose creates:

Resolve.

LXX. JESUS SET HIS FACE TOWARD JERUSALEM

Luke 9:51 strongly resonates with:

Isaiah’s imagery.

Jesus knows His mission moves toward:

Rejection.

Death.

Resurrection.

Yet:

He goes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Calvary was not an accident Jesus stumbled into.

He moved toward His appointed mission in obedience.

LXXI. VINDICATOR NEAR

God is not:

Distant from the Servant’s trial.

Spiritual Principle

Vindication may be delayed without being:

Absent.

LXXII. ACCUSERS COME FORWARD

The Servant is:

Unafraid.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Truth does not need to fear honest examination.

LXXIII. THE LORD HELPS

Repeated.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s confidence has:

One foundation.

LXXIV. ENEMIES WEAR OUT

Garments deteriorate.

God’s verdict:

Does not.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never give temporary opposition the weight of eternal judgment.

LXXV. THE FEARER OF GOD IN DARKNESS

This person is:

Faithful.

Yet:

Confused.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual maturity does not remove every season of uncertainty.

LXXVI. NO LIGHT

Sometimes there is:

No immediate explanation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God does not give explanations, He still gives Himself.

LXXVII. TRUST THE NAME

Remember:

Who God is.

Spiritual Principle

Faith builds its footing on:

Character.

LXXVIII. RELY ON GOD

Weight placed upon:

Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Reliance means letting God carry the weight your understanding cannot.

LXXIX. PEOPLE LIGHT FIRES

Human response to uncertainty:

Create light.

Control.

Explain.

Fix.

Spiritual Principle

Impatience can produce:

Counterfeit guidance.

LXXX. SPARKS AROUND THEM

Lots of:

Light.

But wrong source.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Many sparks do not equal one ray of divine truth.

LXXXI. TORCHES THEY SET ABLAZE

Self-generated:

Direction.

Spiritual Principle

Not every path we illuminate ourselves is:

God’s path.

LXXXII. WALKING BY YOUR OWN FIRE

Self-sufficiency becomes:

Judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The light of self eventually reveals the limitations of self.

LXXXIII. ISAIAH 49 AND ISAIAH 50

Isaiah 49

The Servant is:

Called.

Light to the nations.

Despised.

Vindicated.

Isaiah 50

The Servant is:

Taught.

Obedient.

Beaten.

Mocked.

Vindicated.

Key Truth

Isaiah is steadily moving the Servant portrait toward suffering, obedience, rejection, and eventual vindication.

LXXXIV. ISAIAH 50 AND ISAIAH 53

Isaiah 50 introduces:

Physical abuse.

Mocking.

Rejection.

Willing suffering.

Isaiah 53 will reveal even more clearly:

Why the Servant suffers.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah 50 shows the Servant enduring suffering obediently; Isaiah 53 will explain the redemptive depth of His suffering more fully.

LXXXV. ISRAEL AND JESUS

Israel:

Rebellious servant.

Jesus:

Obedient Servant.

Israel:

Does not answer.

Jesus:

Listens.

Israel:

Turns away.

Jesus:

Sets His face toward obedience.

Spiritual Principle

Christ fulfills what sinful humanity could not.

LXXXVI. TEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 50

1. Israel’s Sin → God’s Redeeming Power

2. Closed Response → Open Ear

3. Rebellion → Obedience

4. Turning Away → Face Like Flint

5. Mocking → Divine Help

6. Human Accusation → Divine Vindication

7. Temporary Enemies → Eternal God

8. Darkness → Trust

9. Reliance on God → Self-Made Fire

10. Faith → Torment of Self-Reliance

Key Truth

Isaiah 50 contrasts disobedient Israel with the perfectly obedient Servant and contrasts humble trust in God’s darkness with arrogant dependence on humanity’s self-made light.

LXXXVII. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 50

1. Sin, Not Divine Weakness, Caused Israel’s Judgment

Principle:

God’s power to redeem never failed.

---

2. God Still Calls

Principle:

The tragedy is when people refuse to answer.

---

3. The Servant Listens Before He Speaks

Principle:

An opened ear produces a taught tongue.

---

4. The Servant Sustains the Weary

Principle:

Truth should strengthen exhausted hearts.

---

5. The Servant Is Perfectly Obedient

Principle:

He refuses rebellion even when obedience becomes costly.

---

6. The Servant Willingly Suffers

Principle:

His path includes beating, mockery, and humiliation.

---

7. The Servant Is Determined

Principle:

His face is set like flint because His confidence is in God.

---

8. God Vindicates His Servant

Principle:

Human accusation cannot overturn the divine verdict.

---

9. Faithful People May Experience Dark Seasons

Principle:

Darkness is not always evidence of disobedience.

---

10. Faith Trusts Without Seeing

Principle:

When there is no visible light, rely on God’s name.

---

11. Self-Made Light Is Dangerous

Principle:

Human independence cannot replace divine guidance.

---

12. Jesus Is the Perfect Pattern of Obedient Servanthood

Principle:

The Gospel accounts vividly fulfill the Servant's suffering and steadfast obedience.

LXXXVIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Why had Israel experienced separation and captivity?

Because of sin and transgression, not because God lacked power.

Question 2

Had God become unable to redeem?

No.

His hand was not too short.

Question 3

What does God cite as evidence of His power?

His authority to dry the sea, turn rivers into desert, and darken the heavens.

Question 4

What is the first characteristic of the Servant in verse 4?

He possesses the tongue of one taught by God.

Question 5

What does the Servant do with His words?

He sustains the weary.

Question 6

What happens morning by morning?

God awakens and opens the Servant’s ear to listen.

Question 7

How does the Servant respond to God?

He is not rebellious and does not turn away.

Question 8

What suffering does He willingly endure?

Beating, abuse to His cheeks, mocking, and spitting.

Question 9

How does the New Testament connect with verse 6?

The Gospel accounts describe Jesus being scourged, struck, mocked, and spat upon.

Question 10

Why does the Servant remain confident?

Because the Sovereign Lord helps Him.

Question 11

What does it mean that His face is like flint?

He is resolutely committed to obedience and will not turn from His mission.

Question 12

What New Testament event strongly reflects this?

Jesus setting His face toward Jerusalem.

Question 13

Who vindicates the Servant?

God.

Question 14

Does the Servant fear His accusers?

No.

He confidently challenges their accusations because God is His vindicator.

Question 15

What eventually happens to His opponents?

They wear out like an old garment.

Question 16

Can someone fear God and still walk through darkness?

Yes.

Verse 10 explicitly describes such a person.

Question 17

What should a faithful person do during such darkness?

Trust in the Lord’s name and rely on God.

Question 18

What should he not do?

Manufacture his own substitute light in place of trusting God.

Question 19

What do the fires and sparks of verse 11 represent?

Self-generated guidance, security, and confidence independent of God.

Question 20

What is the end of self-made light?

Sorrow and judgment.

Question 21

What major contrast does the chapter make?

Disobedient Israel is contrasted with the perfectly obedient Servant.

Question 22

Who ultimately fulfills this Servant portrait?

Jesus Christ.

Question 23

Does the Servant suffer because He has sinned?

No.

He suffers while walking in perfect obedience.

Question 24

What does this teach about suffering?

Suffering is not always proof of personal disobedience.

Question 25

What is one of the chapter’s strongest lessons for believers?

It is better to trust God in unexplained darkness than to manufacture a path apart from Him.

LXXXIX. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 50 asks several searching questions.

Have I Blamed God for Distance Created by Sin?

Have I asked:

Where is God?

Without asking:

Where have I wandered?

Do I Really Believe God’s Arm Is Long Enough to Redeem Me?

My past?

My family?

My situation?

My bondage?

When God Calls, Do I:

Answer?

Is My Ear Open Before My Mouth Is?

Do I spend enough time:

Listening?

Before:

Speaking?

Do My Words Sustain:

The weary?

Or add:

Weight?

Am I teachable:

Morning by morning?

Is there something God has clearly said that I am:

Resisting?

Would I obey if obedience became:

Painful?

Costly?

Unpopular?

Have I confused suffering with:

God’s displeasure?

Can I follow Christ when faithfulness produces:

Mocking?

Rejection?

Is my face set toward:

God’s will?

Or am I always searching for:

An easier path?

Do I trust God to:

Vindicate?

Or do I feel compelled to answer every:

Accusation?

Am I presently walking through:

Darkness?

Can I trust God without:

Understanding everything?

Am I tempted to create:

My own fire?

My own plan?

My own shortcut?

My own explanation?

My own security?

Which is guiding me:

God’s character?

Or:

My sparks?

XC. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“It Is Better to Walk with God in the Dark Than to Walk Without God in Your Own Light”

Verse 10 says:

Trust God in:

Darkness.

Verse 11 says:

Do not substitute:

Your own fire.

Principle:

Faith does not demand that God illuminate the entire road before taking the next step; it rests in the character of the One who leads even when the road remains dark.

XCI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“An Open Ear Produces an Obedient Life”

The Servant says:

> **“He opens My ear.”**

Then:

> **“I was not rebellious.”**

Principle:

Spiritual obedience begins with spiritual attentiveness; people who continually listen to God become increasingly prepared to follow God.

XCII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Servant’s Face Was Flint Because His Heart Was Surrendered”

His determination was not:

Self-will.

It was:

Submitted will.

Principle:

Holy determination is strongest when the will has already surrendered to God.

XCIII. THE REDEEMER IS NOT WEAK

The first question is settled:

God can:

Save.

Spiritual Principle

Never confuse divine patience with:

Divine inability.

XCIV. SIN EXPLAINS THE EXILE

The Bible does not minimize:

Responsibility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace becomes precious when we stop blaming God for consequences sin created.

XCV. GOD STILL CAME

“When I came.”

Spiritual Principle

God had not stopped:

Seeking.

XCVI. GOD STILL CALLED

“When I called.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine calling can continue even after repeated human rebellion.

XCVII. NO ONE ANSWERED

That is the tragedy.

Spiritual Principle

Hearing sound is not the same as:

Answering God.

XCVIII. THE SERVANT ANSWERS

This is the contrast.

Israel:

No answer.

Servant:

Open ear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Where rebellion says “no,” the Servant’s life says “yes.”

XCIX. THE WEARY NEED A WORD

Not merely:

Information.

Spiritual Principle

Truth becomes pastoral when it reaches:

Exhausted people.

C. MORNING BY MORNING

Faithfulness is:

Daily.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Major obedience is often built out of thousands of small mornings of listening.

CI. THE OPEN EAR

A gift from:

The Sovereign Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual responsiveness depends upon:

Grace.

CII. OBEDIENCE BEFORE SUFFERING

The Servant first:

Listens.

Then:

Suffers.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

His suffering is not random tragedy; it occurs on the road of chosen obedience.

CIII. THE SUFFERING BEFORE ISAIAH 53

Isaiah 50 already gives:

Back beaten.

Cheeks abused.

Face mocked.

Spitting.

Later Isaiah 53 will deepen the picture.

Key Truth

The suffering Servant theme is developing progressively toward the great redemptive portrait of Isaiah 53.

CIV. THE SERVANT DOES NOT RETALIATE

The chapter emphasizes:

Submission.

Confidence.

Vindication.

Not:

Personal revenge.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant entrusts judgment to:

God.

CV. GOD HELPS IN SUFFERING

Not necessarily:

By removing it immediately.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes divine help means deliverance from suffering; sometimes it means strength to remain obedient through suffering.

CVI. FACE LIKE FLINT IS NOT HARD HEART

Important distinction.

Hard heart:

Resists God.

Flint face:

Obeys God.

Spiritual Principle

Resolve is righteous only when pointed in:

God’s direction.

CVII. SHAME IS NOT FINAL

Human court:

Mocks.

God’s court:

Vindicates.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not let a temporary courtroom define an eternal verdict.

CVIII. “WHO WILL BRING CHARGES?”

The language anticipates:

Romans 8.

Spiritual Principle

Divine justification silences:

Ultimate accusation.

CIX. MOTH-EATEN OPPOSITION

What looks permanent:

Decays.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Your accuser is temporary.

God’s verdict is not.

CX. THE OBEDIENT PERSON IN DARKNESS

This may be one of the chapter’s most important pastoral truths.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness and clarity do not always arrive:

Together.

CXI. TRUST WITHOUT EXPLANATION

God may give:

Presence.

Before:

Answers.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You do not need to understand the entire plan to trust the character of the Planner.

CXII. RELY ON HIS GOD

Not:

Self.

Spiritual Principle

Dependence is the opposite of:

Self-made fire.

CXIII. SELF-MADE FIRE LOOKS ATTRACTIVE

It offers:

Immediate illumination.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A shortcut is attractive precisely because it promises immediate light where faith requires patient trust.

CXIV. SPARKS DO NOT LAST

They flash.

Then:

Disappear.

Spiritual Principle

Human solutions often have:

Short-lived brilliance.

CXV. GOD’S LIGHT VERSUS OUR FIRE

One is:

Revelation.

The other:

Invention.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not mistake something you manufactured for something God revealed.

CXVI. THE CHOICE OF ISAIAH 50

Listen to:

The Servant.

Or:

Self.

Trust:

God.

Or:

Your own torch.

Key Truth

The crisis of faith is often not whether there will be darkness, but whose light we will trust when darkness comes.

CXVII. ISAIAH 48–50

Isaiah 48

Israel is:

Stubborn.

Isaiah 49

The Servant is:

Called to restore Israel and reach the nations.

Isaiah 50

The Servant is:

Perfectly obedient even through suffering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

As Israel’s failure becomes clearer, the perfection of the Servant becomes brighter.

CXVIII. ISAIAH 49:4 AND ISAIAH 50:7

Isaiah 49:4

The Servant experiences:

Apparent futility.

Isaiah 50:7

The Servant sets His face like:

Flint.

Key Truth

Discouragement does not derail His obedience.

CXIX. ISAIAH 50 AND THE GOSPELS

Isaiah says:

Beating.

Spitting.

Mocking.

Jesus experiences:

Beating.

Spitting.

Mocking.

Isaiah says:

The Servant does not turn away.

Jesus moves willingly toward:

Jerusalem.

Spiritual Principle

The Gospel passion narratives give concrete historical shape to Isaiah’s portrait of the obedient suffering Servant.

CXX. NINE GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 50

1. Israel’s Sin Is Exposed

Their separation came through rebellion.

2. God’s Power Is Defended

His hand is not too short to redeem.

3. The Servant Receives an Open Ear

He listens like a disciple.

4. The Servant Receives a Taught Tongue

He strengthens the weary.

5. The Servant Obeys

He refuses rebellion and does not turn away.

6. The Servant Suffers

He accepts beating, mocking, and spitting.

7. The Servant Perseveres

His face is set like flint.

8. The Servant Trusts God for Vindication

Human accusers cannot overturn the divine verdict.

9. Humanity Faces a Choice

Trust God in darkness or live by the false fire of self-reliance.

Key Truth

Isaiah 50 moves from Israel's rebellious failure to the Servant's perfect obedience and ends by asking every hearer whether they will follow the Servant in trusting God or attempt to illuminate life apart from Him.

CXXI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 50 begins with:

Questions.

Why are you:

Separated?

Did God become:

Weak?

Did God lose:

Power?

Did someone:

Overcome Him?

The answer:

No.

> **"Is My hand too short to redeem you?"**

No.

The Redeemer is still:

Strong.

The first lesson is:

Do not blame God’s weakness for what sin:

Destroyed.

But then Isaiah moves from:

Disobedient Israel.

To:

The obedient Servant.

And suddenly we hear:

“Morning by morning He awakens Me.”

What a picture of:

Jesus.

Listening.

Receiving.

Obeying.

The Servant has:

An open ear.

Therefore He has:

A taught tongue.

And what does He do with:

That tongue?

He sustains:

The weary.

If our words supposedly come from:

God—

Do they strengthen:

Weary people?

Then:

“I was not rebellious.”

Israel was.

The Servant:

Was not.

Then:

“Nor did I turn away.”

Even when the path led toward:

Beating.

Mocking.

Spitting.

He did not:

Turn away.

That points us toward:

Christ.

Jesus did not reach Jerusalem because:

Events trapped Him.

He set His face:

Toward it.

Then the Servant says:

“The Sovereign Lord helps Me.”

Notice:

God’s help did not mean:

No beating.

No mocking.

No pain.

Sometimes we define God’s help as:

Removing difficulty.

Isaiah shows another kind:

God gives strength to remain obedient while passing through:

Difficulty.

Then:

“I have set My face like flint.”

Do you have anything in your life where you need:

Holy resolve?

Not stubbornness against God.

But determination to:

Obey God.

The difference matters.

A stiff neck says:

“I will not obey.”

A flint face says:

“I will not stop obeying.”

Then the accusers come.

But the Servant asks:

Who can condemn?

Why?

God:

Vindicates.

You do not have to spend your whole life:

Defending yourself.

Explaining yourself.

Winning every argument.

If your heart is right and your path obedient:

Trust God with:

The final verdict.

Then verse 10 speaks to anyone walking through:

A dark season.

You fear:

God.

You obey:

His Servant.

Yet you cannot see:

Light.

Isaiah does not say:

You must be wicked.

Instead:

> **“Trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God.”**

Maybe you cannot see:

Tomorrow.

Trust:

God.

Maybe you do not understand:

Why.

Trust:

God.

Maybe prayer seems:

Unanswered.

Trust:

God.

Maybe the path is:

Dark.

Trust:

God.

Then comes the temptation.

Light:

Your own fire.

Create:

Your own answer.

Force:

Your own solution.

Take:

Your own shortcut.

Isaiah says:

Do not.

It is better to have:

No visible light.

And:

God.

Than:

A thousand sparks.

Without Him.

That is the challenge of Isaiah 50.

Will you trust:

The Servant?

Will you follow:

His obedience?

Will you listen:

Morning by morning?

Will you remain faithful when:

Obedience hurts?

Will you trust God when:

Accusers speak?

Will you trust Him when:

The road is dark?

Or will you light:

Your own fire?

The obedient Servant shows us:

The better way.

Listen.

Obey.

Endure.

Trust.

Keep going.

Because the Sovereign Lord:

Helps.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that Your hand is not:

Too short.

Thank You that Your power to redeem has never:

Failed.

Forgive us for blaming You for consequences caused by:

Sin.

Give us hearts that:

Answer.

When You call.

Father, thank You for:

The Servant.

Thank You for:

Jesus Christ.

Thank You for His:

Perfect obedience.

Open our ears as You opened:

His.

Teach us:

Morning by morning.

Before we speak:

Teach us to listen.

Before we instruct:

Teach us to learn.

Give us words that:

Sustain the weary.

Not words that:

Crush them.

Father, deliver us from:

Rebellion.

When obedience becomes difficult:

Keep us from turning away.

When faithfulness costs:

Something—

Strengthen us.

Thank You that Jesus endured:

Mocking.

Beating.

Spitting.

Shame.

And remained:

Obedient.

Teach us to set our faces toward:

Your will.

Not with proud stubbornness.

But with:

Holy resolve.

Father, when people accuse:

Help us trust You to vindicate.

When we are misunderstood:

Guard our hearts.

When human voices condemn:

Remind us that Your verdict matters:

Most.

Father, some seasons are:

Dark.

Sometimes we do not understand:

Where You are leading.

Why You allowed something.

When the answer will come.

In those moments:

Teach us to trust Your name.

Teach us to rely on:

You.

Protect us from:

Self-made fires.

Self-created answers.

Shortcuts.

False wisdom.

Human sparks.

Keep us from walking away from Your will simply because we cannot see:

The whole road.

May we remember:

It is better to walk with You in darkness than to walk without You in our own light.

Make us:

Listeners.

Disciples.

Obedient servants.

Faithful followers.

And keep our eyes fixed upon:

Jesus Christ.

The perfectly obedient Servant of the Lord.

In His name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“The Sovereign Lord has opened My ear, and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away.” — Isaiah 50:5**

Central Truth

Israel’s separation resulted from sin rather than any weakness in God’s ability to redeem, while the faithful Servant—fulfilled ultimately in Jesus Christ—listens perfectly to the Father, strengthens the weary with His words, obeys without rebellion, willingly endures beating, mocking, and shame, confidently trusts God for vindication, and calls all who walk through darkness to rely upon the Lord rather than the self-made fires of human wisdom and independence.

Isaiah 50 in One Sentence

Isaiah declares that Israel’s captivity came through sin rather than weakness in God’s redeeming arm, then presents the obedient Servant fulfilled in Jesus Christ, whose opened ear produces perfect obedience, whose taught tongue strengthens the weary, whose willing suffering includes beating, mocking, and spitting, whose face remains set like flint because God will vindicate Him, and whose followers are called to trust the Lord even in darkness rather than attempting to guide themselves by the deceptive fire of human self-reliance.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 51 — The Lord’s Comfort and Everlasting Salvation

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 51 is a chapter of:

Comfort.

Remembrance.

Righteousness.

Salvation.

Courage.

Deliverance.

Restoration.

The chapter repeatedly calls God’s people to:

Listen.

Look.

Remember.

Awake.

Trust.

Israel has passed through:

Judgment.

Exile.

Fear.

Oppression.

Desolation.

Yet God now directs their attention away from:

Their present weakness.

Toward:

His past faithfulness.

His eternal righteousness.

His everlasting salvation.

His covenant promises.

His sovereign power.

The chapter begins:

> **“Listen to Me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the Lord.”**

These are people who:

Want God.

Seek righteousness.

Long for restoration.

Yet they may be tempted to look at their smallness and conclude:

Nothing great can happen again.

God tells them:

Look backward.

Look to:

Abraham.

Look to:

Sarah.

Abraham began as:

One man.

Yet God blessed him and made him:

Many.

The lesson is clear.

God does not need:

Large beginnings.

He can multiply:

What appears small.

He can restore:

What appears barren.

He can make Zion’s wilderness:

Like Eden.

Then God moves from:

Abraham.

To:

The nations.

His instruction will go out.

His justice will become:

Light.

His righteousness draws:

Near.

His salvation is:

Coming.

Then comes one of the great contrasts in Isaiah.

The heavens will:

Vanish.

The earth will:

Wear out.

People will:

Die.

But:

“My salvation will last forever.”

Everything visible appears:

Permanent.

Yet is temporary.

God’s salvation appears:

Invisible.

Yet is eternal.

Then God addresses:

Fear.

His people fear:

Human reproach.

Human insults.

Oppressors.

God says:

Do not fear:

Mortals.

Why?

Because humans are:

Temporary.

Like garments eaten by:

Moths.

But God’s righteousness lasts:

Forever.

The people then cry:

“Awake, awake, arm of the Lord.”

They remember:

Egypt.

The sea.

The dragon.

The Exodus.

They are essentially praying:

God, do again what You did before.

Then God answers in effect:

I have not been:

Asleep.

The deeper problem is that His people have:

Forgotten.

Verse 12 says:

> **“I, even I, am He who comforts you.”**

Then the Lord asks:

Why are you afraid of man?

Why have you forgotten:

Your Maker?

The fear of the oppressor grows when the memory of:

God.

Shrinks.

The chapter then turns toward:

Jerusalem.

Jerusalem has drunk:

The cup of divine wrath.

The city staggers under:

Judgment.

Her children are:

Faint.

Her leaders are:

Helpless.

Her suffering is:

Severe.

But God announces:

> **“I have taken out of your hand the cup that made you stagger.”**

Judgment will not remain:

Forever.

The cup is removed.

God will:

Defend His people.

The chapter therefore moves from:

Remembering Abraham.

To:

Everlasting salvation.

To:

Freedom from fear.

To:

A new Exodus.

To:

Divine comfort.

To:

The removal of wrath.

The central truth of Isaiah 51 is:

The Lord calls His people to remember His faithfulness to Abraham, trust His everlasting salvation, refuse the fear of temporary human oppressors, remember His mighty acts of deliverance, receive His personal comfort, and believe that the same God who allowed Jerusalem to drink the cup of judgment can remove that cup and restore His afflicted people.

I. LOOK TO THE ROCK FROM WHICH YOU WERE CUT

Isaiah 51:1 — Remember Your Spiritual Origins

> **“Listen to Me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the Lord: Look to the rock from which you were cut, and to the quarry from which you were dug.”**

God speaks to people who:

Pursue righteousness.

Seek Him.

Yet He tells them:

Look back.

Remember:

Where you came from.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 32:4

The Lord is called the Rock whose work is perfect and whose ways are just and faithful.

1 Corinthians 10:4

Paul uses rock imagery in connection with Christ and God’s sustaining provision for His people.

Genesis 15:5

God took Abraham outside, showed him the stars, and promised descendants too numerous to count.

Spiritual Principle

Faith gains strength by remembering:

God’s beginnings.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When the future looks too small, remember what God has already built from almost nothing.

II. LOOK TO ABRAHAM AND SARAH

Isaiah 51:2 — One Man Became Many

> **“Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who gave you birth. When I called him, he was only one man, but I blessed him and made him many.”**

Abraham was:

One.

Sarah was:

Barren.

Yet God created:

A nation.

Cross References

Genesis 12:1

God called Abraham to leave his country and go where God would lead him.

Genesis 17:5

God changed Abram’s name to Abraham because he would become the father of many nations.

Hebrews 11:8

Abraham obeyed God’s call by faith even though he did not know the final destination.

Spiritual Principle

God specializes in:

Multiplying small beginnings.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse smallness with impossibility when God is the One giving the promise.

III. ONE MAN, MANY DESCENDANTS

The phrase:

> **“Only one man.”**

Emphasizes:

Human limitation.

Then:

> **“I blessed him and made him many.”**

Emphasizes:

Divine power.

Spiritual Principle

God does not need:

Large numbers.

To begin:

Large works.

IV. ZION’S DESERT WILL BECOME EDEN

Isaiah 51:3 — Comfort for the Ruins

> **“For the Lord will comfort Zion; He will comfort all her ruins. He will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of singing.”**

Notice:

All her ruins.

God sees:

Every broken place.

And speaks:

Comfort.

Desert becomes:

Eden.

Wasteland becomes:

Garden.

Silence becomes:

Singing.

Cross References

Isaiah 35:1

The wilderness and desert are promised joy and blossoming under God’s restoration.

Ezekiel 36:35

Ruined land is compared to the garden of Eden when God restores His people.

Isaiah 40:1

God commands comfort for His covenant people after judgment.

Spiritual Principle

God does not merely:

Repair.

He can:

Transform.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who planted Eden can make a garden out of a place grief called permanently barren.

V. JOY RETURNS TO THE RUINS

God does not say:

There were never ruins.

He says:

I will comfort:

Them.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration does not require:

Pretending the devastation never happened.

VI. LISTEN TO GOD’S TEACHING

Isaiah 51:4 — Justice as Light to the Nations

> **“Listen to Me, My people; hear Me, My nation. My teaching will go out from Me; My justice will become a light to the nations.”**

God’s teaching moves:

Outward.

His justice becomes:

Light.

The purpose reaches:

Nations.

Cross References

Isaiah 2:3

The nations come to learn the Lord’s ways, and God’s instruction goes out from Zion.

Micah 4:2

Many peoples seek God’s teaching so they may walk in His paths.

Isaiah 42:4

The Servant establishes justice and distant lands wait for His instruction.

Spiritual Principle

God’s truth was never intended to remain:

Hidden.

VII. GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS DRAWS NEAR

Isaiah 51:5 — Salvation Is on the Way

> **“My righteousness draws near speedily, My salvation is on the way, and My arm will bring justice to the nations. The islands will look to Me and wait in hope for My arm.”**

Three great movements:

Righteousness:

Near.

Salvation:

Coming.

Justice:

Extending.

Cross References

Isaiah 46:13

God previously said He was bringing righteousness near and salvation would not delay.

Isaiah 42:4

The nations and coastlands wait for the Servant’s justice and teaching.

Romans 1:16

The gospel is God’s power for salvation to everyone who believes.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation moves:

Toward people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When you feel far from righteousness, remember that grace announces righteousness drawing near.

VIII. THE NATIONS WAIT FOR GOD’S ARM

The arm represents:

Power.

Action.

Deliverance.

Spiritual Principle

Hope belongs in:

God’s strength.

Not:

Human power.

IX. HEAVENS AND EARTH WILL PASS

Isaiah 51:6 — Salvation Will Not

> **“Lift up your eyes to the heavens; look at the earth beneath. The heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and its inhabitants will die like flies. But My salvation will last forever, and My righteousness will never fail.”**

Everything visible is:

Temporary.

God’s salvation is:

Permanent.

Cross References

Matthew 24:35

Jesus says heaven and earth will pass away, but His words will not pass away.

2 Peter 3:10

Peter describes the present created order undergoing dramatic final judgment and transformation.

Psalm 102:25

The heavens and earth are God’s works and can wear out, while God remains.

Spiritual Principle

Do not build eternal confidence on:

Temporary creation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The most permanent-looking thing you can see is less permanent than the salvation you cannot see.

X. GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL NEVER FAIL

Human righteousness:

Fails.

Governments:

Fail.

Systems:

Fail.

God’s righteousness:

Never.

Spiritual Principle

Eternal security rests in:

God’s character.

XI. DO NOT FEAR HUMAN REPROACH

Isaiah 51:7 — God’s Law in the Heart

> **“Listen to Me, you who know righteousness, you people who have My law in your hearts: Do not fear the reproach of mere mortals, or be terrified by their insults.”**

God’s people may experience:

Mocking.

Criticism.

Reproach.

Insults.

But God says:

Do not fear.

Cross References

Matthew 5:11

Jesus calls His followers blessed when people insult and persecute them falsely because of Him.

1 Peter 3:14

Believers are told not to fear threats when suffering for righteousness.

Psalm 37:31

The law of God in the heart produces stability and direction.

Spiritual Principle

Human opinion should not outweigh:

Divine truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If God’s law is in your heart, do not let another person’s insult become lord over your mind.

XII. PEOPLE ARE TEMPORARY

Isaiah 51:8 — Moth-Eaten Garments

> **“For the moth will eat them up like a garment; the worm will devour them like wool. But My righteousness will last forever, My salvation through all generations.”**

Human opposition:

Temporary.

Divine salvation:

Generational.

Cross References

Matthew 6:19

Jesus warns that earthly treasures are vulnerable to moth, decay, and loss.

Isaiah 50:9

The Servant had already said His accusers would wear out like garments eaten by moths.

Psalm 119:89

God’s Word stands firmly established forever.

Spiritual Principle

Do not fear temporary people more than:

The eternal God.

XIII. THE PEOPLE CRY: “AWAKE, ARM OF THE LORD”

Isaiah 51:9 — Remembering Ancient Deliverance

> **“Awake, awake, arm of the Lord, clothe Yourself with strength! Awake, as in days gone by, as in generations of old. Was it not You who cut Rahab to pieces, who pierced the dragon?”**

The people appeal to:

God’s past victories.

“Rahab” here functions as poetic imagery connected with:

Egypt.

Proud opposition.

Chaotic power.

The dragon imagery describes:

A defeated enemy.

Cross References

Isaiah 52:1

The repeated cry “Awake, awake” soon shifts toward Zion herself, showing that God’s people also must rise in response to divine action.

Psalm 89:10

God is praised for crushing Rahab and scattering His enemies with His powerful arm.

Exodus 15:6

God’s right hand is praised for its majestic power over Egypt.

Spiritual Principle

Past deliverance gives language for:

Present prayer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When you do not know how to pray about tomorrow, remember what God did yesterday.

XIV. RAHAB AND THE DRAGON

This language should not be reduced carelessly to:

Literal mythology.

Isaiah uses poetic imagery for:

Proud hostile power.

Especially:

Egypt.

Spiritual Principle

God’s victory over oppressive power is:

Complete.

XV. GOD MADE A ROAD THROUGH THE SEA

Isaiah 51:10 — A New Exodus Hope

> **“Was it not You who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, who made a road in the depths of the sea so that the redeemed might cross over?”**

The Red Sea becomes:

Evidence.

The sea did not merely:

Disappear.

It became:

A road.

Cross References

Exodus 14:21

God parted the sea so Israel crossed through on dry ground.

Psalm 106:9

God rebuked the Red Sea, dried it, and led His people through the depths.

Isaiah 43:16

God identifies Himself as the One who made a path through the mighty waters.

Spiritual Principle

God can turn:

The barrier.

Into:

The road.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The thing standing between you and freedom may become the very place where God displays His power.

XVI. THE REDEEMED WILL RETURN WITH SINGING

Isaiah 51:11 — Sorrow Will Flee

> **“Those the Lord has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.”**

What a reversal.

Exile:

Return.

Weeping:

Singing.

Sorrow:

Joy.

Sighing:

Gone.

Cross References

Isaiah 35:10

The same promise appears earlier: the redeemed return to Zion with everlasting joy.

Revelation 21:4

In final restoration, God wipes away tears and removes death, mourning, crying, and pain.

Psalm 126:5

Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy.

Spiritual Principle

Sorrow is:

Real.

But for the redeemed:

Not eternal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sorrow may travel with you for a season, but it does not have permission to cross every border into eternity.

XVII. JOY WILL OVERTAKE THEM

Usually we think of:

Trouble.

Overtaking.

Here:

Joy.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration can pursue His people with:

Gladness.

XVIII. GOD HIMSELF COMFORTS

Isaiah 51:12 — Why Fear Grass-Like Mortals?

> **“I, even I, am He who comforts you. Who are you that you fear mere mortals, human beings who are but grass,”**

God says:

I comfort.

Then asks:

Why fear:

Humans?

Cross References

2 Corinthians 1:3

God is praised as the Father of mercies and God of all comfort.

Psalm 103:15

Human life is compared to grass that flourishes briefly and then passes.

Isaiah 40:6

All flesh is like grass and human glory like a fading flower.

Spiritual Principle

Fear becomes distorted when:

Temporary humans appear greater than the eternal God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If the One comforting you is eternal, do not let the one threatening you become larger in your mind than God.

XIX. FEAR OF MAN AND FORGETFULNESS OF GOD

Isaiah 51:13 — “You Forget the Lord Your Maker”

> **“That you forget the Lord your Maker, who stretches out the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth, that you live in constant terror every day because of the wrath of the oppressor, who is bent on destruction? But where is the wrath of the oppressor?”**

This verse connects:

Fear.

With:

Forgetfulness.

They feared:

Oppressor.

Because they forgot:

Maker.

Cross References

Psalm 100:3

God’s people are reminded that the Lord made them and they belong to Him.

Psalm 118:6

Because the Lord is with him, the psalmist refuses to fear what people can do.

Isaiah 40:22

God sits above the earth and stretches out the heavens, revealing His incomparable greatness.

Spiritual Principle

Fear of man increases as awareness of God:

Decreases.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The problem is not always that the enemy became bigger.

Sometimes God became smaller in our thoughts.

XX. CONSTANT TERROR

Fear can become:

Daily.

Habitual.

Controlling.

Spiritual Principle

God does not call His people to live under:

Permanent psychological rule by the oppressor.

XXI. “WHERE IS THE WRATH OF THE OPPRESSOR?”

The oppressor looked:

Permanent.

God asks:

Where is he?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Today’s terror may become tomorrow’s question:

“Where did it go?”

XXII. THE PRISONER WILL BE RELEASED

Isaiah 51:14 — Freedom and Provision

> **“The cowering prisoners will soon be set free; they will not die in their dungeon, nor will they lack bread.”**

God promises:

Release.

Life.

Bread.

Cross References

Isaiah 61:1

The Spirit-anointed mission includes proclaiming liberty to captives.

Zechariah 9:11

God promises to free prisoners from a waterless pit because of covenant faithfulness.

Psalm 102:20

God hears the groaning of prisoners and acts to release those condemned to death.

Spiritual Principle

God sees people:

In dungeons.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A prison may restrict your movement without restricting God’s ability to find you.

XXIII. THE GOD WHO STIRS THE SEA

Isaiah 51:15 — Lord Almighty

> **“For I am the Lord your God, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—the Lord Almighty is His name.”**

Why can He:

Free prisoners?

Because He is:

Lord.

God.

Commander of:

The sea.

Cross References

Job 26:12

God displays power over the sea and crushes proud forces through His wisdom.

Jeremiah 31:35

The Lord identifies Himself as the One who established the sun, moon, stars, and roaring sea.

Psalm 89:9

God rules the raging sea and stills its waves.

Spiritual Principle

The God controlling oceans can handle:

Oppressors.

XXIV. GOD PUTS HIS WORDS IN THE MOUTH

Isaiah 51:16 — Covered by God’s Hand

> **“I have put My words in your mouth and covered you with the shadow of My hand—I who set the heavens in place, who laid the foundations of the earth, and who say to Zion, ‘You are My people.’”**

Three great gifts:

Word.

Protection.

Identity.

Cross References

Jeremiah 1:9

God touches Jeremiah’s mouth and puts His words there.

Isaiah 49:2

The Servant was hidden in the shadow of God’s hand and prepared for His mission.

Hosea 2:23

God promises restored covenant identity, saying to those once rejected:

You are My people.

Spiritual Principle

God gives His people:

A message.

A covering.

A name.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who formed the heavens can place His Word in your mouth and still keep you beneath His hand.

XXV. “YOU ARE MY PEOPLE”

After:

Judgment.

Exile.

Fear.

Still:

My people.

Spiritual Principle

Discipline does not erase:

Covenant identity.

XXVI. JERUSALEM MUST AWAKE

Isaiah 51:17 — The Cup of Wrath

> **“Awake, awake! Rise up, Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the hand of the Lord the cup of His wrath. You who have drained to its dregs the goblet that makes people stagger.”**

Earlier:

The people said:

Awake, arm of the Lord.

Now:

Jerusalem is told:

Awake.

This is significant.

God is not:

Asleep.

His people must rise.

Cross References

Jeremiah 25:15

Jeremiah receives the imagery of the cup of God’s wrath poured out upon nations.

Revelation 14:10

The cup of divine wrath appears again in final judgment imagery.

Psalm 75:8

The wicked are pictured drinking from the cup of God’s judgment.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people cannot remain spiritually prostrate when God announces:

Restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes we pray, “God, wake up,” while God answers, “My child, it is time for you to rise.”

XXVII. THE CUP CAME FROM THE LORD’S HAND

This confirms:

Judgment.

Not accident.

Spiritual Principle

Israel’s exile was:

Discipline.

XXVIII. THE CUP MADE JERUSALEM STAGGER

Judgment affected:

Strength.

Direction.

Stability.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin can produce consequences that leave entire communities reeling.

XXIX. NO CHILD COULD GUIDE HER

Isaiah 51:18 — Jerusalem Left Helpless

> **“Among all the children she bore there was none to guide her; among all the children she reared there was none to take her by the hand.”**

Jerusalem needs:

Guidance.

But no human child can:

Provide it.

Cross References

Lamentations 1:2

Jerusalem is pictured weeping with no dependable comforter among former friends.

Lamentations 1:16

The city mourns because the comforter who could restore life seems distant.

Jeremiah 30:14

Former allies fail to help during judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Human help sometimes reaches:

Its limit.

XXX. DOUBLE CALAMITY

Isaiah 51:19 — Ruin, Destruction, Famine, Sword

> **“These double calamities have come upon you—ruin and destruction, famine and sword—and who can console you?”**

The devastation is:

Comprehensive.

External:

Ruin.

Destruction.

Material:

Famine.

Military:

Sword.

Cross References

Lamentations 2:11

Jeremiah weeps over the devastation of Jerusalem and the suffering of its people.

Revelation 6:8

Sword, famine, death, and destruction appear together in judgment imagery.

Ezekiel 14:21

God describes severe judgments including sword, famine, wild beasts, and plague.

Spiritual Principle

There are wounds:

Too deep.

For merely human comfort.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When human consolation reaches its end, divine comfort becomes more precious.

XXXI. JERUSALEM’S CHILDREN FAINT

Isaiah 51:20 — Trapped and Overwhelmed

> **“Your children have fainted; they lie at every street corner, like antelopes caught in a net. They are filled with the wrath of the Lord, with the rebuke of your God.”**

The imagery is:

Helpless.

Caught.

Exhausted.

Cross References

Lamentations 2:19

Children faint from hunger in Jerusalem’s streets during siege and devastation.

Nahum 3:10

The horrors of conquest include severe suffering among the vulnerable.

Lamentations 2:21

Young and old lie fallen under devastating judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Divine judgment is:

Serious.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never make God’s wrath so soft that sin appears harmless.

XXXII. AFFLICTED, BUT NOT DRUNK WITH WINE

Isaiah 51:21 — Staggering from Judgment

> **“Therefore hear this, you afflicted one, made drunk, but not with wine.”**

Jerusalem staggers:

Not because of alcohol.

Because of:

Suffering.

Judgment.

Affliction.

Cross References

Isaiah 29:9

Isaiah uses drunkenness imagery for spiritual confusion and staggering not caused by wine.

Isaiah 28:7

The effects of actual and figurative drunkenness illustrate impaired judgment.

Isaiah 63:6

Judgment imagery again uses the metaphor of intoxication and staggering.

Spiritual Principle

Pain can make life feel:

Disoriented.

XXXIII. GOD DEFENDS HIS PEOPLE

Isaiah 51:22 — The Cup Is Removed

> **“This is what your Sovereign Lord says, your God, who defends His people: ‘See, I have taken out of your hand the cup that made you stagger; from that cup, the goblet of My wrath, you will never drink again.’”**

What a reversal.

Verse 17:

Drink.

Verse 22:

Cup removed.

God identifies Himself as:

Sovereign Lord.

Your God.

Defender.

Cross References

Jeremiah 25:17

The cup of wrath is administered under God’s sovereign judgment.

Jeremiah 25:28

The nations cannot simply refuse the cup God assigns in judgment.

Psalm 60:3

God’s people speak of drinking staggering wine in a season of judgment.

Spiritual Principle

The God who disciplines has authority to say:

Enough.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never assume the cup of discipline must remain in your hand forever when God has power to remove it.

XXXIV. GOD IS BOTH JUDGE AND DEFENDER

This is essential.

The same God who gave:

The cup.

Now takes it:

Away.

Spiritual Principle

Divine discipline and divine compassion are not:

Contradictions.

XXXV. “YOU WILL NEVER DRINK AGAIN”

In context this is a strong promise concerning:

The specific judgment being addressed.

It should not be turned into a claim that Israel would never again face any historical discipline whatsoever.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Read promises as strongly as the text gives them, but not more broadly than the context allows.

XXXVI. THE CUP PASSES TO THE TORMENTORS

Isaiah 51:23 — Justice Reverses the Oppression

> **“I will put it into the hands of your tormentors, who said to you, ‘Fall prostrate that we may walk on you.’ And you made your back like the ground, like a street to be walked on.”**

The oppressors humiliated:

Zion.

They walked upon:

Her.

But oppression will not:

Last forever.

Cross References

Zechariah 12:2

Jerusalem becomes a cup connected with judgment upon surrounding hostile nations.

Obadiah 1:15

The Day of the Lord brings a principle of just recompense: what the nations have done returns upon them.

Lamentations 3:30

The afflicted one bears humiliation and abuse during suffering.

Spiritual Principle

God sees:

Humiliation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The person being walked on may look powerless, but the Judge is still watching the street.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 51 TEACHES ABOUT REMEMBRANCE

Look to:

The rock.

Abraham.

Sarah.

The Exodus.

Spiritual Principle

Memory can become:

Fuel for faith.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When present circumstances argue against hope, answer them with remembered evidence of God’s faithfulness.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 51 TEACHES ABOUT SMALL BEGINNINGS

One man.

Barren woman.

Large nation.

Spiritual Principle

God can multiply:

What appears insignificant.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 51 TEACHES ABOUT RESTORATION

Desert:

Eden.

Wasteland:

Garden.

Ruins:

Comforted.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoration does not merely bring you back to survival; sometimes He turns wasteland into garden.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 51 TEACHES ABOUT SALVATION

Salvation is:

Near.

Eternal.

Generational.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation is more durable than:

Creation.

XLI. WHAT ISAIAH 51 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN FEAR

Mortals:

Grass.

Garments.

Moth-eaten.

Temporary.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not give temporary people permanent control over your heart.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 51 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S ARM

The arm:

Defeats Egypt.

Opens the sea.

Brings justice.

Saves.

Spiritual Principle

God’s arm symbolizes:

Active saving power.

XLIII. WHAT ISAIAH 51 TEACHES ABOUT COMFORT

God says:

> **“I, even I, am He who comforts you.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest comfort is not an explanation from God but God Himself.

XLIV. WHAT ISAIAH 51 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR AND MEMORY

They forgot:

Maker.

Then feared:

Man.

Spiritual Principle

Fear often grows in the soil of:

Spiritual forgetfulness.

XLV. WHAT ISAIAH 51 TEACHES ABOUT PRISONERS

They cower.

Yet:

Will be freed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A frightened prisoner can still belong to a coming deliverance.

XLVI. WHAT ISAIAH 51 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S WORD

He places:

His words.

In the mouth.

Spiritual Principle

God’s mission depends upon:

God’s message.

XLVII. WHAT ISAIAH 51 TEACHES ABOUT IDENTITY

God says to Zion:

> **“You are My people.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Judgment may change circumstances without cancelling covenant identity.

XLVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 51 TEACHES ABOUT WRATH

The cup is:

Real.

Severe.

Divine.

Spiritual Principle

God’s comfort should never be understood in a way that denies:

God’s holiness.

XLIX. WHAT ISAIAH 51 TEACHES ABOUT MERCY

The cup is:

Removed.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment does not prevent:

Mercy.

L. WHAT ISAIAH 51 TEACHES ABOUT OPPRESSORS

They appear:

Powerful.

Permanent.

Unstoppable.

But the cup changes:

Hands.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Oppressors may control the street for a season, but they do not control the Judge.

LI. LISTEN TO ME

The chapter repeatedly calls:

Listen.

Spiritual Principle

Comfort begins with:

Hearing God.

LII. LOOK TO THE ROCK

Look away from:

Present desolation.

Toward:

Past faithfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes faith needs to look backward before it can look forward.

LIII. ABRAHAM WAS ONE

Smallness.

Spiritual Principle

God’s mathematics does not require:

Human abundance.

LIV. SARAH WAS BARREN

Impossibility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can begin a future in a place human strength labels empty.

LV. GOD MADE HIM MANY

Promise fulfilled through:

Divine power.

Spiritual Principle

Multiplication belongs to:

God.

LVI. COMFORT ALL HER RUINS

Not:

Some.

All.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not become overwhelmed by the number of broken places.

LVII. DESERT LIKE EDEN

Restoration reaches:

Environment.

Spiritual Principle

Grace can create:

Beauty after devastation.

LVIII. THANKSGIVING RETURNS

Why?

Because restoration produces:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God restores the ruined place, do not forget to restore the song.

LIX. TEACHING GOES OUT

Truth moves:

Outward.

Spiritual Principle

God’s revelation has:

Mission.

LX. JUSTICE AS LIGHT

Justice is not:

Darkness.

It reveals:

What is right.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s justice is part of His light to the nations.

LXI. RIGHTEOUSNESS DRAWS NEAR

God acts:

First.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation begins with:

Divine initiative.

LXII. ISLANDS WAIT

Distant lands:

Hope.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s saving arm is long enough to reach people far beyond Israel.

LXIII. LIFT YOUR EYES

Heaven.

Earth.

Look.

Spiritual Principle

Visible creation teaches:

Impermanence.

LXIV. HEAVENS LIKE SMOKE

Even enormous creation is:

Temporary.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not confuse size with permanence.

LXV. EARTH LIKE A GARMENT

It wears:

Out.

Spiritual Principle

Creation itself points beyond:

Itself.

LXVI. SALVATION FOREVER

The contrast is:

Sharp.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Put your greatest confidence in what survives the universe.

LXVII. LAW IN THE HEART

Righteousness becomes:

Internal.

Spiritual Principle

Truth belongs:

Inside.

LXVIII. REPROACH OF MORTALS

Words hurt.

But they are:

Temporary.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human insults may wound your emotions without changing God’s verdict.

LXIX. MOTH-EATEN ENEMIES

Power decays.

Spiritual Principle

No human opponent is:

Eternal.

LXX. “AWAKE, ARM OF THE LORD”

The people know:

Who delivered before.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A good prayer reminds itself who God has already proved Himself to be.

LXXI. DAYS GONE BY

Faith remembers:

History.

Spiritual Principle

Testimony strengthens:

Expectation.

LXXII. RAHAB DEFEATED

Proud power:

Broken.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every empire eventually meets a power greater than itself.

LXXIII. SEA DRIED UP

Impossible barrier:

Removed.

Spiritual Principle

God has historical evidence of doing:

Impossible things.

LXXIV. ROAD THROUGH THE DEEP

Not around:

Through.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes God’s deliverance does not avoid the deep; it creates a road through it.

LXXV. REDEEMED CROSS OVER

The purpose:

Freedom.

Spiritual Principle

God opens ways so His people can:

Move.

LXXVI. SINGING INTO ZION

The destination has:

Sound.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The redeemed do not enter Zion silently; salvation deserves a song.

LXXVII. EVERLASTING JOY

Not temporary:

Emotion.

Spiritual Principle

God’s final restoration includes:

Enduring joy.

LXXVIII. SORROW FLEES

Personified as:

Leaving.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sorrow may feel permanent, but Scripture gives it an expiration date in God’s final redemption.

LXXIX. GOD COMFORTS PERSONALLY

“I, even I.”

Spiritual Principle

Comfort is not delegated away from:

God.

LXXX. MORTALS ARE GRASS

Strong today.

Gone tomorrow.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never fear grass more than the Gardener.

LXXXI. FORGETTING THE MAKER

That is the deeper issue.

Spiritual Principle

Fear becomes irrational when it forgets:

Creation.

LXXXII. CONSTANT TERROR

Fear dominates:

Daily life.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

An oppressor wins more than a battle when he occupies your imagination every day.

LXXXIII. “WHERE IS THE OPPRESSOR?”

God’s perspective changes:

Scale.

Spiritual Principle

The threat is real.

But not:

Ultimate.

LXXXIV. PRISONERS SOON FREE

God sees:

The cell.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Bars can hold a body, but they cannot prevent God from announcing freedom.

LXXXV. BREAD FOR PRISONERS

Deliverance includes:

Provision.

Spiritual Principle

God does not free His people only to:

Abandon them hungry.

LXXXVI. THE SEA ROARS BECAUSE GOD STIRS IT

Even chaos-like imagery remains:

Under authority.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The sea may roar, but it does not rule.

LXXXVII. WORDS IN THE MOUTH

God equips:

Witness.

Spiritual Principle

A protected messenger needs:

A divine message.

LXXXVIII. SHADOW OF GOD’S HAND

Protection.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The hand powerful enough to stretch heaven is gentle enough to cover His servant.

LXXXIX. “YOU ARE MY PEOPLE”

Identity restored.

Spiritual Principle

God’s final word over Zion is not:

Rejected.

But:

Mine.

XC. AWAKE, JERUSALEM

The city must:

Rise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Comfort does not call us to permanent passivity; grace tells the fallen to get up.

XCI. THE CUP OF WRATH

Judgment was:

Real.

Spiritual Principle

Mercy means more when we remember what the cup represented.

XCII. DREGS OF THE CUP

Fully experienced.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah does not minimize the depth of Jerusalem’s suffering before announcing restoration.

XCIII. NONE TO GUIDE

Human resources:

Exhausted.

Spiritual Principle

Sometimes God allows secondary supports to fail so dependence returns to:

Him.

XCIV. NONE TO TAKE HER HAND

Loneliness in:

Judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The absence of human help does not mean the absence of divine attention.

XCV. RUIN AND DESTRUCTION

External devastation.

Spiritual Principle

Sin can destroy:

Structures.

XCVI. FAMINE AND SWORD

Life itself:

Threatened.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Judgment reaches deeper than property loss.

XCVII. “WHO CAN CONSOLE YOU?”

Humanly:

No one adequate.

Spiritual Principle

Some griefs require:

God-sized comfort.

XCVIII. CHILDREN FAINT

The next generation suffers:

Consequences.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin is never as private as the sinner imagines.

XCIX. CAUGHT LIKE ANTELOPES

No escape:

Humanly.

Spiritual Principle

Helplessness prepares the stage for:

Divine intervention.

C. “HEAR THIS, YOU AFFLICTED ONE”

Even in judgment:

God still speaks.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Affliction has not silenced the voice of God.

CI. THE SOVEREIGN LORD DEFENDS

The Judge becomes:

Advocate.

Spiritual Principle

God’s relationship with His people cannot be reduced to:

One role.

CII. CUP REMOVED

Enough.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who knows when discipline begins also knows when it has accomplished His appointed purpose.

CIII. TORMENTORS RECEIVE THE CUP

Justice reverses:

Positions.

Spiritual Principle

Oppression has:

Consequences.

CIV. BACK LIKE A STREET

A shocking picture of:

Humiliation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God remembers every footprint left by oppression.

CV. ISAIAH 50 AND ISAIAH 51

Isaiah 50

The faithful person may walk in:

Darkness.

Isaiah 51

That person is told:

Look back.

Remember.

Do not fear.

God comforts.

Key Truth

The answer to darkness is not self-made fire but remembered truth about the eternal God.

CVI. ISAIAH 49 AND ISAIAH 51

Isaiah 49

Zion says:

> **“The Lord has forgotten me.”**

Isaiah 51

God says:

> **“I, even I, am He who comforts you.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God answers the fear of abandonment with repeated declarations of personal remembrance and comfort.

CVII. ISAIAH 40 AND ISAIAH 51

Isaiah 40

> **“Comfort, comfort My people.”**

Isaiah 51

> **“I, even I, am He who comforts you.”**

Key Truth

The comfort promised in Isaiah 40 becomes deeply personal in Isaiah 51: the Comforter is God Himself.

CVIII. ISAIAH 43 AND ISAIAH 51

Isaiah 43

God makes:

A way through the sea.

Isaiah 51

The people remember:

That way.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Yesterday’s deliverance becomes today’s vocabulary for hope.

CIX. ISAIAH 51 AND THE NEW EXODUS

The chapter deliberately recalls:

Egypt.

Sea.

Road through waters.

Redeemed crossing.

Return to Zion.

This creates:

New Exodus imagery.

Spiritual Principle

The God who delivered from Egypt can bring:

A greater restoration.

CX. ISAIAH 51 AND FINAL SALVATION

Everlasting salvation.

Creation wearing out.

Sorrow fleeing.

Joy everlasting.

These themes extend beyond:

One historical return.

They point toward:

God’s final redemptive future.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Historical restoration becomes a window through which Isaiah sees salvation larger than one generation.

CXI. TEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 51

1. One Man → Many Descendants

2. Desert → Eden

3. Wasteland → Garden

4. Temporary Creation → Everlasting Salvation

5. Human Reproach → Eternal Righteousness

6. Oppressor → Creator

7. Prison → Freedom

8. Sorrow → Everlasting Joy

9. Cup of Wrath → Divine Defense

10. Humiliated Zion → Comforted Zion

Key Truth

Isaiah 51 repeatedly replaces what looks permanent—desolation, fear, oppression, judgment, and sorrow—with what is actually permanent: God’s righteousness, salvation, covenant love, and comfort.

CXII. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 51

1. Remember What God Did with Abraham

Principle:

Small beginnings do not limit divine promises.

2. God Can Restore Ruins

Principle:

Deserts can become gardens under His hand.

3. God’s Salvation Is Everlasting

Principle:

Creation may disappear, but salvation remains.

4. Do Not Fear Human Reproach

Principle:

Mortals are temporary; God’s righteousness is eternal.

5. Remember Past Deliverance

Principle:

The God of the Exodus remains the God of redemption.

6. The Redeemed Will Return with Joy

Principle:

Sorrow is not the final destination of God’s people.

7. God Himself Comforts

Principle:

The Comforter is greater than the threat.

8. Fear Grows When God Is Forgotten

Principle:

Remembering the Maker shrinks the oppressor to proper size.

9. God Frees Prisoners

Principle:

Captivity does not exceed His authority.

10. God Gives Word, Protection, and Identity

Principle:

He puts His words in the mouth, covers with His hand, and says, “You are My people.”

11. God’s Wrath Is Serious

Principle:

Jerusalem truly drank the cup of judgment.

12. God Can Remove the Cup

Principle:

Discipline does not mean abandonment forever.

CXIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who is called to listen in verse 1?

Those who pursue righteousness and seek the Lord.

Question 2

What are they told to look toward?

The rock and quarry from which they were cut.

Question 3

Who specifically are they told to remember?

Abraham and Sarah.

Question 4

How many people did Abraham begin with?

He was one man when God called him.

Question 5

What did God do with him?

Blessed him and multiplied him.

Question 6

What will God do for Zion?

Comfort her ruins and transform her desolation.

Question 7

What will her desert become like?

Eden and the garden of the Lord.

Question 8

What sounds will return?

Joy, gladness, thanksgiving, and singing.

Question 9

Where will God’s teaching go?

Out to the nations.

Question 10

What will become a light to the nations?

God’s justice and instruction.

Question 11

How long will God’s salvation last?

Forever.

Question 12

What will happen to heaven and earth?

They will pass and wear out.

Question 13

What will never fail?

God’s righteousness and salvation.

Question 14

Whom should God’s people not fear?

Mere mortals and their reproach.

Question 15

Why?

Because humans are temporary while God’s righteousness is everlasting.

Question 16

What past event do the people remember in verses 9–10?

God’s deliverance through the sea in the Exodus.

Question 17

What will happen to the redeemed?

They will return to Zion with singing and everlasting joy.

Question 18

Who comforts God’s people?

God Himself.

Question 19

What is connected with fear of the oppressor?

Forgetting the Lord their Maker.

Question 20

What will happen to the prisoners?

They will be set free and provided for.

Question 21

What does God say He put in the mouth?

His words.

Question 22

How does God describe Zion?

“You are My people.”

Question 23

What had Jerusalem drunk?

The cup of God’s wrath.

Question 24

How severe had the judgment been?

Ruin, destruction, famine, sword, exhaustion, and helplessness.

Question 25

What does God do with the cup?

He removes it from Jerusalem.

Question 26

Who receives the cup afterward?

The tormentors and oppressors.

Question 27

What is the main lesson about fear?

Remembering the Creator frees the heart from exaggerated fear of temporary human power.

Question 28

What is the main lesson about restoration?

God can turn barren ruins into places of joy and abundance.

CXIV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 51 asks several searching questions.

Have I Forgotten Where God Brought Me From?

What has He already:

Done?

Provided?

Restored?

Changed?

Am I Discouraged Because the Beginning Looks:

Small?

Can I remember:

Abraham was one?

Is there a desert in my life where I have stopped believing:

Eden is possible?

Is there a ruin I assume can never know:

Comfort?

Am I placing too much confidence in things that:

Wear out?

Money?

Government?

Health?

Possessions?

Earthly systems?

Do I believe God’s salvation is more permanent than:

Everything I see?

Whose opinion do I fear?

Have insults become:

Too powerful?

Is human reproach shaping me more than:

God’s Word?

Am I asking God to:

Awake—

While He is calling:

Me to awake?

What past deliverance should I:

Remember?

Is sorrow making me forget:

Everlasting joy?

Am I afraid because I have forgotten:

My Maker?

Has an oppressor become larger in my mind than:

God?

Do I believe God sees:

Prisoners?

Am I willing to speak:

His Word?

Do I rest under:

The shadow of His hand?

Do I believe His declaration:

> **“You are My people”?**

Am I minimizing:

Sin?

The cup of wrath reminds me:

Judgment is real.

Am I despairing after discipline?

The removed cup reminds me:

Mercy is real.

CXV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“When Fear Makes the Oppressor Look Bigger, Remember the Maker Who Stretched Out the Heavens”

Isaiah says:

> **“You forget the Lord your Maker.”**

Then:

You live in:

Constant terror.

Principle:

Fear often grows not because the enemy has become omnipotent, but because we have temporarily forgotten the greatness of God.

CXVI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Can Build a Nation from One Man and a Garden from One Wasteland”

Abraham was:

One.

Zion was:

Ruined.

Yet:

God multiplies.

God restores.

Principle:

Neither small beginnings nor devastated endings prevent the Lord from creating a future.

CXVII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“What Wears Out Cannot Be Your Ultimate Hope”

Heavens:

Vanish.

Earth:

Wears out.

Humans:

Pass away.

God’s salvation:

Remains.

Principle:

The wisest life anchors itself to what will still be true when everything temporary is gone.

CXVIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The God Who Gives the Cup Can Also Remove the Cup”

Judgment is:

Real.

Mercy is:

Also real.

Principle:

Discipline proves God’s holiness, while restoration proves that His holiness does not cancel His compassion.

CXIX. THE ROCK OF ORIGIN

Origins matter.

Spiritual Principle

Memory gives:

Perspective.

CXX. THE QUARRY

Israel is:

Cut from somewhere.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not forget the ordinary place from which extraordinary grace brought you.

CXXI. ABRAHAM ALONE

No nation yet.

Spiritual Principle

God begins before:

Evidence.

CXXII. SARAH BARREN

No visible possibility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human impossibility is not divine inability.

CXXIII. ZION COMFORTED

Not condemned forever.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment can have:

An endpoint.

CXXIV. EDEN AFTER DESERT

Creation imagery returns.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoration often resembles re-creation.

CXXV. JOY FOUND THERE

Joy returns to:

A place.

Spiritual Principle

Places associated with pain can become associated with:

Praise.

CXXVI. THANKSGIVING

Restoration should create:

Gratitude.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not receive the garden and forget the Gardener.

CXXVII. LIGHT TO NATIONS

God’s justice:

Travels.

Spiritual Principle

His kingdom purpose is:

Larger than one people.

CXXVIII. SALVATION ON THE WAY

Not stalled.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God has sent will arrive according to His purpose.

CXXIX. THE ARM OF THE LORD

Strength made:

Active.

Spiritual Principle

God is not merely capable.

He acts.

CXXX. HEAVEN VANISHES

Even heaven as presently experienced belongs to:

Created order.

Spiritual Principle

Only God is:

Uncreated.

CXXXI. EARTH WEARS OUT

The world is:

Not eternal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Treat temporary creation as gift, not god.

CXXXII. SALVATION DOES NOT WEAR OUT

No moth.

No decay.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation has no:

Expiration date.

CXXXIII. LAW IN THE HEART

Internal obedience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Truth is strongest when it moves from tablet to heart.

CXXXIV. MORTAL REPROACH

Painful.

Still mortal.

Spiritual Principle

A person’s words can survive in memory longer than the person survives in history, but they still cannot overturn God.

CXXXV. MOTH AND WORM

Human greatness decays.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not give garment-level permanence to people God says are moth-level temporary.

CXXXVI. THE PEOPLE CALL GOD TO AWAKE

This prayer contains:

Faith.

Memory.

Longing.

Spiritual Principle

God welcomes prayers shaped by:

His past works.

CXXXVII. THE EXODUS MEMORY

The sea once blocked:

Escape.

Then:

Opened.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Yesterday’s impossible crossing can strengthen today’s impossible prayer.

CXXXVIII. REDEEMED CROSSING

God makes:

The route.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption involves:

Passage.

CXXXIX. JOY CROWNS THE HEAD

What once covered them?

Ashes.

Sorrow.

Now:

Joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can replace the emotional clothing of exile with the crown of joy.

CXL. SIGHING FLEES

Sighing is:

Personified.

Spiritual Principle

The final redeemed future does not include permanent sorrow.

CXLI. “I, EVEN I”

God emphasizes:

Himself.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Comfort rooted only in changing circumstances changes with the circumstances; comfort rooted in God lasts with God.

CXLII. FEAR OF MAN

A recurring biblical struggle.

Spiritual Principle

Human fear can become:

Functional idolatry.

CXLIII. FORGETTING GOD

The root beneath:

Terror.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Remembering God correctly is one of the great medicines against fear.

CXLIV. THE MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

Creation theology becomes:

Pastoral theology.

Spiritual Principle

The doctrine of creation should help frightened hearts.

CXLV. THE OPPRESSOR’S WRATH

Real.

Still limited.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The enemy may be angry, but anger does not make him sovereign.

CXLVI. COWERING PRISONERS

Fearful.

Still loved.

Spiritual Principle

God does not wait for the prisoner to become brave before announcing release.

CXLVII. NOT DIE IN DUNGEON

Death sentence:

Reversed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can create a future beyond the place where you thought the story would end.

CXLVIII. NOT LACK BREAD

Freedom with:

Provision.

Spiritual Principle

The Redeemer considers practical needs.

CXLIX. WAVES ROAR

Powerful.

God stirs:

Them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What terrifies you may itself be under God’s command.

CL. WORDS IN YOUR MOUTH

Speech becomes:

Divine assignment.

Spiritual Principle

God equips those He sends.

CLI. SHADOW OF MY HAND

Same hand:

Creates.

Protects.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The hand large enough for the heavens is not too large to shelter one servant.

CLII. ZION: “MY PEOPLE”

Identity after discipline.

Spiritual Principle

Grace speaks belonging after:

Judgment.

CLIII. AWAKE, JERUSALEM

Restoration requires:

Response.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God removes the cup, do not keep living as though it is still in your hand.

CLIV. THE DREGS

Nothing left:

Undrunk.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment was:

Thorough.

CLV. NO HUMAN GUIDE

Leadership failed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not limited when every human hand is unavailable.

CLVI. CALAMITIES

The chapter does not:

Romanticize suffering.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical hope is strongest when it looks honestly at:

Pain.

CLVII. “WHO CAN CONSOLE YOU?”

Answer:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The question prepares us to receive the only comfort large enough for the wound.

CLVIII. CHILDREN IN THE STREET

Consequences become:

Visible.

Spiritual Principle

Collective rebellion can create collective suffering.

CLIX. AFFLICTED, NOT DRUNK

Pain itself causes:

Staggering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God knows the difference between sin-caused intoxication and suffering-caused disorientation.

CLX. GOD DEFENDS HIS PEOPLE

Even disciplined people.

Spiritual Principle

Discipline does not transfer ownership to:

The oppressor.

CLXI. THE CUP CHANGES HANDS

Judgment turns:

Outward.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The oppressor may temporarily become an instrument, but he never becomes the Judge.

CLXII. A BACK LIKE THE STREET

Extreme humiliation.

Spiritual Principle

God remembers degrading treatment inflicted upon:

His people.

CLXIII. ISAIAH 51 IN THE FLOW OF THE SERVANT SONGS

Isaiah 49:

The Servant brings salvation to the ends of the earth.

Isaiah 50:

The Servant obeys and suffers.

Isaiah 51:

God assures His people that His salvation is everlasting and His comfort certain.

This prepares for:

Isaiah 52–53.

Key Truth

Before revealing the Servant's climactic suffering, Isaiah anchors the reader in the certainty of God's eternal salvation and covenant comfort.

CLXIV. NINE GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 51

1. Look Back to Abraham and Sarah

God has always been able to create greatness from small beginnings.

2. Look Forward to Zion's Restoration

Desert will become Eden and ruins will know singing.

3. Listen to God's Everlasting Salvation

Creation passes, but righteousness and salvation remain.

4. Refuse the Fear of Man

Mortals are temporary.

5. Remember the Exodus

God’s arm made a road through the sea.

6. Expect the Redeemed to Return

Sorrow and sighing will flee.

7. Receive God’s Personal Comfort

The Creator Himself comforts His people.

8. Awake from the Staggering of Judgment

Jerusalem must rise because discipline is ending.

9. Receive the Removed Cup

God defends His people and reverses oppression.

Key Truth

Isaiah 51 moves from memory to hope, from fear to comfort, and from judgment to restoration by repeatedly directing God’s people toward the everlasting character and saving power of the Lord.

CLXV. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 51 begins with:

A command.

> **“Look.”**

When circumstances are:

Bad.

Sometimes we keep looking at:

The ruins.

The enemy.

The loss.

The impossibility.

God says:

Look somewhere else.

Look at:

Abraham.

One man.

Look at:

Sarah.

Barren.

Then look at:

What God did.

One man became:

Many.

Barrenness became:

Generations.

So when you say:

There is not enough—

God says:

Remember Abraham.

When you say:

Nothing can grow here—

God says:

Remember Sarah.

Then look at:

Zion.

Ruined.

Deserted.

Wasted.

God says:

I will make the desert like:

Eden.

That means your present landscape does not necessarily reveal:

Your future.

Then God says:

Look at heaven.

Look at earth.

Everything you can see will:

Wear out.

But:

“My salvation will last forever.”

That changes what should:

Frighten us.

People can:

Insult.

Mock.

Threaten.

Oppress.

But they are:

Temporary.

God’s righteousness:

Permanent.

Then the people pray:

“Awake, awake, arm of the Lord.”

God, do something.

God, move.

God, act.

Remember the sea?

Remember Egypt?

Remember the road through the water?

Do it:

Again.

Then God answers:

“I, even I, am He who comforts you.”

And then He asks:

Why are you so afraid of:

People?

You have forgotten:

Your Maker.

That may be one of the most important diagnoses of fear in Scripture.

Fear can become large when:

Memory becomes small.

You keep remembering:

The threat.

The criticism.

The enemy.

The possible disaster.

And forget:

The Maker.

God says:

I stretched out:

The heavens.

I laid:

The earth.

And you are terrified of:

A mortal?

Then He asks:

“Where is the wrath of the oppressor?”

What looks overwhelming today can become:

History tomorrow.

Then:

Prisoners are freed.

Bread is given.

God’s words are placed in:

The mouth.

His hand becomes:

Covering.

And He says:

“You are My people.”

But the chapter does not ignore:

Judgment.

Jerusalem drank:

The cup.

Sin mattered.

Wrath was:

Real.

Children suffered.

The city staggered.

Isaiah does not offer:

Cheap comfort.

He offers:

Holy comfort.

Then God says:

“I have taken out of your hand the cup.”

What words.

Enough.

The cup is:

Removed.

The Judge becomes:

Defender.

The afflicted becomes:

Comforted.

The staggerer can:

Stand.

The ruined place can:

Sing.

The desert can:

Bloom.

The prisoner can:

Leave.

The frightened heart can:

Trust.

So when your beginning seems:

Small—

Look to Abraham.

When your future seems:

Barren—

Remember Sarah.

When your life feels:

Ruined—

Remember Eden can grow in a desert.

When people insult:

Remember they are temporary.

When the enemy frightens:

Remember your Maker.

When the road is blocked:

Remember the sea.

When sorrow seems permanent:

Remember everlasting joy.

When you feel abandoned:

Remember God says:

“I comfort you.”

When discipline has broken you:

Remember God can remove the cup.

When someone has walked over you:

Remember the Judge saw:

Every step.

And when everything around you seems:

Temporary—

Hold to what lasts:

God’s salvation forever.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You are:

Our Rock.

Our Maker.

Our Redeemer.

Our Comforter.

Our Defender.

Thank You for reminding us to:

Look back.

Help us remember:

Abraham.

Sarah.

The Exodus.

Every time You proved:

Faithful.

When our beginnings look:

Small—

Give us faith.

When our circumstances look:

Barren—

Give us hope.

Father, comfort:

Our ruins.

Turn deserts into:

Gardens.

Bring back:

Joy.

Gladness.

Thanksgiving.

Singing.

Thank You that Your salvation lasts:

Forever.

When the earth feels:

Stable—

Remind us it will wear out.

When Your salvation feels:

Invisible—

Remind us it will remain.

Father, free us from:

Fear of man.

Fear of criticism.

Fear of insult.

Fear of opposition.

Fear of oppressors.

Keep us from forgetting:

You.

When fear grows:

Restore our memory.

Remind us:

You stretched out the heavens.

You laid the earth’s foundations.

You rule the sea.

You open prisons.

You provide bread.

You make roads through:

Deep water.

Father, thank You for:

Comfort.

Thank You that You do not merely send comfort.

You say:

“I, even I, am He who comforts you.”

Comfort those who are:

Afflicted.

Grieving.

Afraid.

Exhausted.

Oppressed.

Father, put Your Word:

In our mouths.

Cover us under:

Your hand.

Remind us who we are:

“You are My people.”

Father, we acknowledge:

Your holiness.

Sin is serious.

Judgment is real.

Thank You that mercy is also:

Real.

Thank You that You can take the cup:

Away.

Thank You that discipline does not have to become:

Permanent abandonment.

Rise as:

Defender.

Bring justice against:

Oppression.

Give courage to:

The weary.

Freedom to:

The captive.

Joy to:

The sorrowful.

And help us build our lives upon:

The salvation that will never fail.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“The heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and its inhabitants will die like flies. But My salvation will last forever, and My righteousness will never fail.” — Isaiah 51:6**

Central Truth

The Lord calls His people to remember His faithfulness to Abraham and Sarah, trust His power to restore desolate Zion, anchor themselves in His everlasting salvation rather than temporary creation or human opinion, remember His Exodus deliverance, receive His personal comfort, refuse the fear of mortal oppressors, and believe that the same holy God who allowed Jerusalem to drink the cup of judgment can remove that cup, defend His people, and bring them into everlasting joy.

Isaiah 51 in One Sentence

Isaiah calls those who seek the Lord to remember how God multiplied Abraham and Sarah, promises that Zion’s ruins will become like Eden, declares that God’s salvation and righteousness will outlast heaven and earth, urges His people not to fear temporary human reproach, recalls the mighty arm that opened the sea, promises everlasting joy for the redeemed, identifies God Himself as their Comforter and Maker, and concludes with the Sovereign Lord removing Jerusalem’s cup of wrath and turning judgment against her oppressors.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 52 — The Lord’s Salvation Revealed

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 52 is one of the great turning points in the Book of Isaiah.

The chapter begins with:

Zion waking.

Jerusalem rising.

Chains falling.

Captivity ending.

Good news arriving.

Watchmen rejoicing.

Ruins singing.

God’s holy arm revealed.

The redeemed departing in purity.

Then the chapter closes by introducing the climactic suffering Servant passage that continues directly into:

Isaiah 53.

The movement is remarkable.

Jerusalem begins:

In dust.

In chains.

Humiliated.

Oppressed.

But God says:

> **“Awake, awake, Zion!”**

And:

> **“Put on your strength.”**

Then:

> **“Shake off your dust.”**

Then:

> **“Rise up.”**

Then:

> **“Free yourself from the chains on your neck.”**

The city that had been:

Humiliated.

Will become:

Restored.

The people who had been:

Captive.

Will become:

Free.

The nation that had suffered:

Blasphemy.

Will again know:

The Lord’s name.

The central announcement of the chapter comes in verse 7:

> **“Your God reigns!”**

That is the good news.

Why can Zion rise?

Because:

God reigns.

Why can prisoners go free?

Because:

God reigns.

Why can Jerusalem sing?

Because:

God reigns.

Why can the nations see salvation?

Because:

God reigns.

Why can the people leave Babylon without panic?

Because:

God goes before them.

And stands:

Behind them.

The Exodus imagery becomes unmistakable.

But this deliverance is not merely:

Another political escape.

Isaiah’s vision expands toward:

Worldwide salvation.

Verse 10 says:

> **“All the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.”**

Then the chapter moves unexpectedly from:

The joy of redeemed Zion.

To:

The Servant.

> **“See, My servant will act wisely.”**

He will be:

Raised.

Lifted up.

Highly exalted.

But immediately after that exaltation comes:

Disfigurement.

Suffering.

Humiliation.

People are:

Appalled.

Then:

Nations are affected.

Kings become:

Silent.

This prepares directly for Isaiah 53.

The Servant will be:

Exalted.

But His road to exaltation passes through:

Suffering.

The language of verse 15—“sprinkle many nations”—carries priestly and cleansing associations and has been understood in more than one way. The Hebrew verb can evoke:

Sprinkling.

Purification.

Or possibly startling effect in some interpretive traditions.

Within the larger Servant context, cleansing imagery fits naturally, especially as Isaiah 53 will explain the redemptive significance of the Servant’s suffering.

The chapter therefore combines:

Restoration.

Gospel.

Holiness.

Exodus.

Mission.

Servanthood.

Suffering.

Exaltation.

The central truth of Isaiah 52 is:

The Lord calls captive Zion to rise because her redemption is near, declares that His reign is good news to His people and salvation to the ends of the earth, commands the redeemed to leave impurity behind under His protecting presence, and reveals the Servant who will be humiliated beyond recognition yet ultimately exalted and become the means by which the nations encounter God’s saving work.

I. “AWAKE, AWAKE, ZION!”

Isaiah 52:1 — Put on Your Strength

> **“Awake, awake, Zion! Put on your strength. Clothe yourself with your beautiful garments, Jerusalem, the holy city. Never again will the uncircumcised and the unclean enter into you.”**

Isaiah 51 had said:

> **“Awake, awake, arm of the Lord.”**

Now God turns toward:

Zion.

And says:

> **“Awake, awake.”**

The Lord has not been:

Sleeping.

His people must:

Rise.

Cross References

Isaiah 51:9

God’s people had appealed to the arm of the Lord to awake and act as in former days.

Isaiah 61:10

The restored people rejoice because God clothes them with garments of salvation and righteousness.

Revelation 21:27

Nothing defiled or unclean enters the final holy city, where complete holiness characterizes God’s dwelling.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration requires:

Response.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God announces freedom, do not continue dressing like a prisoner.

II. PUT ON YOUR STRENGTH

Zion had experienced:

Weakness.

Defeat.

Captivity.

Now:

Strength.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration changes:

Posture.

III. BEAUTIFUL GARMENTS

Dust is replaced by:

Beauty.

Shame by:

Honor.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely remove prison clothes; He clothes the redeemed for restored identity.

IV. THE HOLY CITY

Jerusalem is called:

Holy.

That means:

Set apart.

Belonging to God.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration includes:

Holiness.

Not merely:

Prosperity.

V. SHAKE OFF THE DUST

Isaiah 52:2 — Rise and Sit Enthroned

> **“Shake off your dust; rise up, Jerusalem. Sit enthroned once more. Free yourself from the chains on your neck, captive Daughter of Zion.”**

Four commands:

Shake.

Rise.

Sit.

Free yourself.

The imagery reverses Isaiah 47.

Babylon had been told:

Come down.

Sit in dust.

Zion is told:

Get up from dust.

Sit enthroned.

Cross References

Isaiah 60:1

Zion is told to arise and shine because God’s glory has come.

Zechariah 2:7

God calls His people to escape from Babylon and return.

Psalm 113:7

God raises the poor from dust and lifts the needy from degradation.

Spiritual Principle

What God humbles in judgment He can:

Restore in grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Babylon goes from throne to dust.

Zion goes from dust to restoration.

VI. CHAINS ON THE NECK

Captivity was:

Real.

The chains symbolize:

Bondage.

Oppression.

Humiliation.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption breaks:

Ownership claims.

VII. “YOU WERE SOLD FOR NOTHING”

Isaiah 52:3 — Redeemed Without Money

> **“For this is what the Lord says: ‘You were sold for nothing, and without money you will be redeemed.’”**

Israel’s exile did not result from:

God’s financial debt.

And redemption does not require:

Babylon’s payment.

Cross References

Isaiah 50:1

God had already denied that Israel was sold because He owed some creditor.

1 Peter 1:18

Believers are reminded that redemption is not accomplished through perishable silver or gold.

Isaiah 55:1

God later invites the thirsty to receive freely without money and without price.

Spiritual Principle

God’s redemption cannot be:

Purchased by human wealth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The price of redemption is not measured in earthly currency.

VIII. REDEMPTION IS GOD’S INITIATIVE

The people cannot:

Buy themselves back.

God acts.

Spiritual Principle

Grace originates with:

The Redeemer.

IX. ISRAEL’S HISTORY OF OPPRESSION

Isaiah 52:4 — Egypt and Assyria

> **“For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: ‘At first My people went down to Egypt to live there; later, the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.’”**

God reviews:

History.

Egypt.

Assyria.

Oppression.

The people have repeatedly known:

Foreign domination.

Cross References

Genesis 46:6

Jacob and his household went down to Egypt with their families and possessions.

Exodus 1:11

Egypt placed oppressive taskmasters over Israel and forced them into hard labor.

Hosea 11:1

God remembers Israel’s early history in Egypt and His loving call that brought His people out.

Spiritual Principle

God knows:

The full history.

Of His people’s suffering.

X. GOD’S NAME IS BLASPHEMED

Isaiah 52:5 — Oppression Dishonors God

> **“Now what do I have here?’ declares the Lord. ‘For My people have been taken away for nothing, and those who rule over them mock,’ declares the Lord. ‘And all day long My name is continually blasphemed.’”**

The oppression is not merely:

Political.

It affects:

God’s reputation.

The nations interpret Israel’s humiliation as:

God’s weakness.

Cross References

Romans 2:24

Paul quotes the prophetic principle that God’s name can be blasphemed among the nations because of the unfaithfulness of those who claim to represent Him.

Ezekiel 36:20

Israel’s exile among the nations resulted in God’s holy name being profaned because outsiders misunderstood the meaning of their condition.

Psalm 44:22

God’s people describe suffering endured because of their identity and relationship to Him.

Spiritual Principle

God cares about:

His name.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God redeems His people, He is not merely changing their circumstances; He is publicly defending His holy name.

XI. “MY PEOPLE WILL KNOW MY NAME”

Isaiah 52:6 — “Yes, It Is I”

> **“Therefore My people will know My name; therefore in that day they will know that it is I who foretold it. Yes, it is I.”**

Redemption brings:

Knowledge.

The people will know:

Who God is.

Who spoke.

Who acted.

Who saved.

Cross References

Jeremiah 31:34

In the new covenant promise, God’s people know Him personally and deeply.

Exodus 6:7

God promises to take Israel as His people so they will know that He is the Lord who delivers them.

John 8:58

Jesus uses striking divine identity language in declaring His existence before Abraham.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation reveals:

The Savior.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest gift of redemption is not simply freedom from bondage but deeper knowledge of the Redeemer.

XII. BEAUTIFUL FEET BRING GOOD NEWS

Isaiah 52:7 — “Your God Reigns!”

> **“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’”**

The feet are beautiful because of:

The message carried.

The message includes:

Good news.

Peace.

Salvation.

Kingdom.

Cross References

Romans 10:15

Paul applies Isaiah’s imagery to those who proclaim the good news of the gospel.

Nahum 1:15

A messenger brings good news of peace and deliverance after the fall of an oppressor.

Ephesians 6:15

Believers are to stand ready with the gospel of peace.

Spiritual Principle

The beauty belongs to:

The gospel.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Ordinary feet become beautiful when they carry extraordinary news.

XIII. “YOUR GOD REIGNS”

This may be the theological center of:

The chapter.

Why is salvation possible?

Because:

God reigns.

Spiritual Principle

The gospel is not merely:

God helps.

It is:

God reigns.

XIV. PEACE AND SALVATION BELONG TO THE KINGDOM

Peace is not:

Human optimism.

Salvation is not:

Self-improvement.

Both flow from:

God’s reign.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The good news is good because the true King has not lost His throne.

XV. THE WATCHMEN SHOUT TOGETHER

Isaiah 52:8 — The Lord Returns to Zion

> **“Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the Lord returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes.”**

Watchmen normally:

Scan.

Warn.

Wait.

Now they:

Sing.

Why?

God’s return.

Cross References

Ezekiel 3:17

The prophet is compared to a watchman responsible to hear God’s word and warn the people.

Isaiah 62:6

Watchmen are posted on Jerusalem’s walls to remain vigilant and prayerful.

Jeremiah 31:6

Watchmen announce the time to return to Zion and worship the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Waiting becomes:

Celebration.

When God’s promise arrives.

XVI. THEY SEE WITH THEIR OWN EYES

Faith becomes:

Sight.

Promise becomes:

Fulfillment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who asks us to wait can eventually let us watch the answer arrive.

XVII. THE RUINS ARE COMMANDED TO SING

Isaiah 52:9 — Comfort and Redemption

> **“Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the Lord has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem.”**

Notice who sings:

Ruins.

Not merely:

Rebuilt walls.

The ruined place is summoned to:

Praise.

Cross References

Isaiah 44:23

Creation is commanded to rejoice because the Lord has redeemed Jacob.

Isaiah 49:13

Heaven, earth, and mountains rejoice because God comforts His afflicted people.

Luke 1:68

Zechariah blesses God because He has visited and brought redemption to His people.

Spiritual Principle

God can put a song into:

Ruins.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You do not have to wait until every stone is back in place before praising the God who has announced restoration.

XVIII. COMFORT AND REDEMPTION BELONG TOGETHER

God comforts:

Because He redeems.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical comfort is rooted in:

Divine action.

XIX. THE LORD BARES HIS HOLY ARM

Isaiah 52:10 — Salvation Before All Nations

> **“The Lord will lay bare His holy arm in the sight of all nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.”**

The “arm” symbolizes:

Power.

Action.

Deliverance.

God rolls up His sleeve, as it were:

To act.

Cross References

Isaiah 53:1

The next chapter asks to whom the arm of the Lord has been revealed, linking the Servant directly to God’s saving power.

Luke 3:6

Luke quotes Isaiah’s salvation language, declaring that all flesh will see God’s salvation.

Psalm 98:2

The Lord makes His salvation known and reveals His righteousness before the nations.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation is:

Public.

Visible.

Worldwide.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not intend His salvation to remain hidden behind Israel’s walls.

XX. ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

Isaiah 49:

Salvation to the ends of earth.

Isaiah 52:

The ends of earth see:

Salvation.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s mission is becoming:

Global fulfillment.

XXI. “DEPART, DEPART”

Isaiah 52:11 — Redemption Requires Purity

> **“Depart, depart, go out from there! Touch no unclean thing! Come out from her and be pure, you who carry the vessels of the Lord.”**

The people must:

Leave.

But not carelessly.

They must leave:

Pure.

Holiness accompanies:

Freedom.

Cross References

2 Corinthians 6:17

Paul calls believers to separate from what is spiritually unclean and live in holiness before God.

Revelation 18:4

God’s people are called to come out of Babylon so they do not share in its sins and judgments.

Jeremiah 51:45

Israel is told to come out of Babylon and escape the judgment falling upon it.

Spiritual Principle

God does not redeem people so they can carry:

Babylon.

With them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Freedom is incomplete if you leave the prison but keep the prison’s values in your heart.

XXII. HOLINESS MATTERS

Redemption is:

Not merely relocation.

It is:

Consecration.

Spiritual Principle

The redeemed must live:

Differently.

XXIII. THOSE WHO CARRY THE LORD’S VESSELS

The restored temple service lies in:

View.

Those handling holy things must be:

Holy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sacred service requires serious attention to sacred character.

XXIV. THIS EXODUS WILL NOT BE PANICKED

Isaiah 52:12 — God Goes Before and Behind

> **“But you will not leave in haste or go in flight; for the Lord will go before you, the God of Israel will be your rear guard.”**

The first Exodus included:

Urgency.

This new departure carries:

Security.

God ahead.

God behind.

Cross References

Exodus 14:19

The angel of God and the pillar moved behind Israel to protect them from Egypt.

Exodus 12:11

The original Passover departure involved readiness and haste.

Deuteronomy 9:3

God goes before His people as a consuming fire against their enemies.

Spiritual Principle

God surrounds:

The journey.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If God is before you and behind you, you do not have to flee as though the outcome depends on your panic.

XXV. THE LORD GOES BEFORE

Leadership.

Spiritual Principle

The Redeemer does not merely:

Send.

He leads.

XXVI. GOD IS THE REAR GUARD

Protection from:

Behind.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is already where you are going and still guarding what lies behind you.

XXVII. THE EXALTED SERVANT APPEARS

Isaiah 52:13 — Wise, Raised, Lifted, Exalted

> **“See, My servant will act wisely; He will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.”**

The final section of Isaiah 52 begins the Servant song continuing through:

Isaiah 53:12.

The Servant will:

Act wisely.

Prosper in His mission.

Be raised.

Lifted.

Highly exalted.

Cross References

Philippians 2:9

Because Christ humbled Himself in obedience, God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name above every name.

John 12:32

Jesus speaks of being lifted up, language that includes His crucifixion while also pointing toward the saving effect of His death.

Acts 2:33

Peter proclaims Jesus as exalted to the right hand of God after resurrection.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s suffering does not end in:

Defeat.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before Isaiah shows us how low the Servant will go, he tells us how high God will raise Him.

XXVIII. “HE WILL ACT WISELY”

This includes:

Skill.

Understanding.

Successful fulfillment of mission.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant does not fail:

God’s purpose.

XXIX. RAISED, LIFTED, HIGHLY EXALTED

The language is:

Strong.

Majestic.

In Isaiah, “high and lifted up” language is associated with:

Divine majesty.

This makes the Servant’s exaltation especially striking.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant who descends into humiliation belongs to a glory far greater than His enemies can understand.

XXX. THE SERVANT IS APPALLINGLY DISFIGURED

Isaiah 52:14 — Suffering Beyond Recognition

> **“Just as there were many who were appalled at Him—His appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being, and His form marred beyond human likeness—”**

The Servant’s suffering is:

Severe.

Public.

Shocking.

The verse emphasizes:

Disfigurement.

Humiliation.

Physical degradation.

Cross References

Psalm 22:6

The suffering righteous one describes himself as despised, scorned, and treated as less than human.

Matthew 27:28

Jesus was stripped and clothed mockingly by Roman soldiers as part of His humiliation.

Mark 15:17

Jesus was dressed in purple and crowned with thorns in cruel mockery.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s path to exaltation passes through:

Extreme humiliation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not judge the Servant’s glory by the appearance of His suffering.

XXXI. “MANY WERE APPALLED”

People are:

Shocked.

Repulsed.

Stunned.

Spiritual Principle

God’s saving method may look:

Nothing like human expectations.

XXXII. SUFFERING DOES NOT CANCEL EXALTATION

Verse 13:

Exalted.

Verse 14:

Disfigured.

Both:

True.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The cross and the crown are not contradictions in the Servant’s mission.

XXXIII. THE SERVANT WILL SPRINKLE MANY NATIONS

Isaiah 52:15 — Nations and Kings Confronted

> **“So He will sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of Him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand.”**

The Servant’s effect is:

International.

Nations.

Kings.

The language “sprinkle” naturally evokes:

Priestly cleansing.

Consecration.

Purification.

The larger context points toward the Servant doing something redemptive for:

Many nations.

Cross References

Romans 15:21

Paul quotes the final words of this verse concerning people seeing and understanding what they had not previously heard, applying it to gospel mission among unreached peoples.

Hebrews 9:13

The Old Testament sacrificial system used sprinkling imagery in ceremonial cleansing, providing important background for the Servant’s priestly associations.

1 Peter 1:2

Peter uses the language of sprinkling in connection with the blood of Jesus Christ and covenant obedience.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s work reaches:

Beyond Israel.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant who was rejected by His own people becomes the cleansing hope of many nations.

XXXIV. KINGS SHUT THEIR MOUTHS

Why?

Astonishment.

Reverence.

Recognition.

They encounter something:

Beyond expectation.

Spiritual Principle

Human rulers eventually become:

Silent.

Before God’s Servant.

XXXV. WHAT THEY WERE NOT TOLD, THEY WILL SEE

The message reaches:

Those previously uninformed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The gospel has a special urgency toward those who have not yet heard.

XXXVI. WHAT THEY HAD NOT HEARD, THEY UNDERSTAND

Hearing becomes:

Understanding.

Spiritual Principle

God’s revelation penetrates:

Ignorance.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 52 TEACHES ABOUT ZION

Zion must:

Awake.

Rise.

Dress.

Shake off dust.

Break chains.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoring Word calls His people to live according to the freedom He announces.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 52 TEACHES ABOUT REDEMPTION

Redemption is:

Free from human purchasing power.

Spiritual Principle

Money cannot buy:

God’s saving work.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 52 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S NAME

God’s name had been:

Blasphemed.

His redemption makes His identity:

Known.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s saving work vindicates the honor of His name.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 52 TEACHES ABOUT THE GOSPEL

Good news includes:

Peace.

Salvation.

God’s reign.

Spiritual Principle

The gospel is:

Kingdom news.

XLI. WHAT ISAIAH 52 TEACHES ABOUT MISSION

Beautiful feet travel.

The ends of earth see.

Nations receive cleansing.

Kings understand.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A gospel that never moves outward has lost touch with Isaiah’s vision.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 52 TEACHES ABOUT HOLINESS

“Touch no unclean thing.”

Spiritual Principle

Redemption and holiness belong:

Together.

XLIII. WHAT ISAIAH 52 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S GUIDANCE

Before:

God.

Behind:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The redeemed journey is guarded at both ends by the presence of God.

XLIV. WHAT ISAIAH 52 TEACHES ABOUT THE SERVANT

He is:

Wise.

Exalted.

Disfigured.

Worldwide in effect.

Spiritual Principle

Suffering and glory belong to:

One mission.

XLV. WHAT ISAIAH 52 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

The New Testament naturally connects this section to:

Jesus Christ.

His humiliation.

Crucifixion.

Exaltation.

Worldwide gospel.

Cleansing work.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah 52:13–15 opens the door directly into the suffering and saving work explained in Isaiah 53.

XLVI. AWAKE, AWAKE

Repeated words emphasize:

Urgency.

Spiritual Principle

There is a time to stop:

Sleeping spiritually.

XLVII. PUT ON STRENGTH

God calls Zion to live out:

Restored identity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not keep rehearsing weakness after God has announced restoration.

XLVIII. BEAUTIFUL GARMENTS

Grace changes:

Clothing.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation replaces:

Shame.

XLIX. SHAKE OFF DUST

Dust speaks of:

Humiliation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some seasons require you to stop wearing the dust of what God has already begun to redeem.

L. RISE UP

Grace is:

Active.

Spiritual Principle

God’s command to rise assumes that staying down is no longer the only option.

LI. SIT ENTHRONED

The humiliated city receives:

Dignity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who allowed discipline can restore honor.

LII. FREE YOUR NECK

Chains are:

Not jewelry.

Spiritual Principle

Do not become emotionally attached to symbols of captivity.

LIII. SOLD FOR NOTHING

No legitimate creditor:

Owned them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Captivity may have been real without becoming ultimate ownership.

LIV. REDEEMED WITHOUT MONEY

The Redeemer provides:

What money cannot.

Spiritual Principle

Grace cannot be:

Purchased.

LV. EGYPT

Past oppression.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God remembers every chapter of His people’s bondage.

LVI. ASSYRIA

Another oppressor.

Spiritual Principle

Empires change.

God remains:

Redeemer.

LVII. GOD’S NAME BLASPHEMED

Israel’s condition created:

Mockery.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s people represent a name larger than their own.

LVIII. “THEY WILL KNOW MY NAME”

Knowledge follows:

Redemption.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation deepens:

Revelation.

LIX. “YES, IT IS I”

No ambiguity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God wants His people to know who acted when deliverance arrives.

LX. BEAUTIFUL FEET

The messenger matters because:

The message matters.

Spiritual Principle

Gospel proclamation is:

Beautiful work.

LXI. GOOD NEWS

Not:

Advice.

News.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The gospel is first an announcement of what God has done, not a list of what humans must accomplish.

LXII. PEACE PROCLAIMED

Peace follows:

God’s reign.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical peace has a:

King.

LXIII. SALVATION PROCLAIMED

Not:

Possibility alone.

A saving act of:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The messenger does not create salvation; he announces it.

LXIV. “YOUR GOD REIGNS”

The whole chapter can stand under:

This sentence.

Spiritual Principle

God’s sovereignty makes good news:

Possible.

LXV. WATCHMEN REJOICE

Those who spent years:

Watching.

Finally:

See.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Long waiting can end in loud praise.

LXVI. LORD RETURNS TO ZION

Presence is:

Restored.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest restoration is:

God with His people.

LXVII. RUINS SING

A contradiction?

No.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith can sing in ruins because it knows the Builder is coming.

LXVIII. COMFORTED PEOPLE

Isaiah 40 began:

Comfort.

Isaiah 52 says:

Comfort accomplished.

Spiritual Principle

God keeps:

His themes.

Across history.

LXIX. HOLY ARM

Power is not:

Morally neutral.

God’s arm is:

Holy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God never has to become unrighteous in order to become powerful.

LXX. IN SIGHT OF ALL NATIONS

No hidden victory.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation has:

Public significance.

LXXI. ENDS OF EARTH SEE

Mission:

Global.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The horizon of redemption is the world.

LXXII. DEPART

Freedom requires:

Leaving.

Spiritual Principle

The open prison door still requires:

Movement.

LXXIII. TOUCH NO UNCLEAN THING

The redeemed must separate from:

Defilement.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not drag Babylon’s idols into Zion’s restoration.

LXXIV. BE PURE

Holiness is not:

Optional decoration.

Spiritual Principle

The holy God calls for:

A holy people.

LXXV. NO HASTE

This departure is:

Ordered.

Secure.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God controls the exit, panic is unnecessary.

LXXVI. NO FLIGHT

Not running in:

Terror.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption changes:

Posture.

LXXVII. GOD BEFORE

The road ahead is:

Occupied.

By God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You never arrive somewhere before God.

LXXVIII. GOD BEHIND

No exposed:

Rear.

Spiritual Principle

God protects against:

Pursuit.

LXXIX. THE SERVANT WILL ACT WISELY

Mission accomplished:

Skillfully.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s Servant is never confused about the purpose entrusted to Him.

LXXX. THE SERVANT RAISED

Humiliation is:

Not final.

Spiritual Principle

God controls:

The final elevation.

LXXXI. THE SERVANT LIFTED UP

John connects “lifted up” with:

The cross.

And with:

Saving attraction.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The very place humanity intended as shame becomes the place from which salvation is proclaimed.

LXXXII. HIGHLY EXALTED

Philippians 2:

Humbled.

Then:

Exalted.

Spiritual Principle

God’s kingdom reverses:

Human verdicts.

LXXXIII. APPALLED AT HIM

The suffering shocks:

Observers.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant’s humiliation was not cosmetic; it was devastatingly real.

LXXXIV. DISFIGURED APPEARANCE

The text emphasizes:

Severity.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption will not come cheaply.

LXXXV. MARRED FORM

The Servant bears:

Humiliation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before Isaiah explains the meaning of the wounds, he makes sure we see that the wounds are real.

LXXXVI. SPRINKLE MANY NATIONS

Priestly imagery enters:

Servant imagery.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant's work is not merely:

Political liberation.

It has:

Purifying significance.

LXXXVII. MANY NATIONS

Again:

Global.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant who was despised locally becomes salvation's blessing globally.

LXXXVIII. KINGS SILENCED

Authority meets:

Greater authority.

Spiritual Principle

Earthly rulers do not have the final word about:

The Servant.

LXXXIX. UNHEARD THINGS UNDERSTOOD

Revelation reaches:

New people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God delights to make known His salvation where it has not yet been understood.

XC. ISAIAH 51 AND ISAIAH 52

Isaiah 51

Jerusalem is told:

> **“Awake, awake!”**

After drinking:

The cup.

Isaiah 52

Zion is told:

> **“Awake, awake!”**

And put on:

Strength.

Key Truth

The movement is from awakening after judgment to awakening into restoration.

XCI. ISAIAH 47 AND ISAIAH 52

Isaiah 47

Babylon:

Comes down.

Sits in:

Dust.

Isaiah 52

Zion:

Shakes off dust.

Rises.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can reverse the positions of oppressor and oppressed.

XCII. ISAIAH 48 AND ISAIAH 52

Isaiah 48

> **“Leave Babylon!”**

Isaiah 52

> **“Depart, depart.”**

Spiritual Principle

The call out of captivity becomes:

Stronger.

XCIII. ISAIAH 49 AND ISAIAH 52

Isaiah 49

The Servant brings salvation to:

The ends of earth.

Isaiah 52

The ends of earth see:

God’s salvation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What the Servant was commissioned to carry outward is now pictured reaching its intended horizon.

XCIV. ISAIAH 50 AND ISAIAH 52

Isaiah 50

The Servant is:

Beaten.

Mocked.

Spat upon.

Isaiah 52

The Servant is:

Marred.

Then:

Highly exalted.

Key Truth

Isaiah is drawing suffering and exaltation closer together as the Servant song reaches its climax.

XCV. ISAIAH 52 AND ISAIAH 53

The chapter break is:

Modern.

The Servant song begins:

Isaiah 52:13.

And continues directly through:

Isaiah 53:12.

Therefore Isaiah 52:13–15 should be read with:

Isaiah 53.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not stop at the chapter number when the prophetic argument keeps moving.

XCVI. THE SERVANT SONG BEGINS WITH EXALTATION

Before:

Wounds.

Before:

Rejection.

Before:

Bearing sin.

Isaiah tells us:

He wins.

Spiritual Principle

The suffering Servant is never:

A failed Servant.

XCVII. EXALTATION FRAMES THE SUFFERING

Isaiah 52:13:

Exaltation.

Isaiah 53:

Humiliation.

Isaiah 53:12:

Triumph.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant’s suffering must be interpreted inside the certainty of His ultimate victory.

XCVIII. GOOD NEWS AND THE SERVANT

The good news of verse 7:

> **“Your God reigns!”**

The Servant of verse 13:

Carries out the means by which salvation is:

Revealed.

Spiritual Principle

The kingdom announcement and the Servant’s redemptive work belong:

Together.

XCIX. HOLY ARM AND SERVANT

Isaiah 52:10:

God bares His:

Holy arm.

Isaiah 53:1:

“To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

The transition links God’s saving power with:

The Servant.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant is not separate from God’s saving action; He is central to its revelation.

C. THE NEW EXODUS IN ISAIAH 52

Original Exodus:

Slavery.

Departure.

God before and behind.

Deliverance.

New Exodus:

Babylon.

Departure.

Purity.

God before and behind.

Salvation.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration from exile is described using:

Exodus categories.

CI. A GREATER EXODUS

The chapter reaches beyond:

Babylon.

Why?

Because the nations see:

Salvation.

The Servant affects:

Many nations.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The historical return from exile becomes part of a larger saving story fulfilled in Christ.

CII. TEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 52

1. Sleep → Awakening

2. Dust → Beautiful Garments

3. Chains → Freedom

4. Captivity → Enthronement

5. Blasphemy → Knowledge of God’s Name

6. Ruins → Singing

7. Hidden Power → Holy Arm Revealed

8. Babylonian Defilement → Purity

9. Humiliation → Exaltation

10. Rejected Servant → Nations Astonished

Key Truth

Isaiah 52 is a chapter of reversal in which captivity gives way to freedom, shame to beauty, ruins to praise, hidden salvation to worldwide revelation, and the Servant’s horrifying humiliation to incomparable exaltation.

CIII. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 52

1. God Calls Zion to Awake

Principle:

Restoration requires a changed posture.

2. Redemption Cannot Be Bought with Money

Principle:

God alone provides the decisive saving action.

3. God Defends His Name

Principle:

Redemption vindicates the glory of the Lord among the nations.

4. The Gospel Is Good News

Principle:

Peace and salvation are announced because God reigns.

5. The Watchmen’s Waiting Ends in Joy

Principle:

Faithful waiting can become visible fulfillment.

6. Ruins Can Sing

Principle:

Restoration begins before every scar disappears.

7. Salvation Is Worldwide

Principle:

The ends of the earth are included in God’s saving vision.

8. Holiness Belongs to Redemption

Principle:

Freedom from Babylon means separation from Babylon's uncleanness.

9. God Leads and Guards His People

Principle:

He goes before and stands behind.

10. The Servant Will Be Exalted

Principle:

His mission ends in divine vindication.

11. The Servant Will Suffer Severely

Principle:

Exaltation comes through real humiliation.

12. The Servant's Work Reaches the Nations

Principle:

His saving effect extends far beyond Israel.

CIV. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What is Zion commanded to do at the beginning of Isaiah 52?

Awake and put on strength.

Question 2

What is Jerusalem told to wear?

Beautiful garments.

Question 3

What is she told to shake off?

The dust.

Question 4

What is she told to remove from her neck?

The chains of captivity.

Question 5

How was Israel sold?

For nothing.

Question 6

How will God redeem them?

Without money.

Question 7

What earlier nations are mentioned as oppressors?

Egypt and Assyria.

Question 8

What happened to God’s name during Israel’s humiliation?

It was continually blasphemed.

Question 9

What will the people come to know?

God’s name and that He is the One who foretold and acted.

Question 10

Why are the messenger’s feet called beautiful?

Because they carry good news.

Question 11

What does the good news include?

Peace, salvation, and the announcement:

> **“Your God reigns!”**

Question 12

What do the watchmen do?

They shout together for joy.

Question 13

Why do Jerusalem’s ruins sing?

Because God has comforted and redeemed His people.

Question 14

Who sees God’s salvation?

The ends of the earth.

Question 15

What are the redeemed commanded to leave?

The place of captivity and uncleanness.

Question 16

What must characterize those carrying God’s vessels?

Purity.

Question 17

Will the departure happen in panic?

No.

Question 18

Why not?

Because God goes before and serves as rear guard.

Question 19

Who appears in verse 13?

The Servant of the Lord.

Question 20

How is the Servant’s final status described?

Raised, lifted up, and highly exalted.

Question 21

What happened to His appearance?

He was horribly disfigured and marred.

Question 22

What New Testament events correspond with this suffering?

The mocking, beating, scourging, thorn-crowning, crucifixion, and humiliation of Jesus.

Question 23

What effect does the Servant have on many nations?

He “sprinkles” them, language naturally associated with cleansing and priestly action.

Question 24

What happens to kings?

They shut their mouths in astonishment before Him.

Question 25

What do previously uninformed people do?

They see and understand.

Question 26

Where does the Servant passage continue?

Directly into Isaiah 53.

Question 27

What is the central message of verse 7?

God reigns.

Question 28

What is the central connection between redemption and holiness?

Those delivered from Babylon are commanded not to carry its uncleanness with them.

Question 29

What does God’s presence before and behind His people teach?

Their journey is completely under His leadership and protection.

Question 30

What is the great paradox at the chapter’s end?

The Servant is both terribly marred and highly exalted.

CV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 52 asks several searching questions.

Am I Living Like Someone God Has Told to:

Awake?

Or am I still spiritually:

Asleep?

Am I Wearing the Dust of a season God is calling me to:

Rise from?

Am I still holding chains God is calling me to:

Remove?

Do I understand that redemption cannot be:

Purchased?

Earned?

Bought?

Do I know God’s name personally?

Or only know:

Religious language?

Do I believe:

“My God reigns”?

When:

Government changes?

Culture shifts?

Trouble comes?

The future feels uncertain?

Am I carrying:

Good news?

Would anyone call my message:

Peace?

Salvation?

Hope?

Have I become a watchman who only warns and never:

Rejoices?

Can I sing in:

Ruins?

Do I believe God’s salvation is meant for:

The ends of the earth?

Is there any “Babylon” God has told me:

To leave?

Am I trying to leave captivity while still touching:

Unclean things?

Do I value:

Purity?

Am I panicking about the future when God says:

I go before you?

Am I afraid about what is behind me when God says:

I am your rear guard?

Do I see Christ as:

The exalted Servant?

Do I understand that His suffering was:

Real?

Do I appreciate that His saving work reaches:

Many nations?

Am I willing to carry the message to those who:

Have not heard?

CVI. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Keep Sitting in the Dust When God Has Told You to Rise”

Zion had been:

Humiliated.

Captive.

Broken.

Then God said:

> **“Shake off your dust; rise up.”**

Principle:

Grace does not deny what happened in the dust, but it refuses to let the dust become your permanent identity.

CVII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Good News Is Not That the World Is Under Control—It Is That God Reigns”

Circumstances may look:

Chaotic.

The message still says:

> **“Your God reigns!”**

Principle:

The gospel rests not on the stability of circumstances but on the sovereignty of God.

CVIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“When God Goes Before You and Guards Behind You, Panic Is Unnecessary”

The redeemed do not have to:

Run blindly.

Principle:

Divine presence surrounds the path of obedience.

CIX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Servant Was Marred by Men but Exalted by God”

Human verdict:

Shame.

God’s verdict:

Exaltation.

Principle:

The cross reveals how wrong human judgment can be about the One God has chosen to glorify.

CX. ZION MUST WAKE UP

The call is:

Immediate.

Spiritual Principle

Some breakthroughs begin with:

Spiritual alertness.

CXI. STRENGTH AS CLOTHING

“Put on” suggests:

Visible change.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s strength should affect how the restored person stands.

CXII. BEAUTIFUL GARMENTS AFTER CAPTIVITY

No more:

Prison appearance.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption creates:

New identity.

CXIII. HOLINESS OF THE CITY

The future vision grows toward:

Final purity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s ultimate city is not merely safe; it is holy.

CXIV. DUST SHAKEN OFF

The dust belonged to:

Humiliation.

Spiritual Principle

There is a time to stop carrying evidence of former defeat as present identity.

CXV. THRONE RESTORED

Dignity returns.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can restore what judgment temporarily removed.

CXVI. CHAINS BROKEN

Freedom:

Visible.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption must affect:

Bondage.

CXVII. NO MONEY

Human economy cannot:

Purchase grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The richest person cannot buy what only the Redeemer can give.

CXVIII. HISTORY OF OPPRESSION

Egypt.

Assyria.

Babylon.

Spiritual Principle

Oppressors change names.

God’s covenant faithfulness:

Does not.

CXIX. BLASPHEMED NAME

God cares how:

Nations interpret history.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s redemption becomes an answer to every claim that He has forgotten or failed His people.

CXX. KNOW MY NAME

God is not merely:

A force.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption is relational.

CXXI. BEAUTIFUL MESSENGER

The messenger arrives over:

Mountains.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The difficulty of the road does not reduce the beauty of the message.

CXXII. GOOD TIDINGS OF PEACE

Peace comes after:

Conflict.

Spiritual Principle

God’s reign restores:

Shalom.

CXXIII. SALVATION ANNOUNCED

People hear:

What God has done.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A preacher of salvation is a herald, not the Savior.

CXXIV. GOD REIGNS NOW

Not:

Someday only.

Spiritual Principle

Divine sovereignty is:

Present reality.

CXXV. WATCHMEN TOGETHER

Unity in:

Joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God fulfills His promise, there is enough joy for every faithful watchman.

CXXVI. SEEING WITH THEIR OWN EYES

Waiting becomes:

Witnessing.

Spiritual Principle

Faith can mature into:

Sight.

CXXVII. RUINS COMMANDed TO PRAISE

Striking.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may call praise from a place before restoration looks complete because His promise is already sure.

CXXVIII. HOLY ARM REVEALED

God’s power becomes:

Visible.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation reveals:

Strength.

CXXIX. WORLDWIDE SIGHT

Not hidden:

Local event only.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God of Israel is revealing salvation for the nations.

CXXX. COME OUT

Separation from:

Captivity.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption has:

Direction.

CXXXI. NO UNCLEAN THING

The journey home requires:

Holiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not celebrate deliverance while carrying the contamination of bondage.

CXXXII. VESSELS OF THE LORD

Sacred responsibility.

Spiritual Principle

Those handling holy things should pursue:

Holy living.

CXXXIII. NO PANIC

Security replaces:

Fear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith walks urgently when God commands, but it need not walk anxiously when God guards.

CXXXIV. GOD BEFORE AND BEHIND

Complete:

Coverage.

Spiritual Principle

No exposed side.

CXXXV. “SEE, MY SERVANT”

Attention shifts:

Decisively.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

After all the promises of salvation, God points the reader toward the Servant.

CXXXVI. SERVANT WISDOM

He acts:

Perfectly.

Spiritual Principle

The saving mission is not:

Improvised.

CXXXVII. EXALTATION BEFORE SUFFERING

God reveals:

Outcome first.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The coming suffering should never be mistaken for ultimate defeat.

CXXXVIII. APPALLING SUFFERING

Observers react:

Strongly.

Spiritual Principle

Sin’s redemption involves:

Cost.

CXXXIX. MARRED APPEARANCE

The Servant is treated:

Brutally.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace is free to us, but it was not cheap to the Servant.

CXL. SPRINKLING NATIONS

Purification imagery.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s work cleanses:

Many.

CXLI. KINGS SILENCED

The powerful become:

Speechless.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant who was mocked by soldiers becomes the One before whom kings lose their words.

CXLII. UNREACHED PEOPLE

Paul later sees missionary significance here.

Spiritual Principle

The gospel presses toward:

Places where Christ is not yet known.

CXLIII. ISAIAH 52 AS A GOSPEL CHAPTER

The chapter contains:

Good news.

Peace.

Salvation.

God’s reign.

Redemption.

Purity.

The Servant.

The nations.

Key Truth

Isaiah 52 is not merely about return from Babylon; it opens outward into the worldwide gospel accomplished through the suffering and exalted Servant.

CXLIV. ISAIAH 52 AS A KINGDOM CHAPTER

> **“Your God reigns!”**

Everything flows from:

Kingship.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation is the action of:

The reigning God.

CXLV. ISAIAH 52 AS A MISSIONARY CHAPTER

Messenger.

Mountains.

Good news.

Ends of earth.

Many nations.

Kings.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The chapter begins with redeemed Zion and ends with amazed nations.

CXLVI. ISAIAH 52 AS A HOLINESS CHAPTER

Holy city.

Holy arm.

Purity.

Vessels.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation never separates:

Grace.

From:

Holiness.

CXLVII. ISAIAH 52 AS A CHRISTOLOGICAL CHAPTER

Servant:

Wise.

Exalted.

Marred.

Cleansing nations.

Astonishing kings.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The final verses form the doorway into one of the clearest prophetic portraits of Christ’s redemptive suffering in the Old Testament.

CXLVIII. NINE GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 52

1. Zion Awakens

She rises from weakness and dust.

2. Zion Is Freed

Chains are removed.

3. God Defends His Name

Oppression and blasphemy are answered by redemption.

4. Good News Is Announced

> **“Your God reigns!”**

5. The Watchmen Rejoice

They see God returning to Zion.

6. The Ruins Sing

Jerusalem is comforted and redeemed.

7. The Nations See Salvation

God bares His holy arm publicly.

8. The Redeemed Depart in Purity

God goes before and guards behind.

9. The Servant Is Revealed

He is terribly marred yet destined for supreme exaltation and worldwide impact.

Key Truth

Isaiah 52 moves from Zion's awakening to the Servant's exaltation, showing that God's redemption restores His people, reveals His reign, reaches the nations, demands holiness, and finds its deepest fulfillment through the suffering Servant.

CXLIX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 52 begins with:

> **"Awake."**

Maybe there are seasons when God's people become accustomed to:

Dust.

Chains.

Defeat.

Captivity.

They begin to believe:

This is simply who I am.

God says:

No.

> **"Shake off your dust."**
>
> **"Rise up."**

“Free yourself from the chains.”

Grace does not ask us to deny:

The captivity happened.

It announces:

Captivity does not own the future.

Then God says:

You were sold:

For nothing.

You will be redeemed:

Without money.

In other words:

Your deliverance does not depend on:

Your wealth.

Your power.

Your ability to negotiate.

God acts as:

Redeemer.

Then comes the message over:

The mountains.

“Your God reigns!”

That is still good news.

When the world feels:

Chaotic—

God reigns.

When governments shift—

God reigns.

When nations rise and fall—

God reigns.

When circumstances change—

God reigns.

When you cannot see how redemption will come—

God reigns.

Then Jerusalem’s:

Ruins.

Are commanded to:

Sing.

Maybe that seems strange.

Why sing while the walls still look:

Broken?

Because redemption is:

Certain.

Sometimes faith sings before reconstruction is:

Complete.

Then the Lord bares:

His holy arm.

All nations see:

Salvation.

This means your redemption is not merely:

About you.

God’s saving work becomes:

Testimony.

Then:

“Depart, depart.”

Freedom means:

Leaving.

If God brings you out of:

Babylon—

Do not carry Babylon in:

Your heart.

If God breaks:

Chains—

Do not keep polishing them.

If God calls you into:

Holiness—

Do not call impurity:

Freedom.

Then God gives one of the great promises of:

Security.

“The Lord will go before you.”

And:

“The God of Israel will be your rear guard.”

Ahead:

God.

Behind:

God.

That means you do not have to:

Panic.

Then suddenly the chapter points:

To the Servant.

“See, My servant.”

The One through whom salvation reaches its deepest fulfillment.

He will be:

Exalted.

But before the crown:

Disfigurement.

Before vindication:

Humiliation.

Before kings fall silent:

People are appalled.

The Servant is:

Marred.

Mocked.

Rejected.

Suffering.

Yet God already tells us the end:

“Highly exalted.”

That is crucial.

The cross does not mean:

The mission failed.

The wounds do not mean:

God abandoned the Servant.

The humiliation does not mean:

The enemy won.

The Servant’s suffering becomes part of:

The saving purpose.

And through Him:

Many nations.

Are affected.

Kings:

Fall silent.

Those who had not heard:

Understand.

That prepares us for:

Isaiah 53.

There Isaiah will answer the question:

Why did the Servant suffer?

But Isaiah 52 makes sure we know before entering the suffering:

The Servant will:

Succeed.

The Servant will:

Be exalted.

And the salvation accomplished through Him will reach:

The nations.

So Isaiah 52 says:

Wake up.

Shake off the dust.

Rise.

Break with captivity.

Believe the good news.

Your God:

Reigns.

Sing in the ruins.

Walk in purity.

Do not panic.

God goes before.

God guards behind.

And fix your eyes on:

The Servant.

The One marred by men.

Exalted by God.

And revealed as the center of:

Salvation.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You are:

Our Redeemer.

Our King.

Our Defender.

Our Salvation.

Father, awaken us.

Where we have become spiritually:

Sleepy.

Discouraged.

Defeated.

Accustomed to captivity.

Speak again:

“Awake, awake.”

Help us shake off:

The dust.

Rise from:

Defeat.

Refuse to live under chains You have broken.

Clothe us with:

Salvation.

Righteousness.

Holiness.

Father, thank You that redemption cannot be:

Purchased.

Earned.

Negotiated.

Thank You for:

Grace.

Thank You for the good news:

“Your God reigns!”

Let that truth govern our:

Fear.

Worry.

Thinking.

Ministry.

Future.

Father, make our feet:

Beautiful.

Not because of who we are—

But because of:

The message we carry.

Help us proclaim:

Peace.

Salvation.

The gospel.

Your kingdom.

Father, put songs in:

Ruins.

Give hope to:

Broken places.

Reveal Your holy arm.

Let people everywhere see:

Your salvation.

Father, call us into:

Purity.

Help us leave behind:

Every unclean thing.

Do not let us bring the values of Babylon into:

The life of redemption.

Thank You that You go:

Before us.

And stand:

Behind us.

Free us from:

Panic.

Father, most of all:

Thank You for:

Your Servant.

Thank You for:

Jesus Christ.

The obedient Servant.

The suffering Servant.

The exalted Servant.

Thank You that He was:

Mocked.

Beaten.

Marred.

Rejected.

Yet His suffering did not become:

Defeat.

Thank You that You:

Raised Him.

Exalted Him.

Glorified Him.

And through Him Your salvation reaches:

The nations.

Prepare our hearts as we move into:

Isaiah 53.

Help us see:

The wounds.

The substitution.

The sacrifice.

The victory.

And the glory of:

Jesus Christ.

In His name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’” — Isaiah 52:7**

Central Truth

The Lord calls Zion to rise from dust and captivity because He freely redeems His people, vindicates His holy name, announces the good news that He reigns, reveals His salvation to the ends of the earth, calls the redeemed to purity under His protecting presence, and introduces the Servant who will suffer shocking humiliation yet be raised, lifted up, highly exalted, and become the means by which many nations encounter God’s cleansing and saving work.

Isaiah 52 in One Sentence

Isaiah calls captive Zion to awake, rise, shake off her chains, and rejoice in redemption without money, announces the beautiful gospel message that God reigns, portrays Jerusalem’s ruins singing as the Lord reveals His salvation to the ends of the earth, commands the redeemed to leave Babylon in purity while God goes before and guards behind them, and then introduces the Servant who will be horribly marred yet ultimately raised, exalted, and revealed as the source of worldwide astonishment and cleansing salvation.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 53 — The Suffering Servant

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 53 stands at the theological heart of the Servant passages.

Isaiah 52 ended by announcing:

> **“See, My servant will act wisely; He will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.”**

Then Isaiah immediately described the Servant as:

Marred.

Disfigured.

Appalling to observers.

Isaiah 53 explains:

Why.

The Servant suffers:

Not for His own sin.

But for:

Ours.

This chapter moves through:

Rejection.

Sorrow.

Substitution.

Sin-bearing.

Silence.

Death.

Burial.

Vindication.

Justification.

Intercession.

Victory.

The language is intensely personal.

Again and again:

Our griefs.

Our sorrows.

Our transgressions.

Our iniquities.

Our peace.

Our healing.

We went astray.

Our sin was laid on:

Him.

The Servant is:

Righteous.

Yet suffers.

Innocent.

Yet condemned.

Silent.

Yet victorious.

Killed.

Yet afterward He sees:

Life.

Fruit.

Reward.

Isaiah 53 is therefore not merely a prophecy of:

Suffering.

It is a prophecy of:

Substitutionary suffering.

The Servant takes the place of:

Sinners.

Verse 5 says:

> **“He was pierced for our transgressions.”**

Not:

His transgressions.

Ours.

> **“He was crushed for our iniquities.”**

> **“The punishment that brought us peace was upon Him.”**

Verse 6 says:

> **“The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”**

Verse 8 says:

> **“For the transgression of My people He was stricken.”**

Verse 11 says:

> **“He will bear their iniquities.”**

Verse 12 says:

> **“He bore the sin of many.”**

The repetition is unmistakable.

The Servant is:

Sinless.

The people are:

Sinful.

Yet the consequences connected with sin fall upon:

Him.

This is one of the Old Testament’s clearest pictures of:

Substitutionary atonement.

The New Testament repeatedly identifies this Servant with:

Jesus Christ.

John 12 quotes Isaiah 53:1.

Acts 8 records Philip explaining Isaiah 53 to the Ethiopian official and proclaiming:

Jesus.

1 Peter 2 draws directly from Isaiah 53 in explaining Christ’s suffering.

The Gospels describe Jesus:

Silent before His accusers.

Numbered with transgressors.

Rejected.

Killed.

Buried with the rich.

Yet His death does not become:

The end.

Isaiah 53:10–12 moves beyond death.

The Servant:

Sees offspring.

Prolongs His days.

Sees the result of His suffering.

Is satisfied.

Justifies many.

Receives a portion among the great.

Divides spoils.

Intercedes for transgressors.

This means His death cannot be:

Final defeat.

The Servant passes through death into:

Vindication.

Life.

Victory.

Exaltation.

The chapter therefore reveals the paradox of:

The cross.

What looks like:

Defeat.

Becomes:

Victory.

What looks like:

Punishment upon a rejected man.

Becomes:

The means of peace for sinners.

What looks like:

The end.

Becomes:

The fulfillment of God’s saving purpose.

The central truth of Isaiah 53 is:

The righteous Servant, fulfilled ultimately and decisively in Jesus Christ, is rejected by humanity yet willingly bears the griefs, transgressions, iniquities, punishment, and sin of others; though innocent, He is oppressed, killed, and buried, yet through His sacrificial death God’s saving purpose succeeds, many are justified, the Servant lives beyond suffering, receives victory, and continues as the intercessor for transgressors.

I. WHO HAS BELIEVED THE MESSAGE?

Isaiah 53:1 — The Arm of the Lord Revealed

> **“Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”**

Isaiah begins with:

Unbelief.

The message is:

Proclaimed.

But not everyone:

Believes.

The “arm of the Lord” refers to:

God’s saving power.

Isaiah 52:10 had said:

> **“The Lord will lay bare His holy arm.”**

Now the question becomes:

Who recognizes that saving arm in:

The Servant?

Cross References

John 12:38

John quotes this verse to explain the widespread unbelief surrounding Jesus despite the signs He performed.

Romans 10:16

Paul quotes Isaiah 53:1 while discussing the fact that not everyone who hears the gospel responds with faith.

Isaiah 52:10

God reveals His holy arm before the nations so that the ends of the earth may see His salvation.

Spiritual Principle

Divine revelation does not guarantee:

Human acceptance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest truth can stand directly in front of a person and still be rejected by an unbelieving heart.

II. THE ARM OF THE LORD APPEARS IN AN UNEXPECTED FORM

People might expect God’s arm to appear as:

Military power.

Political triumph.

Spectacular force.

Instead the saving power of God appears in:

A suffering Servant.

Spiritual Principle

God’s greatest power may appear in a form human pride considers:

Weak.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not decide what God’s power must look like before God reveals it.

III. A TENDER SHOOT FROM DRY GROUND

Isaiah 53:2 — Humble Appearance

> **“He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to Him, nothing in His appearance that we should desire Him.”**

The Servant does not arrive surrounded by:

Earthly grandeur.

Royal spectacle.

Visible majesty.

He grows like:

A tender shoot.

A root from:

Dry ground.

Cross References

Isaiah 11:1

Isaiah had promised a shoot arising from Jesse’s seemingly cut-down family line.

Matthew 13:54

People who knew Jesus' ordinary background were astonished and questioned where His wisdom and power came from.

John 1:10

The world was made through Christ, yet the world did not recognize Him.

Spiritual Principle

God's greatest work can emerge from:

Unimpressive surroundings.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Heaven's greatest treasure did not arrive wrapped in earthly spectacle.

IV. "NO BEAUTY OR MAJESTY TO ATTRACT US"

The issue is not that Jesus lacked:

Human appearance.

The point is:

He did not come according to human expectations of royal splendor.

Spiritual Principle

Faith must learn to recognize:

Spiritual glory.

V. THE REJECTED SERVANT

Isaiah 53:3 — A Man of Sorrows

> **"He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, familiar with suffering. Like one from whom people hide their faces He was despised, and we did not value Him."**

Five painful descriptions:

Despised.

Rejected.

Sorrows.

Suffering.

Not valued.

Cross References

Psalm 22:6

The suffering righteous one describes being despised and scorned by people.

John 1:11

Jesus came to His own, but His own people did not receive Him.

Mark 9:12

Jesus teaches that the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be treated with contempt.

Spiritual Principle

Human rejection does not mean:

Divine rejection.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The world can place no value on the One heaven values infinitely.

VI. A MAN OF SORROWS

Jesus knows:

Grief.

Rejection.

Loss.

Pain.

Spiritual Principle

The Savior is not:

Emotionally distant from human suffering.

VII. FAMILIAR WITH SUFFERING

Suffering was not:

An abstract subject.

He knew:

It.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus does not counsel suffering people as One who has never entered suffering Himself.

VIII. “WE DID NOT VALUE HIM”

This is confession.

Humanity misjudged:

The Servant.

Spiritual Principle

Sin distorts:

Evaluation.

IX. HE CARRIED OUR GRIEFS

Isaiah 53:4 — Misunderstood Suffering

> **“Surely He took up our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we considered Him stricken by God, smitten and afflicted.”**

The observers make a mistake.

They see:

Suffering.

And assume:

He deserves it.

But Isaiah says:

The suffering is connected with:

Our griefs.

Our sorrows.

Cross References

Matthew 8:17

Matthew applies this verse to Jesus' healing ministry, emphasizing Him as the One who bears human affliction.

Psalm 103:3

The Lord is praised as the One who forgives sin and heals disease.

Hebrews 4:15

Jesus is able to sympathize with human weakness because He has entered fully into human testing without sin.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant enters deeply into:

Human brokenness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

They thought His suffering revealed His guilt.

Isaiah says His suffering revealed His willingness to carry ours.

X. "WE CONSIDERED HIM STRICKEN"

Human judgment says:

He must be condemned.

God's revelation says:

He is bearing:

Our burden.

Spiritual Principle

Appearances can hide:

Redemptive purpose.

XI. PIERCED FOR OUR TRANSGRESSIONS

Isaiah 53:5 — Substitution

> **“But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed.”**

This verse stands at the center of:

Christian understanding of the cross.

Notice the exchange:

His piercing.

Our transgressions.

His crushing.

Our iniquities.

His punishment.

Our peace.

His wounds.

Our healing.

Cross References

1 Peter 2:24

Peter says Christ bore our sins in His body on the tree so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness, echoing Isaiah’s language of healing through His wounds.

Romans 4:25

Christ was delivered over because of our transgressions and raised in connection with our justification.

Romans 5:6

Christ died for the ungodly while they were helpless.

Spiritual Principle

The cross is:

Substitutionary.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The great exchange of Isaiah 53 is this: what belonged to us fell upon Him so that what belongs to Him could become ours by grace.

XII. PIERCED

The Servant’s suffering is:

Violent.

Physical.

Real.

Spiritual Principle

Atonement is not:

Abstract.

XIII. CRUSHED FOR OUR INIQUITIES

“Iniquities” points to:

Guilt.

Crookedness.

Sin.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The weight crushing the Servant was connected not to His corruption but to ours.

XIV. THE PUNISHMENT THAT BROUGHT PEACE

Peace is:

Costly.

Not:

Cheap.

Spiritual Principle

Reconciliation with God involves:

The dealing with sin.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Peace with God does not come from pretending sin never mattered; it comes because sin was dealt with.

XV. “BY HIS WOUNDS WE ARE HEALED”

The healing in context is primarily connected to:

Sin.

Alienation.

Spiritual restoration.

The verse should not be reduced to a guarantee that every believer will experience immediate physical healing from every disease.

Spiritual Principle

The deepest human wound is:

Sin.

The Servant brings:

Healing.

XVI. ALL WE LIKE SHEEP HAVE GONE ASTRAY

Isaiah 53:6 — Universal Sin and Substitution

> **“We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”**

Two uses of:

All.

“We all.”

“Iniquity of us all.”

The problem:

Universal wandering.

The solution:

Iniquity laid upon:

The Servant.

Cross References

1 Peter 2:25

Peter says believers were like wandering sheep but have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of their souls.

Romans 3:23

All have sinned and fall short of God’s glory.

2 Corinthians 5:21

God made the sinless Christ to be sin for us so that in Him we might become God’s righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is both:

Universal.

Personal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We all wandered together, but every one of us also chose his own road.

XVII. “EACH OF US TURNED TO HIS OWN WAY”

Sin is not merely:

Breaking rules.

It is:

Self-direction.

Spiritual Principle

At the heart of sin is the declaration:

My way.

XVIII. THE LORD LAID INIQUITY ON HIM

The transfer is:

Divine.

Not accidental.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Calvary was not merely human cruelty; behind human sin stood God’s redemptive purpose to deal with sin through the Servant.

XIX. SILENT BEFORE HIS OPPRESSORS

Isaiah 53:7 — The Lamb Led to Slaughter

> **“He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He did not open His mouth.”**

Twice:

> **“He did not open His mouth.”**

The Servant is:

Silent.

Not because:

He has no defense.

But because:

He submits to the mission.

Cross References

Acts 8:32

The Ethiopian official was reading this exact passage when Philip explained the good news about Jesus.

John 1:29

John the Baptist identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Matthew 27:12

Jesus remained silent before the accusations brought against Him by religious leaders.

Spiritual Principle

Silence can be:

Strength.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant’s silence is not helplessness; it is obedience under control.

XX. THE LAMB

This imagery carries:

Sacrificial significance.

Gentleness.

Innocence.

Substitution.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant becomes:

The sacrificial Lamb.

XXI. LED TO SLAUGHTER

The destination is:

Death.

Yet the Servant goes:

Without rebellion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

He was not dragged unwillingly into God’s plan; He submitted to it.

XXII. CUT OFF FROM THE LAND OF THE LIVING

Isaiah 53:8 — Stricken for the People

> **“By oppression and judgment He was taken away. Who can speak of His descendants? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of My people He was stricken.”**

“Cut off” means:

Death.

The Servant dies.

Why?

> **“For the transgression of My people.”**

Again:

Substitution.

Cross References

Acts 8:33

The Ethiopian official reads this verse, and Philip begins from this Scripture to preach Jesus.

Daniel 9:26

Daniel speaks of an Anointed One being cut off.

John 11:51

Caiaphas unknowingly prophesies that Jesus would die for the nation.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s death is:

Representative.

Substitutionary.

Redemptive.

XXIII. OPPRESSION AND JUDGMENT

Human proceedings were:

Unjust.

Yet God’s redemptive purpose worked through:

Human injustice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can accomplish holy redemption through circumstances for which sinful humans remain morally responsible.

XXIV. “FOR THE TRANSGRESSION OF MY PEOPLE”

The text does not leave the cause:

Ambiguous.

Spiritual Principle

The death is:

For others.

XXV. THE GRAVE WITH THE WICKED, YET WITH THE RICH

Isaiah 53:9 — Innocent in Death

> **“He was assigned a grave with the wicked, yet with the rich in His death, though He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth.”**

The Servant is treated as:

Criminal.

Yet buried with:

The rich.

The Gospel narratives give striking fulfillment in:

Joseph of Arimathea.

Cross References

Matthew 27:57

Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man and disciple, received Jesus' body for burial.

1 Peter 2:22

Peter directly echoes Isaiah, declaring that Christ committed no sin and no deceit was found in His mouth.

Luke 23:41

One criminal crucified beside Jesus acknowledged that Jesus had done nothing wrong.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant dies:

Innocent.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

He was treated like the guilty because He was carrying the guilt of others, not because guilt belonged to Him.

XXVI. NO VIOLENCE

His hands:

Innocent.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant does not suffer for:

Personal wrongdoing.

XXVII. NO DECEIT

His mouth:

Pure.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One who bore false accusations had never spoken falsely Himself.

XXVIII. “IT WAS THE LORD’S WILL”

Isaiah 53:10 — The Sin Offering

> **“Yet it was the Lord’s will to crush Him and cause Him to suffer, and though the Lord makes His life an offering for sin, He will see His offspring and prolong His days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in His hand.”**

This is one of the most profound verses in:

Scripture.

Human beings:

Rejected.

Oppressed.

Killed.

But behind their sinful actions stood:

God’s saving purpose.

This does not mean God delighted in:

Pain for pain’s sake.

The pleasure is in:

The redemptive purpose.

The successful offering.

The salvation accomplished.

Cross References

Romans 8:32

God did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all.

Hebrews 9:14

Christ offered Himself without blemish to God through the eternal Spirit.

John 10:17

Jesus says He lays down His life willingly and will take it up again.

Spiritual Principle

The cross was:

Planned redemption.

Not:

Divine accident.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God did not delight in suffering itself; He purposed salvation through the Servant’s willing sacrifice.

XXIX. HIS LIFE BECOMES AN OFFERING FOR SIN

The language is:

Sacrificial.

The Servant is both:

Person.

Offering.

Spiritual Principle

Atonement stands at the heart of:

His death.

XXX. HE WILL SEE HIS OFFSPRING

But He has died.

How then:

See?

This points beyond death.

The Servant will experience:

Life.

Fruit.

A redeemed people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Death does not have the last word over the Servant.

XXXI. HE WILL PROLONG HIS DAYS

Again:

Death.

Then:

Life.

Spiritual Principle

The text moves toward:

Resurrection-like vindication.

XXXII. THE LORD’S WILL PROSPERS IN HIS HAND

The mission:

Succeeds.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant’s wounds are not evidence that God’s plan failed; they are central to the plan’s fulfillment.

XXXIII. AFTER THE SUFFERING HE SEES LIGHT

Isaiah 53:11 — The Righteous Servant Justifies Many

> **“After the suffering of His soul, He will see the light of life and be satisfied; by His knowledge My righteous Servant will justify many, and He will bear their iniquities.”**

After:

Suffering.

Comes:

Sight.

Life.

Satisfaction.

Justification.

Cross References

Romans 5:19

Through the obedience of the One, many are made righteous.

Hebrews 12:2

Jesus endured the cross because of the joy set before Him and afterward sat at God’s right hand.

1 Corinthians 1:30

Christ becomes for believers wisdom, righteousness, holiness, and redemption from God.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s suffering produces:

Saving results.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

He does not merely endure the cross; He sees what the cross accomplishes and is satisfied.

XXXIV. “MY RIGHTEOUS SERVANT”

God gives the verdict:

Righteous.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s sinlessness is essential to:

His substitution.

XXXV. HE WILL JUSTIFY MANY

To justify means:

To declare righteous.

The guilty cannot justify:

Themselves.

The righteous Servant provides the basis for:

Justification.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant does not merely inspire sinners to improve; He provides righteousness for those who cannot justify themselves.

XXXVI. HE WILL BEAR THEIR INIQUITIES

Again the theme:

Bearing.

Spiritual Principle

Justification is connected to:

Sin-bearing.

XXXVII. THE SERVANT RECEIVES THE SPOILS

Isaiah 53:12 — Victory Through Sacrifice

> **“Therefore I will give Him a portion among the great, and He will divide the spoils with the strong, because He poured out His life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”**

The final verse contains:

Victory.

Reward.

Death.

Identification with sinners.

Sin-bearing.

Intercession.

Cross References

Luke 22:37

Jesus explicitly applies the words “numbered with the transgressors” to Himself.

Hebrews 7:25

Christ lives to intercede for those who come to God through Him.

Mark 15:28

The crucifixion tradition connects Jesus’ execution among criminals with the fulfillment of this Servant prophecy.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant wins through:

Sacrifice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

His victory is not achieved by avoiding death but by pouring out His life through it.

XXXVIII. “HE POURED OUT HIS LIFE”

Not stolen from Him:

Against His will.

Poured out.

Spiritual Principle

The sacrifice is:

Voluntary.

XXXIX. NUMBERED WITH TRANSGRESSORS

The sinless One is counted:

Among sinners.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus entered the place of transgressors without ever becoming a transgressor.

XL. HE BORE THE SIN OF MANY

Again:

Substitution.

Spiritual Principle

The cross deals with:

Sin.

XLI. HE INTERCEDES FOR TRANSGRESSORS

The Servant does not merely:

Die for sinners.

He intercedes for:

Them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One who bore the transgressor’s sin also pleads the transgressor’s cause.

XLII. THE GREAT EXCHANGE OF ISAIAH 53

Our Griefs

He:

Carried.

Our Sorrows

He:

Bore.

Our Transgressions

He:

Was pierced.

Our Iniquities

He:

Was crushed.

Our Punishment

He:

Received.

Our Peace

We:

Receive.

His Wounds

We:

Are healed.

Our Iniquity

Laid upon:

Him.

Key Truth

Isaiah 53 is the chapter of substitution: the innocent Servant takes what belongs to the guilty so the guilty may receive what comes through His sacrifice.

XLIII. WHAT ISAIAH 53 TEACHES ABOUT SIN

Sin is:

Wandering.

Transgression.

Iniquity.

Guilt.

Rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

The cross is as serious as:

Sin is serious.

XLIV. WHAT ISAIAH 53 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

Rejected.

Sorrowful.

Sinless.

Pierced.

Crushed.

Silent.

Killed.

Buried.

Alive beyond death.

Justifier.

Victor.

Intercessor.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Few Old Testament chapters gather so many aspects of Christ’s saving work into one concentrated prophetic portrait.

XLV. WHAT ISAIAH 53 TEACHES ABOUT SUBSTITUTION

Repeatedly:

For us.

For our.

On Him.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant suffers:

In the place of others.

XLVI. WHAT ISAIAH 53 TEACHES ABOUT ATONEMENT

His life becomes:

Sin offering.

He bears:

Iniquity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The cross is not merely an example of love; it is a sacrificial dealing with human sin.

XLVII. WHAT ISAIAH 53 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE

Peace comes through:

Punishment borne.

Spiritual Principle

Peace with God is:

Reconciled peace.

XLVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 53 TEACHES ABOUT HEALING

Healing flows through:

His wounds.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant repairs the deepest damage caused by:

Sin.

XLIX. WHAT ISAIAH 53 TEACHES ABOUT HUMANITY

> **“We all like sheep have gone astray.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Humanity’s problem is not merely that we lost the road; we chose our own road.

L. WHAT ISAIAH 53 TEACHES ABOUT INNOCENCE

No violence.

No deceit.

Righteous Servant.

Spiritual Principle

The substitute must not be guilty of:

The guilt He bears.

LI. WHAT ISAIAH 53 TEACHES ABOUT SILENCE

The Servant refuses:

Self-saving retreat.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

His silence before accusers becomes part of His obedient march toward redemption.

LII. WHAT ISAIAH 53 TEACHES ABOUT DEATH

Cut off.

Grave.

Poured out unto death.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant truly:

Dies.

LIII. WHAT ISAIAH 53 TEACHES ABOUT LIFE AFTER DEATH

See offspring.

Prolong days.

See light.

Receive reward.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah does not leave the Servant in the grave.

LIV. WHAT ISAIAH 53 TEACHES ABOUT JUSTIFICATION

The righteous Servant:

Justifies many.

Spiritual Principle

Righteous standing comes through:

Him.

LV. WHAT ISAIAH 53 TEACHES ABOUT INTERCESSION

The Servant continues:

Representing sinners.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The cross is not the end of Christ’s concern for His people; the risen Christ continues to intercede.

LVI. UNBELIEF AT THE BEGINNING

> **“Who has believed?”**

Spiritual Principle

The message can be:

True.

And still:

Rejected.

LVII. THE ARM REVEALED IN THE SERVANT

Power appears:

Cruciform.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s arm of salvation is revealed not merely through conquest but through the suffering Servant.

LVIII. TENDER SHOOT

Fragile-looking.

Spiritual Principle

Appearance does not define:

Strength.

LIX. ROOT OUT OF DRY GROUND

Life emerging from:

Barrenness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can bring messianic life from soil everyone else has written off.

LX. NO EARTHLY MAJESTY

No spectacle.

Spiritual Principle

Christ’s glory must be seen by:

Faith.

LXI. DESPISED

Human rejection.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Popularity is never the final proof of truth.

LXII. REJECTED

The Servant knows:

Exclusion.

Spiritual Principle

No rejected believer follows a Savior unfamiliar with rejection.

LXIII. SORROWS

Plural.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus entered a world overflowing with grief and did not remain untouched by it.

LXIV. FACES HIDDEN FROM HIM

People turn:

Away.

Spiritual Principle

Humanity recoils from:

The suffering Servant.

LXV. “WE DID NOT VALUE HIM”

Wrong evaluation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin can look directly at infinite worth and call it worthless.

LXVI. “SURELY”

Isaiah emphasizes:

Certainty.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant truly bears:

Human grief.

LXVII. CARRIED OUR SORROWS

The Servant is:

Burden-bearer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What crushed us He took upon Himself.

LXVIII. CONSIDERED SMITTEN BY GOD

People misread:

The cross.

Spiritual Principle

Without revelation, suffering can be:

Misinterpreted.

LXIX. “BUT HE WAS PIERCED”

The word:

But.

Corrects the misunderstanding.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

They thought He suffered for His sin; Isaiah says He suffered for ours.

LXX. OUR TRANSGRESSIONS

Personal:

Guilt.

Spiritual Principle

The cross confronts:

Us.

LXXI. OUR INIQUITIES

Deep moral:

Crookedness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant does not deal merely with mistakes; He deals with guilt.

LXXII. OUR PEACE

Result:

Reconciliation.

Spiritual Principle

His suffering produces:

Our shalom.

LXXIII. HIS WOUNDS

The means of:

Healing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The marks of apparent defeat become evidence of saving love.

LXXIV. SHEEP ASTRAY

Simple image.

Profound diagnosis.

Spiritual Principle

Sin wanders away from:

The Shepherd.

LXXV. “HIS OWN WAY”

Self-rule.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The shortest definition of sin may be: God’s creature insisting on his own way.

LXXVI. INIQUITY LAID ON HIM

Transfer.

Spiritual Principle

The substitute bears:

What does not belong to Him naturally.

LXXVII. OPPRESSED

External pressure.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant knows:

Injustice.

LXXVIII. AFFLICTED

Internal suffering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

His suffering reaches both body and soul.

LXXIX. SILENT LAMB

Controlled submission.

Spiritual Principle

Obedience does not require:

Self-defense.

LXXX. SLAUGHTER

Death is:

Intentional destination.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Lamb imagery does not end at gentleness; it moves toward sacrifice.

LXXXI. “CUT OFF”

The Servant truly:

Dies.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption enters:

Death itself.

LXXXII. “MY PEOPLE”

The substitution concerns:

A covenant people.

Yet the chapter also expands to:

Many.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant’s death is deeply rooted in Israel’s story and reaches beyond Israel to many.

LXXXIII. GRAVE WITH THE WICKED

He dies under:

Criminal condemnation.

Spiritual Principle

The righteous One is treated as:

Guilty.

LXXXIV. WITH THE RICH IN DEATH

Unexpected burial detail.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Even the Servant’s burial lies within God’s prophetic purpose.

LXXXV. NO VIOLENCE

Hands:

Clean.

Spiritual Principle

His suffering is not:

Deserved.

LXXXVI. NO DECEIT

Mouth:

Pure.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Perfect innocence makes substitution all the more striking.

LXXXVII. THE LORD’S WILL

Not accidental.

Spiritual Principle

The cross belongs to:

God’s redemptive plan.

LXXXVIII. CRUSHED

Severe language.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s saving plan takes sin with terrifying seriousness.

LXXXIX. OFFERING FOR SIN

Priestly-sacrificial vocabulary.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s death has:

Atoning purpose.

XC. SEE OFFSPRING

Fruit from:

Death.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant dies childless in ordinary biological terms yet becomes the source of a vast redeemed family.

XCI. PROLONG DAYS

Death reversed.

Spiritual Principle

Life follows:

Death.

XCII. GOD’S WILL PROSPERS

Mission accomplished.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Nothing about Calvary is wasted.

XCIII. SUFFERING OF HIS SOUL

Not merely:

Physical pain.

Spiritual Principle

The cross involves:

Profound inward anguish.

XCIV. SEE LIGHT OF LIFE

Vindication.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant sees beyond the grave.

XCV. SATISFIED

The result is:

Worth it.

Spiritual Principle

The redeemed become part of:

The joy set before Him.

XCVI. RIGHTEOUS SERVANT

God’s verdict.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One condemned by human courts is declared righteous by God.

XCVII. JUSTIFY MANY

Legal language.

Spiritual Principle

The guilty receive:

Righteous standing.

XCVIII. BEAR INIQUITIES

Sacrificial language.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Justification is not God pretending sin never existed; the Servant bears it.

XCIX. PORTION AMONG THE GREAT

Victory.

Spiritual Principle

Humiliation gives way to:

Honor.

C. DIVIDE SPOILS

Conquest imagery.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One who looked defeated emerges as the victor.

CI. POURED OUT LIFE

Complete self-giving.

Spiritual Principle

Nothing held back.

CII. NUMBERED WITH TRANSGRESSORS

Identification.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The sinless Servant enters the sinner’s place so sinners may enter His righteousness.

CIII. BORE SIN OF MANY

Saving burden.

Spiritual Principle

The cross is:

For others.

CIV. INTERCEDES

The Servant prays:

For sinners.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One wounded by transgressors becomes their intercessor.

CV. ISAIAH 52:13–15 AND ISAIAH 53

The Servant song begins:

Before chapter 53.

Isaiah 52:13:

Exaltation.

Isaiah 52:14:

Disfigurement.

Isaiah 52:15:

Worldwide effect.

Then Isaiah 53 explains:

Rejection.

Substitution.

Death.

Vindication.

Key Truth

Isaiah 53 should be read as the continuation of the Servant song beginning in Isaiah 52:13.

CVI. ISAIAH 49–53

Isaiah 49

The Servant brings salvation to:

Nations.

Isaiah 50

The Servant obeys through:

Suffering.

Isaiah 52

The Servant is:

Marred and exalted.

Isaiah 53

The Servant’s suffering is:

Substitutionary and redemptive.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant songs progressively reveal not only that He suffers, but why He suffers.

CVII. ISAIAH 53 AND THE GOSPELS

Isaiah:

Despised.

Gospels:

Rejected.

Isaiah:

Silent.

Gospels:

Silent before accusers.

Isaiah:

Numbered with transgressors.

Gospels:

Crucified between criminals.

Isaiah:

With the rich in death.

Gospels:

Buried by Joseph of Arimathea.

Spiritual Principle

The passion narratives correspond strikingly with:

Isaiah’s Servant portrait.

CVIII. ISAIAH 53 AND 1 PETER 2

Peter echoes:

No deceit.

Bore our sins.

By His wounds healed.

Sheep astray.

Returned to Shepherd.

Key Truth

The New Testament explicitly interprets Isaiah 53 through the suffering and saving work of Jesus Christ.

CIX. ISAIAH 53 AND ACTS 8

The Ethiopian official asks:

Who is the prophet speaking about?

Philip begins with:

This Scripture.

And tells him:

The good news about Jesus.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The early church did not merely see vague similarities between Isaiah 53 and Jesus; it proclaimed Jesus directly from this passage.

CX. ISAIAH 53 AND SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT

The chapter repeatedly uses substitutionary language:

For our transgressions.

For our iniquities.

Our punishment on Him.

Our iniquity laid on Him.

For the transgression of My people.

Offering for sin.

Bear their iniquities.

Bore sin of many.

Key Truth

Substitution is not a marginal inference from Isaiah 53; it is woven throughout the chapter.

CXI. ISAIAH 53 AND RESURRECTION

Isaiah does not explicitly narrate the resurrection event in Gospel form.

But after:

Death.

Burial.

The Servant:

Sees offspring.

Prolongs days.

Sees light.

Is satisfied.

Receives victory.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s post-death activity strongly points toward:

Vindication beyond death.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah takes the Servant into the grave but refuses to leave Him there.

CXII. TWELVE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 53

1. Rejected by Men → Chosen by God

2. No Earthly Majesty → Divine Saving Glory

3. Our Griefs → His Bearing

4. Our Transgressions → His Piercing

5. Our Iniquities → His Crushing

6. His Punishment → Our Peace

7. His Wounds → Our Healing

8. Our Wandering → His Substitution

9. His Innocence → His Condemnation

10. His Death → His Prolonged Days

11. His Suffering → Our Justification

12. His Humiliation → His Victory

Key Truth

Every major movement in Isaiah 53 turns on a redemptive reversal: the righteous Servant receives what sinners deserve so sinners may receive what they could never obtain for themselves.

CXIII. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 53

1. The Saving Message Can Be Rejected

Principle:

Unbelief does not make the message false.

2. The Servant Comes in Humility

Principle:

God’s glory is not dependent on outward spectacle.

3. The Servant Is Rejected

Principle:

Human opinion can completely misjudge God’s chosen One.

4. The Servant Bears Human Grief

Principle:

He enters suffering deeply.

5. The Servant Suffers Substitutionally

Principle:

He is pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities.

6. Sin Is Universal

Principle:

All have gone astray.

7. The Servant Is Silent

Principle:

His submission is voluntary and controlled.

8. The Servant Is Innocent

Principle:

No violence or deceit is found in Him.

9. The Cross Belongs to God’s Saving Purpose

Principle:

The Servant becomes an offering for sin.

10. Death Does Not Defeat the Servant

Principle:

He sees life, offspring, satisfaction, and victory beyond suffering.

11. The Servant Justifies Many

Principle:

His righteousness becomes the ground of their justification.

12. The Servant Intercedes for Sinners

Principle:

The Savior who died continues to represent those He saves.

CXIV. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What question opens Isaiah 53?

> **“Who has believed our message?”**

Question 2

What does the “arm of the Lord” represent?

God’s saving power.

Question 3

How does the Servant appear?

Like a tender shoot and root from dry ground, without earthly majesty that would attract people naturally.

Question 4

How is He treated?

Despised and rejected.

Question 5

What is He called?

A man of sorrows, familiar with suffering.

Question 6

What did people wrongly assume about His suffering?

That He was stricken by God because of His own guilt.

Question 7

What does Isaiah say He actually carried?

Our griefs and sorrows.

Question 8

Why was He pierced?

For our transgressions.

Question 9

Why was He crushed?

For our iniquities.

Question 10

What produced our peace?

The punishment laid upon Him.

Question 11

What comes through His wounds?

Healing.

Question 12

How does Isaiah describe humanity?

Like sheep that have gone astray.

Question 13

What has each person done?

Turned to his own way.

Question 14

What did the Lord lay upon the Servant?

The iniquity of us all.

Question 15

How did the Servant respond under oppression?

He remained silent.

Question 16

What animal is used to describe Him?

A lamb led to slaughter.

Question 17

What happened to Him?

He was cut off from the land of the living.

Question 18

Why was He stricken?

For the transgression of God’s people.

Question 19

Was the Servant guilty of violence or deceit?

No.

Question 20

With whom was He assigned a grave?

The wicked.

Question 21

With whom was He associated in burial?

The rich.

Question 22

What did His life become?

An offering for sin.

Question 23

Does the Servant’s story end in death?

No.

He sees offspring, prolongs His days, sees light, and receives victory.

Question 24

What will the righteous Servant do for many?

Justify them.

Question 25

What does He bear?

Their iniquities.

Question 26

Why is He rewarded?

Because He poured out His life unto death.

Question 27

With whom was He numbered?

Transgressors.

Question 28

Whose sin did He bear?

The sin of many.

Question 29

What does He do for transgressors?

Intercedes.

Question 30

Who does the New Testament identify as the fulfillment of this Servant?

Jesus Christ.

CXV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 53 asks several searching questions.

Have I Believed the Message?

Not merely:

Heard it.

Believed it?

Do I recognize God’s saving power in:

The crucified Christ?

Am I looking for a Savior who fits:

Human expectations?

Or accepting the Servant God:

Revealed?

Do I understand that Jesus knows:

Sorrow?

Rejection?

Suffering?

Have I admitted:

My transgressions?

My iniquities?

My wandering?

Can I say honestly:

“I have turned to my own way”?

Do I understand the cross as:

Personal?

He was pierced for:

Our transgressions.

That includes:

Mine.

Have I received the peace:

His punishment provides?

Have I received the healing:

His wounds provide?

Am I still trying to:

Carry guilt.

That Isaiah says was laid upon:

Him?

Do I understand Jesus as:

The Lamb?

Have I considered His:

Silence?

Innocence?

Submission?

Do I believe His death was:

Part of God’s redemptive purpose?

Do I understand that He is not:

Dead?

But victorious?

Am I trying to:

Justify myself?

Or trusting:

The righteous Servant?

Do I understand that Jesus:

Intercedes?

For sinners?

Have I thanked Him personally for:

Bearing my sin?

CXVI. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Cross Was Not Christ Paying for His Sin—It Was Christ Bearing Ours”

Isaiah repeatedly says:

Our.

Our.

Our.

Principle:

The innocence of the Servant and guilt of the people are essential to understanding the cross: the righteous One suffers in the place of the unrighteous.

CXVII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“We Went Our Own Way; He Took Our Place”

Humanity says:

My way.

The Servant says:

God’s will.

Principle:

Sin is our self-directed wandering; salvation comes through the obedient Servant who bears the consequences of that wandering.

CXVIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Wounds Were His, but the Peace Became Ours”

Piercing:

His.

Crushing:

His.

Punishment:

His.

Peace:

Ours.

Principle:

Grace gives the believer benefits purchased through suffering he did not endure.

CXIX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Isaiah Takes the Servant to the Grave, but God Takes the Servant Beyond It”

Death:

Real.

Grave:

Real.

But afterward:

Life.

Offspring.

Satisfaction.

Victory.

Principle:

The grave is part of the Servant's mission, not the end of His story.

CXX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

"The One Numbered with Transgressors Became the Intercessor for Transgressors"

He identifies with:

Sinners.

Without becoming:

Sinful.

Principle:

Jesus enters the sinner's place in order to bring sinners into the favor of God.

CXXI. THE UNBELIEVED MESSAGE

The chapter begins with:

Rejection.

Spiritual Principle

Truth can be:

Unpopular.

CXXII. THE UNRECOGNIZED ARM

People see:

Weakness.

God sees:

Saving power.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The cross looks weak only when viewed without resurrection eyes.

CXXIII. TENDER SHOOT

Small beginning.

Spiritual Principle

Messiah does not arrive according to:

Human grandeur.

CXXIV. DRY GROUND

Hostile setting.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can grow saving life in a spiritually barren world.

CXXV. NO MAJESTIC APPEARANCE

No external:

Spectacle.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant must be recognized by:

Revelation.

CXXVI. DESPISED

Rejected:

Socially.

Spiritual Principle

Human rejection is part of:

His humiliation.

CXXVII. SORROWS

He knows:

Pain.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is no sorrowing believer who can say to Jesus, “You could never understand suffering.”

CXXVIII. GRIEFS BORNE

He carries:

Human pain.

Spiritual Principle

Compassion becomes:

Burden-bearing.

CXXIX. MISTAKEN JUDGMENT

They think:

He deserves suffering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Calvary exposes how badly humanity can misread righteousness.

CXXX. PIERCED

Physical suffering.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption entered:

Flesh and blood.

CXXXI. CRUSHED

Deep suffering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin’s seriousness is measured partly by what it cost the Servant.

CXXXII. PEACE

Result of:

Reconciliation.

Spiritual Principle

Peace is purchased through:

Sacrifice.

CXXXIII. HEALING

Sin’s wound:

Treated.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The cross reaches the deepest place where humanity is broken.

CXXXIV. ALL GONE ASTRAY

No exceptions based on:

Status.

Spiritual Principle

Everyone needs:

The Servant.

CXXXV. EACH HIS OWN WAY

Individual accountability.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Humanity is collectively sinful and personally responsible.

CXXXVI. INIQUITY OF US ALL

A staggering load.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s capacity exceeds:

Human guilt.

CXXXVII. SILENCE

No retaliatory defense.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Lamb does not save Himself from the slaughter because He is saving others through it.

CXXXVIII. SHEARERS

Powerlessness imagery.

Spiritual Principle

He willingly accepts:

Humiliation.

CXXXIX. OPPRESSION

Human injustice.

Spiritual Principle

God can use an unjust event without becoming:

Unjust.

CXL. JUDGMENT

Legal condemnation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The world’s courtroom condemned the One heaven called righteous.

CXLI. CUT OFF

Death.

Spiritual Principle

The wages of sin are confronted at:

Death.

CXLII. RICH MAN’S BURIAL

Unexpected honor after:

Humiliation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God begins reversing the human verdict even at the tomb.

CXLIII. SINLESSNESS

No violence.

No deceit.

Spiritual Principle

Perfect innocence.

CXLIV. LORD’S PURPOSE

Redemption planned.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Calvary was not God repairing a failed plan; Calvary was central to the saving plan.

CXLV. SIN OFFERING

Sacrificial meaning.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s death deals with:

Guilt.

CXLVI. OFFSPRING

Redeemed people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

His death produces a family too large for the grave to contain.

CXLVII. PROLONGED DAYS

Life beyond death.

Spiritual Principle

Vindication.

CXLVIII. LIGHT OF LIFE

Suffering ends in:

Life.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Servant walks through death into the satisfaction of accomplished redemption.

CXLIX. SATISFACTION

Mission completed.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant sees:

Fruit.

CL. JUSTIFICATION

The guilty declared:

Righteous.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Christian salvation is not merely emotional relief; it includes a changed verdict before God.

CLI. MANY

The Servant’s saving work is:

Abundant.

Spiritual Principle

His sacrifice bears:

Wide fruit.

CLII. SPOILS

Victory language.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The cross becomes Christ’s battlefield, and resurrection reveals the victory.

CLIII. POURED OUT

Complete surrender.

Spiritual Principle

Sacrifice held:

Nothing back.

CLIV. TRANSGRESSORS

That is:

Us.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The word “transgressor” should never remain a distant category when reading Isaiah 53.

CLV. INTERCESSION

The chapter ends not merely with:

Past death.

But:

Ongoing advocacy.

Spiritual Principle

The Savior remains:

For His people.

CLVI. ISAIAH 53 AND THE GOSPEL IN ONE CHAPTER

Human sin.

Christ’s innocence.

Substitution.

Sacrifice.

Death.

Burial.

Life.

Justification.

Victory.

Intercession.

Key Truth

Isaiah 53 contains the core movements later proclaimed openly in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

CLVII. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 53

1. The Message Is Rejected

Few recognize the arm of the Lord.

2. The Servant Comes Humbly

No outward majesty attracts the crowd.

3. The Servant Is Despised

He becomes the Man of Sorrows.

4. The Servant Bears Human Grief

He carries what belongs to others.

5. The Servant Suffers for Sin

He is pierced and crushed for transgressions and iniquities.

6. Humanity Is Exposed as Wandering

Everyone turns to his own way.

7. The Servant Goes Silently to Death

Like a lamb to slaughter.

8. The Innocent Servant Is Buried

With remarkable association with the rich.

9. God’s Redemptive Purpose Succeeds

His life becomes a sin offering, and He sees life and fruit beyond suffering.

10. The Servant Triumphs and Intercedes

He justifies many, receives victory, bears sin, and intercedes for transgressors.

Key Truth

Isaiah 53 moves from unbelief to victory through the astonishing truth that God's righteous Servant saves sinners by taking their place.

CLVIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 53 begins with:

A question.

> **"Who has believed our message?"**

That question still matters.

It is possible to:

Know the story.

Hear the gospel.

Recognize the words.

And still never:

Believe.

Then Isaiah shows us:

The Servant.

No worldly spectacle.

No royal show.

No appearance that forces:

Admiration.

He comes:

Humbly.

Then:

Rejected.

Despised.

A man of:

Sorrows.

That already tells us something about:

Jesus.

He understands:

Rejection.

He understands:

Suffering.

He understands:

Grief.

Then the chapter turns.

“Surely He took up our griefs.”

Our.

Then:

“He was pierced for our transgressions.”

Our.

“Crushed for our iniquities.”

Our.

“The punishment that brought us peace was upon Him.”

His punishment.

Our peace.

That is:

The gospel.

Then:

“We all, like sheep, have gone astray.”

Isaiah does not flatter:

Humanity.

We wandered.

And not merely by:

Accident.

“Each of us has turned to his own way.”

That is sin.

My way.

My truth.

My will.

My direction.

Then:

“The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

That is grace.

He took:

Our place.

Then the Servant stands before:

Accusers.

He is:

Silent.

The Lamb does not:

Run.

He does not:

Abandon the mission.

Then:

He dies.

“Cut off from the land of the living.”

Why?

“For the transgression of My people.”

Then:

Burial.

The wicked.

The rich.

And still:

Innocent.

No violence.

No deceit.

Then comes perhaps the hardest statement:

“It was the Lord’s will to crush Him.”

This does not mean the Father took cruel pleasure in:

Pain.

It means the cross belonged to:

Redemption.

God was accomplishing:

Salvation.

Jesus was willingly:

Offering Himself.

Then something changes.

The dead Servant:

Sees offspring.

Prolongs days.

Sees light.

Is satisfied.

Justifies many.

Receives spoils.

Intercedes.

The grave did not:

Win.

Death did not:

Win.

Human judgment did not:

Win.

Sin did not:

Win.

The Servant:

Wins.

And He wins by:

Sacrifice.

So Isaiah 53 forces every reader to ask:

Do I see myself among:

The sheep?

Do I acknowledge:

My transgressions?

My iniquities?

My own way?

Do I believe:

He bore them?

Am I still trying to:

Justify myself?

When God says:

The righteous Servant justifies many?

Am I still carrying:

Guilt?

When Isaiah says:

The iniquity was laid on Him?

Am I still searching for:

Peace?

When Isaiah says:

The punishment that brought peace fell upon Him?

Am I still wondering whether Jesus understands:

Suffering?

When Isaiah calls Him:

A Man of Sorrows?

And am I still afraid the story ended at:

The grave?

When Isaiah says:

He sees life.

Fruit.

Victory.

Reward.

Intercession.

Isaiah 53 says:

The Savior was rejected:

So sinners could be received.

He was pierced:

So transgressors could know peace.

He was crushed:

So the guilty could be justified.

He died:

So many could live.

He was numbered with transgressors:

So transgressors could be numbered among the redeemed.

He bore sin:

So we would not have to stand before God bearing it alone.

And He intercedes:

Still.

So look at:

The Servant.

Not merely with:

Sympathy.

With:

Faith.

Not merely:

“What happened to Him?”

But:

“Why did it happen?”

Isaiah answers:

For:

Us.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for:

The Servant.

Thank You for:

Jesus Christ.

Father, we confess:

We have gone astray.

We have turned to:

Our own way.

We have sinned.

We have transgressed.

We have carried:

Iniquity.

We cannot:

Justify ourselves.

Thank You that Jesus:

Took our griefs.

Carried our sorrows.

Was pierced for:

Our transgressions.

Crushed for:

Our iniquities.

Thank You that the punishment bringing us:

Peace.

Fell upon:

Him.

Thank You that by His wounds:

Healing comes.

Father, keep us from minimizing:

Sin.

When we look at the cross:

Show us its seriousness.

When we look at the Servant:

Show us Your grace.

Thank You that Jesus was:

Despised.

Rejected.

A Man of Sorrows.

Thank You that He understands:

Pain.

Rejection.

Grief.

Suffering.

Thank You that He remained:

Silent.

Obedient.

Faithful.

Thank You that He willingly became:

The Lamb.

Father, thank You that His death was not:

The end.

Thank You that He:

Lives.

Sees the fruit of His suffering.

Justifies many.

Reigns in victory.

Intercedes for:

Transgressors.

Father, help us stop trying to:

Earn.

Buy.

Prove.

Or justify ourselves.

Teach us to rest in:

Christ.

Let His righteousness be:

Our hope.

His sacrifice:

Our confidence.

His wounds:

Our healing.

His peace:

Our peace.

His victory:

Our assurance.

And His intercession:

Our comfort.

May we never read Isaiah 53 casually.

Give us hearts that:

Believe.

Worship.

Repent.

Trust.

And proclaim:

The suffering and risen Servant.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed.” — Isaiah 53:5**

Central Truth

The righteous Servant, fulfilled in Jesus Christ, was despised and rejected yet willingly bore the griefs, transgressions, iniquities, punishment, and sin of others; though completely innocent, He suffered silently, died as a sacrificial offering for sin, was buried, yet emerged beyond suffering into life, satisfaction, victory, and exaltation, thereby justifying many and continuing as the intercessor for transgressors.

Isaiah 53 in One Sentence

Isaiah reveals the suffering Servant fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who is rejected and despised despite perfect innocence, bears humanity’s griefs, transgressions, iniquities, punishment, and sin as a substitute, remains silent like a lamb before oppression, is cut off from the living and buried, yet through His sacrificial death fulfills God’s redemptive purpose, rises beyond suffering to see life and the fruit of His work, justifies many, receives victory, and intercedes for the very transgressors whose sins He carried.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 54 — The Covenant of Peace

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 54 follows immediately after one of the greatest passages concerning:

The suffering Servant.

Isaiah 53 revealed:

The Servant rejected.

The Servant pierced.

The Servant crushed.

The Servant bearing sin.

The Servant dying.

The Servant justifying many.

The Servant victorious.

Then Isaiah 54 opens with:

> **“Sing, O barren woman.”**

That sequence matters.

Isaiah 53 shows:

The sacrifice.

Isaiah 54 shows:

The fruit.

Isaiah 53 shows:

The suffering Servant.

Isaiah 54 shows:

The restored people.

Isaiah 53 shows:

Sin borne.

Isaiah 54 shows:

Peace established.

Isaiah 53 shows:

The Servant producing spiritual offspring.

Isaiah 54 opens with:

Unexpected children.

The barren woman who had:

No children.

Is told to:

Sing.

Not because circumstances already look:

Different.

But because God has promised:

Fruitfulness.

The command seems surprising.

How can the barren woman sing before:

Children appear?

Because faith can praise:

On the strength of God's promise.

Then comes:

Expansion.

"Enlarge the place of your tent."

The expected blessing is so large that existing space will not:

Contain it.

God does not merely say:

Prepare for survival.

He says:

Prepare for increase.

Lengthen:

Cords.

Strengthen:

Stakes.

Make:

Room.

Then God addresses:

Shame.

Fear.

Widowhood.

Rejection.

He says:

> **“Do not be afraid.”**

Why?

Because:

> **“Your Maker is your husband.”**

The One who created:

Zion.

Is also her:

Covenant Husband.

The One who disciplines her is also:

Her Redeemer.

Then God contrasts:

A brief moment.

With:

Great compassion.

A little burst of anger.

With:

Everlasting kindness.

The point is not that Israel’s sin was:

Insignificant.

Nor that divine judgment was:

Imaginary.

The point is that judgment is not:

God’s final word over His covenant people.

Compassion is:

Larger.

Kindness is:

Everlasting.

Then God invokes:

Noah.

Just as the flood covenant carried a divine promise of stability, God speaks of:

A covenant of peace.

Mountains may:

Move.

Hills may:

Disappear.

But:

“My unfailing love for you will not be shaken.”

Then the chapter pictures restored Zion in terms of:

Beautiful stones.

Sapphires.

Rubies.

Precious jewels.

This imagery reaches forward toward the magnificent city imagery later developed in:

Revelation.

Yet the greatest blessing is not:

Jewels.

It is:

“All your children will be taught by the Lord.”

And:

“Great will be the peace of your children.”

The city’s future rests on:

Righteousness.

Peace.

Security.

Freedom from:

Terror.

Oppression.

Then comes one of Scripture’s most frequently quoted promises:

“No weapon forged against you will prevail.”

This promise must be read:

In context.

It does not promise that God’s people will never:

Suffer.

Be attacked.

Be persecuted.

Be wounded.

Isaiah itself has shown:

The Servant suffering severely.

Rather, the promise means that opposition will not finally:

Overthrow.

Nullify.

Destroy.

God’s covenant purpose.

Weapons may be:

Formed.

Tongues may:

Accuse.

Enemies may:

Attack.

But they cannot overturn:

God’s verdict.

Verse 17 ends:

> **“Their vindication is from Me.”**

That is the foundation.

The security of God’s servants does not rest ultimately upon:

Their power.

Their resources.

Their arguments.

Their political influence.

Their ability to defend themselves.

Their vindication comes from:

God.

The central truth of Isaiah 54 is:

Because of God’s redemptive purpose, barren Zion is called to sing and prepare for unexpected fruitfulness; the Lord restores her as faithful Husband and Redeemer, replaces temporary discipline with everlasting kindness, establishes an unshakable covenant of peace, promises a future marked by righteousness and divine teaching, and assures His servants that no weapon or accusation can finally defeat the people whose vindication comes from Him.

I. THE BARREN WOMAN IS TOLD TO SING

Isaiah 54:1 — Joy Before Visible Fruitfulness

> **“Sing, O barren woman, you who never bore a child; break forth into singing and cry aloud, you who never travailed in labor; for more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband, says the Lord.”**

This command begins with:

Faith.

The barren woman has:

No visible reason.

Yet God gives:

A promise.

Therefore:

Sing.

Cross References

Galatians 4:27

Paul quotes this verse while contrasting bondage and promise, using Isaiah’s barren-woman imagery to describe the surprising expansion of God’s covenant people.

1 Samuel 2:5

Hannah celebrates God’s reversal of human circumstances, including the barren woman becoming fruitful.

Psalm 113:9

God is praised for making the barren woman a joyful mother within her household.

Spiritual Principle

Faith can rejoice before:

Visible fulfillment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes God tells you to sing before He tells you how the barren place will become fruitful.

II. BARRENNESS IS NOT THE FINAL IDENTITY

The woman is:

Barren.

But God speaks of:

Children.

Spiritual Principle

Present limitation does not define:

Future promise.

III. DESOLATION BECOMES FRUITFULNESS

“Desolate” sounds:

Final.

God says:

More.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never let the word “desolate” speak louder than the God who says “fruitful.”

IV. ENLARGE THE TENT

Isaiah 54:2 — Prepare for Increase

> **“Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch out the curtains of your dwelling; do not hold back—lengthen your cords, and strengthen your stakes.”**

God commands preparation:

Before expansion arrives.

Enlarge.

Stretch.

Lengthen.

Strengthen.

Cross References

Jeremiah 33:22

God promises an innumerable multiplication of His servants, using the imagery of countless heavenly bodies and sand.

Zechariah 2:4

Jerusalem is pictured expanding beyond conventional boundaries because of the abundance of people within it.

Genesis 28:14

Jacob is promised descendants spreading outward in every direction and becoming a blessing to the nations.

Spiritual Principle

Faith prepares for:

What God promises.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not pray for increase while refusing to make room for it.

V. “DO NOT HOLD BACK”

Fear says:

Stay small.

God says:

Expand.

Spiritual Principle

Unbelief often prepares for:

Less.

Faith prepares for:

God’s promise.

VI. LENGTHEN AND STRENGTHEN

Expansion without strength can produce:

Collapse.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If you lengthen the cords, strengthen the stakes.

Growth needs both:

Vision.

Foundation.

VII. SPREAD TO THE RIGHT AND LEFT

Isaiah 54:3 — Expansion Beyond Former Boundaries

> **“For you will spread out to the right and to the left; your descendants will possess the nations and will inhabit the desolate cities.”**

Expansion becomes:

Wide.

Desolate cities become:

Inhabited.

Cross References

Genesis 28:14

Jacob’s offspring are promised expansion to the west, east, north, and south.

Romans 4:13

Paul speaks of the promise to Abraham and his offspring in broad inheritance terms centered on faith.

Galatians 3:29

Those who belong to Christ are identified with Abraham’s offspring according to promise.

Spiritual Principle

God’s covenant purpose expands:

Outward.

VIII. DESOLATE CITIES WILL BE INHABITED

Places that once held:

Ruins.

Will hold:

People.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can put life back into places everyone else has abandoned.

IX. “DO NOT BE AFRAID”

Isaiah 54:4 — Shame Will Not Have the Last Word

> **“Do not be afraid, for you will not be put to shame; do not be humiliated, for you will not be disgraced. You will forget the shame of your youth and remember no more the reproach of your widowhood.”**

God addresses:

Fear.

Shame.

Humiliation.

Disgrace.

Reproach.

Cross References

Isaiah 41:10

God tells His people not to fear because He is with them, strengthening and upholding them.

Jeremiah 31:19

Israel remembers former shame and discipline but moves toward repentance and restoration.

Romans 10:11

Whoever trusts in the Lord will not ultimately be put to shame.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration reaches:

Identity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace does not merely repair circumstances; it changes what shame is allowed to call you.

X. SHAME OF YOUTH

Past failure can become:

A permanent label.

God says:

No.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption can outlive:

Reproach.

XI. THE REPROACH OF WIDOWHOOD

Widowhood in the imagery suggests:

Abandonment.

Loss.

Vulnerability.

God says:

That condition will not define:

The future.

XII. YOUR MAKER IS YOUR HUSBAND

Isaiah 54:5 — Creator, Husband, Redeemer

> **“For your Maker is your husband—the Lord of hosts is His name; your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of all the earth.”**

Four magnificent titles:

Maker.

Husband.

Redeemer.

God of all the earth.

Cross References

Jeremiah 3:14

God calls His unfaithful people back in covenant relationship, using marriage imagery.

Hosea 2:19

God promises to betroth His people to Himself in righteousness, justice, steadfast love, and compassion.

Ephesians 5:25

Christ’s sacrificial love for the church is compared to a husband’s covenant love for his wife.

Spiritual Principle

The God who made His people also:

Claims.

Loves.

Redeems.

Them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Your Maker is not merely powerful enough to create you; He is faithful enough to covenant with you.

XIII. LORD OF HOSTS

He commands:

Heavenly armies.

Yet presents Himself as:

Covenant Husband.

Spiritual Principle

Infinite power and covenant tenderness meet in:

One God.

XIV. HOLY ONE AND REDEEMER

Holiness does not prevent:

Redemption.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God too holy to ignore sin is the same God gracious enough to redeem sinners.

XV. GOD OF ALL THE EARTH

Israel’s Redeemer is not:

A local deity.

He is:

Universal Lord.

Spiritual Principle

The covenant God of Israel rules:

All nations.

XVI. THE DESERTED WIFE IS CALLED BACK

Isaiah 54:6 — Grief Is Not the Final State

> **“The Lord has called you back like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit—like a wife of youth who was rejected, says your God.”**

The imagery describes:

Pain.

Grief.

Rejection.

Yet the dominant action is:

Called back.

Cross References

Hosea 2:14

God speaks tenderly to His wayward people and promises to draw them back with compassion.

Isaiah 62:4

Zion will no longer be called forsaken or desolate but will receive a new identity of delight.

2 Corinthians 6:17

God calls His people to come out from uncleanness and live distinctly as those who belong to Him.

Spiritual Principle

Rejection does not have to become:

Permanent abandonment.

XVII. GOD CALLS BACK THE GRIEVING

The restoration is:

Relational.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely rebuild Zion’s walls; He restores Zion’s heart.

XVIII. A BRIEF MOMENT VERSUS GREAT COMPASSION

Isaiah 54:7 — Gathered in Mercy

> **“For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with great compassion I will gather you.”**

The contrast:

Brief.

Great.

Abandonment.

Gathering.

Cross References

Psalm 30:5

God’s anger is temporary, but His favor gives life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes.

Isaiah 60:10

Though God struck in anger, He promises favor and restoration.

Lamentations 3:31

The Lord does not cast off forever.

Spiritual Principle

Discipline is not:

God’s final covenant posture.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The moment of discipline must never be interpreted as larger than the compassion that gathers.

XIX. “I WILL GATHER YOU”

Scattered.

Now:

Gathered.

Spiritual Principle

God’s compassion has:

Direction.

It brings people:

Home.

XX. EVERLASTING KINDNESS

Isaiah 54:8 — Mercy After Hiddenness

> **“In a little burst of anger I hid My face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you, says the Lord, your Redeemer.”**

Again the contrast:

Moment.

Everlasting.

Anger.

Kindness.

Hidden face.

Mercy.

Cross References

Psalm 103:9

God does not keep accusing forever or remain angry without end.

Jeremiah 31:3

God declares everlasting love and continued covenant kindness toward His people.

Micah 7:18

God delights in mercy and does not retain anger forever.

Spiritual Principle

God’s discipline has:

Limits.

His covenant kindness has:

Enduring character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never measure God’s everlasting kindness by one moment when His face seemed hidden.

XXI. ANGER AND KINDNESS

Isaiah does not deny:

Either.

God is:

Holy.

God is:

Merciful.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical love is not sentimental love that ignores:

Sin.

XXII. THE LORD YOUR REDEEMER

The relationship is restored because:

God redeems.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God names Himself Redeemer, failure is no longer allowed to have the final word.

XXIII. LIKE THE DAYS OF NOAH

Isaiah 54:9 — A Covenant Assurance

> **“This is like the days of Noah to Me: As I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth, so I have sworn not to be angry with you or rebuke you again.”**

God appeals to:

Covenant certainty.

The flood came.

Then:

Promise.

Cross References

Genesis 9:11

God covenanted that never again would a flood destroy all life as before.

Genesis 8:21

After the flood, God declared His commitment not to strike down every living thing in the same manner again.

2 Peter 3:7

Peter explains that the present creation is preserved for a different final judgment, showing that the Noahic promise does not mean there will never be divine judgment again.

Spiritual Principle

God binds His comfort to:

His promise.

XXIV. COVENANT LANGUAGE

God does not merely say:

Maybe.

He says:

I have sworn.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God joins promise with covenant, hope receives a foundation stronger than emotion.

XXV. MOUNTAINS MAY MOVE

Isaiah 54:10 — The Covenant of Peace Remains

> **“Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet My unfailing love for you will not be shaken, nor My covenant of peace be removed, says the Lord, who has compassion on you.”**

Imagine:

Mountains moving.

Hills disappearing.

Things that seem most:

Stable.

Become:

Unstable.

Yet:

Love remains.

Covenant remains.

Cross References

Psalm 46:2

God’s people need not fear even if the earth gives way and mountains fall into the sea.

Romans 8:38

Paul declares that nothing in all creation can separate believers from God’s love in Christ.

Matthew 24:35

Jesus says heaven and earth will pass away, but His words will never pass away.

Spiritual Principle

God’s covenant is more stable than:

Creation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If mountains move and God’s love remains, then circumstances are never the measure of covenant faithfulness.

XXVI. UNFAILING LOVE WILL NOT BE SHAKEN

Earth:

Can shake.

Love:

Does not.

Spiritual Principle

The stability of faith rests in:

God.

XXVII. THE COVENANT OF PEACE

This is more than:

Absence of war.

Biblical peace includes:

Wholeness.

Reconciliation.

Well-being.

Security.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s covenant of peace is not a fragile ceasefire; it is a relationship established by divine faithfulness.

XXVIII. “THE LORD WHO HAS COMPASSION”

God identifies Himself by:

Compassion.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant rests not in:

Cold contract.

But in:

Faithful mercy.

XXIX. THE STORM-TOSSED CITY

Isaiah 54:11 — Beauty After Affliction

> **“O afflicted city, storm-tossed and not comforted, behold, I will lay your stones with beautiful colors, and set your foundations with sapphires.”**

The city is:

Afflicted.

Storm-tossed.

Uncomforted.

Then:

Beauty.

Foundations.

Sapphires.

Cross References

Revelation 21:19

The foundations of the New Jerusalem are adorned with precious stones.

Isaiah 60:15

Zion, once abandoned and hated, is promised lasting glory and joy.

Psalm 102:16

The Lord rebuilds Zion and appears in His glory.

Spiritual Principle

God’s answer to ruined foundations is:

Rebuilding.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The storm does not decide what material God will use when He rebuilds.

XXX. BEAUTIFUL FOUNDATIONS

Beauty is not merely:

Surface.

It reaches:

Foundation.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration begins:

Deep.

XXXI. RUBIES, JEWELS, PRECIOUS STONES

Isaiah 54:12 — Glorious Security

> **“I will make your pinnacles of rubies, your gates of sparkling jewels, and all your walls of precious stones.”**

Everything ruined becomes:

Beautiful.

Walls.

Gates.

Pinnacles.

Cross References

Revelation 21:18

The New Jerusalem is described with radiant precious materials.

Revelation 21:21

Its gates and streets display extraordinary glory and beauty.

Isaiah 60:18

Violence is replaced with salvation and praise within Zion’s walls and gates.

Spiritual Principle

God’s final restoration is not:

Bare survival.

It is:

Glory.

XXXII. ALL YOUR CHILDREN TAUGHT BY THE LORD

Isaiah 54:13 — Great Peace

> **“All your children will be taught by the Lord, and great will be the peace of your children.”**

This may be one of the chapter’s deepest promises.

Not merely:

Beautiful city.

But:

Taught children.

Cross References

John 6:45

Jesus quotes this verse and explains that those who truly hear and learn from the Father come to Him.

Jeremiah 31:33

God promises to place His law within His people and write it on their hearts.

1 Thessalonians 4:9

Believers are described as taught by God to love one another.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest inheritance is not:

Jewels.

It is:

Knowing God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A city of precious stones is beautiful, but children taught by the Lord are the greater treasure.

XXXIII. GREAT PEACE FOR THE CHILDREN

Instruction produces:

Peace.

Spiritual Principle

Truth and peace belong:

Together.

XXXIV. ESTABLISHED IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Isaiah 54:14 — Far from Oppression and Terror

> **“In righteousness you will be established: You will be far from oppression, for you will not fear; far from terror, for it will not come near you.”**

Foundation:

Righteousness.

Result:

Security.

Cross References

Isaiah 32:17

The fruit of righteousness is peace, quietness, and confidence.

Romans 14:17

God’s kingdom is characterized by righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Proverbs 16:7

When a person’s ways please the Lord, God can even bring peace amid hostility.

Spiritual Principle

True security is rooted in:

Righteousness.

XXXV. OPPRESSION NO LONGER DEFINES THE FUTURE

The city had known:

Oppression.

God speaks:

Freedom.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What terrified you in one season does not receive automatic permission to govern the next.

XXXVI. IF ANYONE ATTACKS

Isaiah 54:15 — Opposition Is Not Divine Abandonment

> **“If anyone attacks you, it will not be My doing; whoever attacks you will fall because of you.”**

This verse is important.

Opposition may still:

Come.

But not every attack means:

God is judging.

Cross References

Isaiah 8:10

Enemies may make plans, but those plans fail when God is with His people.

Psalm 2:1

Nations may rage and plot against God’s purposes, yet their rebellion cannot overthrow His rule.

Romans 8:31

If God is for His people, no opposing power can finally defeat His saving purpose.

Spiritual Principle

Attack does not equal:

Abandonment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not interpret every enemy as evidence that God has turned against you.

XXXVII. OPPOSITION MAY EXIST AFTER RESTORATION

The promise is not:

No enemies.

It is:

No final victory for the enemy.

Spiritual Principle

Security is not:

Absence of opposition.

It is:

God’s sovereignty over the outcome.

XXXVIII. GOD CREATED THE BLACKSMITH

Isaiah 54:16 — Even Weapons Exist Under Divine Sovereignty

> **“Behold, I created the blacksmith who fans the coals into flame and forges a weapon fit for its work; and I also created the destroyer to bring devastation.”**

The maker of weapons is:

Created.

The destroyer is:

Created.

Neither is:

Ultimate.

Cross References

Proverbs 16:4

All things remain within God’s sovereign order and ultimate purpose.

Isaiah 45:7

God declares sovereign authority over prosperity and calamity within history.

Job 12:9

Creation itself testifies that the Lord’s hand governs life and events.

Spiritual Principle

The weapon-maker is not:

Above God.

The destroyer is not:

Above God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before you fear the weapon, remember who created the hands capable of forging it.

XXXIX. GOD IS NOT THREATENED BY HUMAN TECHNOLOGY

Whatever humans:

Design.

Forge.

Build.

Remains:

Created.

Spiritual Principle

Human ingenuity does not escape:

Divine sovereignty.

XL. NO WEAPON WILL PREVAIL

Isaiah 54:17 — The Heritage of the Servants of the Lord

> **“But no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will silence every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their vindication is from Me, declares the Lord.”**

Weapons:

Formed.

Tongues:

Raised.

Opposition:

Real.

Final success:

Denied.

Cross References

Romans 8:31

If God is for us, no opposing power can ultimately overturn His saving purpose.

Romans 8:33

No accusation can successfully condemn those whom God justifies.

1 John 4:4

The One dwelling in believers is greater than the opposing power in the world.

Spiritual Principle

God does not promise:

No weapon.

He promises:

No final triumph of the weapon.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The promise is not that nothing will be formed against you; the promise is that nothing formed against God’s purpose can have the final word.

XLI. EVERY ACCUSING TONGUE

Opposition is not only:

Physical.

It can be:

Verbal.

Legal.

Relational.

Accusatory.

Spiritual Principle

Words can wound.

But God controls:

The final verdict.

XLII. “YOU WILL SILENCE”

The accusation cannot stand:

Forever.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Truth may endure a courtroom before it receives vindication, but the Judge has not lost the case.

XLIII. THE HERITAGE OF GOD’S SERVANTS

Not:

An occasional privilege.

Heritage.

Inheritance.

Spiritual Principle

God’s servants receive:

Covenant security.

XLIV. “THEIR VINDICATION IS FROM ME”

This is the key.

Not:

Self-defense.

Self-righteousness.

Human approval.

But:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The safest place for your reputation is in the hands of the God who knows the truth.

XLV. ISAIAH 53 AND ISAIAH 54

Isaiah 53

The Servant bears:

Sin.

Isaiah 54

Zion receives:

Peace.

Isaiah 53

The Servant is:

Crushed.

Isaiah 54

The barren woman:

Sings.

Isaiah 53

The Servant sees:

Offspring.

Isaiah 54

Children become:

Numerous.

Key Truth

The blessings of Isaiah 54 flow naturally from the redemptive work of the Servant revealed in Isaiah 53.

XLVI. THE SUFFERING SERVANT AND THE COVENANT OF PEACE

Isaiah 53:5 says:

> **“The punishment that brought us peace was upon Him.”**

Isaiah 54:10 says:

> **“My covenant of peace.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The peace promised to Zion rests in the redemptive work of the Servant who bore the punishment that brings peace.

XLVII. BARRENNESS AFTER CALVARY

The chapter after the cross begins:

Sing.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption creates:

Fruitfulness.

XLVIII. ISAIAH 49 AND ISAIAH 54

Isaiah 49

Zion cannot understand where all the children came from.

Isaiah 54

The barren woman is told:

Enlarge the tent.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The unexpected children of Isaiah 49 become the expected expansion of Isaiah 54.

XLIX. ISAIAH 51 AND ISAIAH 54

Isaiah 51

Desert becomes:

Eden.

Isaiah 54

Desolation becomes:

Fruitfulness.

Spiritual Principle

God repeatedly answers emptiness with:

Restoration.

L. ISAIAH 52 AND ISAIAH 54

Isaiah 52

Zion puts on:

Beautiful garments.

Isaiah 54

Zion is rebuilt with:

Beautiful stones.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoration reaches both the people and the city.

LI. GALATIANS 4 AND ISAIAH 54

Paul quotes:

Isaiah 54:1.

He sees the barren-woman imagery within the larger story of:

Promise.

Freedom.

God’s covenant people.

Spiritual Principle

Isaiah’s restoration imagery becomes part of the New Testament’s explanation of:

Grace.

LII. JOHN 6 AND ISAIAH 54

Jesus quotes:

> **“They shall all be taught by God.”**

And connects that teaching with:

Coming to Him.

Key Truth

Divine teaching in Isaiah 54 reaches a Christ-centered fulfillment in the New Testament.

LIII. REVELATION 21 AND ISAIAH 54

Precious stones.

Beautiful foundations.

Glorious gates.

Secure city.

These images strongly anticipate:

New Jerusalem imagery.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Zion’s historical restoration opens toward God’s final vision of a glorified people dwelling securely with Him.

LIV. WHAT ISAIAH 54 TEACHES ABOUT BARRENNESS

Barrenness is:

Not final.

Spiritual Principle

God can produce:

Fruit.

LV. WHAT ISAIAH 54 TEACHES ABOUT PREPARATION

Enlarge.

Stretch.

Lengthen.

Strengthen.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith does more than hope for blessing; it prepares room for obedience to the promise.

LVI. WHAT ISAIAH 54 TEACHES ABOUT SHAME

God says:

Do not fear it.

Spiritual Principle

Past shame does not own:

The redeemed future.

LVII. WHAT ISAIAH 54 TEACHES ABOUT GOD AS HUSBAND

The relationship is:

Covenantal.

Tender.

Faithful.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s covenant commitment is not casual affection; it is faithful love that calls His people home.

LVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 54 TEACHES ABOUT DISCIPLINE

A moment of hiddenness.

A burst of anger.

Yet not:

Final abandonment.

Spiritual Principle

Discipline can coexist with:

Covenant love.

LIX. WHAT ISAIAH 54 TEACHES ABOUT MERCY

Great compassion.

Everlasting kindness.

Unfailing love.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah piles up mercy words because restored Zion needs to hear how thoroughly grace answers judgment.

LX. WHAT ISAIAH 54 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE

Peace is:

Covenantal.

Spiritual Principle

God’s peace rests on:

God’s promise.

LXI. WHAT ISAIAH 54 TEACHES ABOUT SECURITY

Mountains can move.

God’s love:

Will not.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Security is strongest when anchored in what cannot be shaken.

LXII. WHAT ISAIAH 54 TEACHES ABOUT CHILDREN

They will be:

Taught by God.

Know:

Great peace.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration has:

Generational dimensions.

LXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 54 TEACHES ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS

Zion is:

Established in righteousness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not rebuild His people on the old foundation of rebellion.

LXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 54 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

Oppression:

Far.

Terror:

Far.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restored future is marked by:

Security.

LXV. WHAT ISAIAH 54 TEACHES ABOUT OPPOSITION

Attacks may still:

Occur.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The presence of opposition does not prove the absence of God.

LXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 54 TEACHES ABOUT SOVEREIGNTY

Blacksmith.

Weapon.

Destroyer.

All:

Created.

Spiritual Principle

No enemy operates as:

An independent god.

LXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 54 TEACHES ABOUT VINDICATION

Comes from:

The Lord.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You can stop treating every accusation like it has the authority of God’s courtroom.

LXVIII. SING BEFORE THE CHILDREN ARRIVE

This is:

Faith.

Spiritual Principle

Praise can precede:

Proof.

LXIX. ENLARGE BEFORE THE CROWD ARRIVES

This is:

Preparation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God promises growth, prepare before the tent becomes crowded.

LXX. STRENGTHEN THE STAKES

Do not expand:

Carelessly.

Spiritual Principle

Growth requires:

Depth.

LXXI. SPREAD RIGHT AND LEFT

No longer:

Confined.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace frequently expands beyond the limits fear preferred.

LXXII. INHABIT DESOLATE CITIES

Restoration becomes:

Occupation.

Spiritual Principle

God fills:

Emptiness.

LXXIII. DO NOT FEAR SHAME

Fear looks:

Backward.

God points:

Forward.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Shame has a long memory, but grace gives a new future.

LXXIV. YOUR MAKER IS YOUR HUSBAND

Creator becomes:

Covenant partner.

Spiritual Principle

The One who made you understands:

Everything about you.

LXXV. LORD OF HOSTS AND HUSBAND

Power.

Tenderness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God commanding heaven’s armies is also the God speaking covenant comfort to a grieving bride.

LXXVI. HOLY ONE AND REDEEMER

Holiness.

Grace.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption never requires God to become:

Less holy.

LXXVII. GOD OF ALL EARTH

Universal sovereignty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Zion’s Husband is not a defeated local deity but Lord of the entire earth.

LXXVIII. DESERTED WIFE CALLED BACK

Grace initiates:

Return.

Spiritual Principle

God’s call overcomes:

Alienation.

LXXIX. GRIEVED IN SPIRIT

God acknowledges:

Pain.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Restoration begins honestly; God does not pretend the grief never existed.

LXXX. BRIEF MOMENT

Discipline has:

Scale.

Spiritual Principle

Temporary sorrow should not be mistaken for:

Eternal rejection.

LXXXI. GREAT COMPASSION

Compassion exceeds:

The moment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s mercy is not merely equal to the pain; it surpasses it.

LXXXII. EVERLASTING KINDNESS

The final adjective:

Everlasting.

Spiritual Principle

Kindness outlives:

Anger.

LXXXIII. NOAH’S DAYS

History becomes:

Assurance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God uses an old covenant promise to strengthen confidence in a new word of peace.

LXXXIV. MOUNTAINS SHAKEN

What seems:

Permanent.

Can move.

Spiritual Principle

Creation is not:

Ultimate.

LXXXV. LOVE UNSHAKEN

What seems invisible is actually:

More permanent.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s love is sturdier than the mountains.

LXXXVI. COVENANT NOT REMOVED

Promise secured.

Spiritual Principle

God’s covenant rests in:

His faithfulness.

LXXXVII. STORM-TOSSED CITY

The city has been:

Battered.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Storm damage does not disqualify a city from beautiful rebuilding.

LXXXVIII. NOT COMFORTED

The feeling was:

Real.

Yet not:

Final.

Spiritual Principle

Lack of comfort yesterday does not mean:

No comfort tomorrow.

LXXXIX. SAPPHIRE FOUNDATIONS

Glory begins:

Below.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s rebuilding goes deeper than appearance.

XC. PRECIOUS WALLS

Security becomes:

Beautiful.

Spiritual Principle

God’s future combines:

Safety.

Glory.

XCI. CHILDREN TAUGHT BY GOD

Divine instruction.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest educational promise in the chapter is that God Himself becomes the Teacher.

XCII. PEACE OF THE CHILDREN

Generational:

Shalom.

Spiritual Principle

The blessing reaches:

Families.

XCIII. ESTABLISHED IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Firm foundation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Righteousness is not decoration on Zion; it is structural.

XCIV. FAR FROM OPPRESSION

Former reality:

Removed.

Spiritual Principle

God’s future is not obligated to repeat:

Past bondage.

XCV. FAR FROM TERROR

Fear no longer:

Rules.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who restores the city also restores the emotional landscape of His people.

XCVI. ATTACK MAY COME

Honesty.

Spiritual Principle

Promise does not mean:

No conflict.

XCVII. ATTACK NOT FROM GOD

Important distinction.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not call every attack divine judgment when God says some attacks come from enemies acting against His people.

XCVIII. THE BLACKSMITH IS CREATED

Human skill:

Derived.

Spiritual Principle

Creators of weapons are still:

Creatures.

XCIX. THE DESTROYER IS CREATED

No independent power.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The destroyer is dangerous, but never divine.

C. NO WEAPON WILL PREVAIL

Not:

No weapon formed.

Rather:

No successful final overthrow.

Spiritual Principle

Opposition can exist without:

Victory.

CI. EVERY TONGUE IN JUDGMENT

Words become:

Weapons.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A false accusation may rise, but rising is not the same as standing.

CII. HERITAGE OF THE SERVANTS

Belongs to:

God’s people.

Spiritual Principle

Vindication is:

Inherited grace.

CIII. RIGHTEOUSNESS FROM GOD

The chapter ends where security truly rests:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Our final defense is not self-righteousness but God-given vindication.

CIV. THE COVENANT OF PEACE AFTER THE SIN-BEARING SERVANT

This sequence is:

Crucial.

Isaiah 53:

Peace purchased through:

Punishment.

Isaiah 54:

Peace promised through:

Covenant.

Key Truth

The covenant of peace is not detached from the suffering Servant; it follows immediately after the Servant bears the punishment that brings peace.

CV. TEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 54

1. Barrenness → Fruitfulness

2. Small Tent → Enlargement

3. Shame → Honor

4. Widowhood → Covenant Husband

5. Brief Abandonment → Great Compassion

6. Momentary Anger → Everlasting Kindness

7. Shaken Mountains → Unshaken Love

8. Storm-Tossed City → Precious Foundations

9. Oppression → Righteous Security

10. Weapons and Accusations → Divine Vindication

Key Truth

Isaiah 54 is a chapter of covenant reversal in which everything associated with shame, barrenness, rejection, instability, and oppression is answered by God's fruitfulness, compassion, peace, beauty, security, and vindication.

CVI. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 54

1. God Can Make the Barren Fruitful

Principle:

Desolation is not stronger than divine promise.

2. Faith Prepares for Increase

Principle:

Enlarge the tent before the blessing fills it.

3. God Removes Shame

Principle:

Past humiliation does not own the redeemed future.

4. God Is Covenant Husband

Principle:

His relationship with His people is faithful and personal.

5. Discipline Is Not Permanent Abandonment

Principle:

A brief moment cannot cancel everlasting kindness.

6. God’s Love Is Unshakable

Principle:

Mountains may move before His covenant love does.

7. God Rebuilds Beautifully

Principle:

Storm-tossed ruins can become glorious foundations.

8. God Teaches the Next Generation

Principle:

The greatest blessing is not architecture but hearts instructed by the Lord.

9. Righteousness Produces Stability

Principle:

Zion is established on moral and covenant reality.

10. Opposition Does Not Equal Abandonment

Principle:

Attacks may come without being God's judgment.

11. No Weapon Is Ultimate

Principle:

The weapon-maker and destroyer remain under God's sovereignty.

12. Vindication Comes from God

Principle:

The servants of the Lord do not depend on human courts for the final verdict.

CVII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who is commanded to sing in verse 1?

The barren and desolate woman.

Question 2

Why is she told to sing?

Because God promises unexpected fruitfulness and many children.

Question 3

What practical command follows the promise?

Enlarge the tent.

Question 4

Why must the tent be enlarged?

Because God promises expansion.

Question 5

What must be strengthened along with expansion?

The stakes.

Question 6

What does this teach?

Growth must be supported by strong foundations.

Question 7

What is Zion told not to fear?

Shame, humiliation, and disgrace.

Question 8

Who is identified as Zion’s husband?

Her Maker, the Lord of hosts.

Question 9

Who is her Redeemer?

The Holy One of Israel.

Question 10

How is He further identified?

As the God of all the earth.

Question 11

How does God describe Zion’s former condition?

Like a deserted and grieving wife.

Question 12

What does God promise?

To call her back and gather her with great compassion.

Question 13

How long did the abandonment seem?

A brief moment.

Question 14

How long does God’s kindness last?

Everlastingly.

Question 15

What previous covenant does God use as an analogy?

His covenant after Noah’s flood.

Question 16

What can move before God’s covenant love does?

Mountains and hills.

Question 17

What kind of covenant does God promise?

A covenant of peace.

Question 18

How is Zion described in verse 11?

Afflicted, storm-tossed, and not comforted.

Question 19

How does God promise to rebuild her?

With beautiful and precious stones.

Question 20

Who will teach Zion’s children?

The Lord.

Question 21

What will characterize those children?

Great peace.

Question 22

What will establish Zion?

Righteousness.

Question 23

Does restoration mean no one will ever attack?

No.

Verse 15 still allows the possibility of attack.

Question 24

What does God say about such attacks?

They will not ultimately overthrow His purpose.

Question 25

Who created the blacksmith?

God.

Question 26

What does that teach?

Even the maker of weapons remains under God’s sovereignty.

Question 27

What does “no weapon forged against you will prevail” mean?

Opposition will not finally overturn God’s covenant purpose for His servants.

Question 28

What kind of weapon is mentioned besides physical weapons?

Accusing tongues.

Question 29

What is the heritage of the servants of the Lord?

Divine protection from final defeat and vindication from God.

Question 30

Where does their vindication come from?

The Lord Himself.

Question 31

How does Isaiah 54 connect with Isaiah 53?

The restored peace, fruitfulness, and covenant blessing follow the Servant’s sin-bearing sacrifice.

CVIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 54 asks several searching questions.

Is There a Barren Place in My Life I Have Declared Permanently Empty?

Can God say:

Sing?

Before I see:

Fruit?

Have I Prepared Room for What I Have Been Asking God to Do?

Have I:

Enlarged?

Stretched?

Lengthened?

Strengthened?

Am I Asking for Growth Without Strengthening:

The stakes?

Is Shame Still Naming Me?

Past failure?

Past sin?

Past humiliation?

Past rejection?

Do I believe God can give:

A future larger than my shame?

Do I know God only as:

Creator?

Or also as:

Redeemer?

Covenant Lord?

Faithful Husband?

Have I mistaken:

A season of discipline.

For:

Permanent abandonment?

Do I believe God’s kindness is:

Everlasting?

What feels more stable to me:

Circumstances?

Or:

God’s covenant?

If the mountains moved, would I still believe:

God loves me?

Am I storm-tossed?

Can I believe God can still:

Rebuild?

What am I praying for my children?

More:

Success?

Or:

To be taught by the Lord?

Am I established in:

Righteousness?

Have I interpreted every attack as:

God being against me?

Do I fear:

Weapons?

Accusations?

Criticism?

Opposition?

More than I trust:

God’s verdict?

Is there a tongue raised against me that I need to place into:

God’s hands?

Can I say:

“My vindication is from the Lord”?

CIX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Pray for a Larger Tent While Refusing to Strengthen the Stakes”

God says:

Enlarge.

And:

Strengthen.

Principle:

Biblical growth requires both expansion and depth; God may increase the reach while also requiring stronger foundations.

CX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“A Moment of Discipline Is Not Stronger Than Everlasting Kindness”

God says:

Moment.

Then:

Everlasting.

Principle:

Never turn a temporary season of divine correction into a theology of permanent abandonment.

CXI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Mountains May Move Before God’s Covenant Does”

Creation:

Shakes.

God’s love:

Does not.

Principle:

The believer’s deepest security rests not in stable circumstances but in the stable character of God.

CXII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“No Weapon Has the Authority to Cancel God’s Verdict”

Weapons may:

Form.

Accusations may:

Rise.

But:

Vindication belongs to God.

Principle:

The final question is not whether opposition exists, but whether opposition can overturn the judgment of the Lord. It cannot.

CXIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Chapter After the Wounded Servant Begins with a Song”

Isaiah 53:

Wounds.

Isaiah 54:

Sing.

Principle:

The suffering of the Servant creates the foundation for the joy of the redeemed.

CXIV. SING, BARREN ONE

Praise precedes:

Expansion.

Spiritual Principle

Hope worships:

Early.

CXV. MORE CHILDREN THAN EXPECTED

Grace exceeds:

Human calculation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can create abundance in the very category where you had accepted emptiness.

CXVI. TENT ENLARGEMENT

Faith affects:

Preparation.

Spiritual Principle

Belief changes:

Behavior.

CXVII. DO NOT HOLD BACK

Fear is:

Restrictive.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes the next act of faith is simply refusing to make your future as small as your past.

CXVIII. LENGTHEN CORDS

Reach farther.

Spiritual Principle

Blessing may require:

Greater capacity.

CXIX. STRENGTHEN STAKES

Deepen.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Wide ministry needs deep anchoring.

CXX. RIGHT AND LEFT

Expansion in multiple:

Directions.

Spiritual Principle

God’s promise is not:

Constricted.

CXXI. DESOLATE CITIES FILLED

Empty streets become:

Homes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can give abandoned places inhabitants again.

CXXII. FEAR NOT

Why?

God’s verdict:

Changed.

Spiritual Principle

Fear loses power when:

Shame loses ownership.

CXXIII. NO DISGRACE

God’s future contains:

Honor.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine restoration can outlast public humiliation.

CXXIV. MAKER AS HUSBAND

Creation plus covenant.

Spiritual Principle

God is both:

Powerful enough to make.

Faithful enough to keep.

CXXV. LORD OF HOSTS AS HUSBAND

Infinite greatness.

Personal love.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God of armies speaks with the tenderness of covenant commitment.

CXXVI. REDEEMER AS HOLY ONE

Mercy without:

Compromise.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption satisfies:

Holiness.

CXXVII. GOD OF ALL EARTH

Global sovereignty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One making promises to Zion owns no smaller territory than the whole earth.

CXXVIII. DESERTED WIFE

Pain acknowledged.

Spiritual Principle

God’s metaphors do not:

Hide grief.

CXXIX. CALLED BACK

Restoration is:

Invitation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The voice that once rebuked now calls home.

CXXX. BRIEF ABANDONMENT

Temporal.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment has:

Boundaries.

CXXXI. GREAT COMPASSION

Abundant.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s compassion gets the larger adjective.

CXXXII. LITTLE BURST OF ANGER

Real.

But:

Measured.

Spiritual Principle

God’s anger is never:

Uncontrolled rage.

CXXXIII. EVERLASTING KINDNESS

Permanent.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The strongest word in the contrast is “everlasting.”

CXXXIV. NOAHIC ASSURANCE

Promise remembers:

History.

Spiritual Principle

Past covenant faithfulness supports:

Present confidence.

CXXXV. MOUNTAINS REMOVED

Impossible-seeming instability.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Even if the landscape changes, God’s covenant identity does not.

CXXXVI. COVENANT OF PEACE

Peace grounded in:

Promise.

Spiritual Principle

Shalom is:

Covenantal.

CXXXVII. AFFLICTED CITY

God addresses:

The wounded.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God knows the address of the storm-tossed city.

CXXXVIII. BEAUTIFUL STONES

Transformation.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration can create:

Beauty.

CXXXIX. FOUNDATIONS WITH SAPPHIRES

What matters most is:

Foundation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not only beautify what people see; He strengthens what everything rests upon.

CXL. PRECIOUS GATES

Entry points become:

Glorious.

Spiritual Principle

Security and beauty meet.

CXLI. CHILDREN TAUGHT BY THE LORD

Divine discipleship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest legacy is not what children inherit from us, but what they learn from God.

CXLII. GREAT PEACE

The fruit of:

Divine teaching.

Spiritual Principle

God’s truth produces:

Shalom.

CXLIII. RIGHTEOUSNESS ESTABLISHES

Not:

Wealth.

Military strength.

Human alliances.

Righteousness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A city can be powerful without being stable; righteousness creates a deeper foundation.

CXLIV. OPPRESSION FAR AWAY

Former master:

Removed.

Spiritual Principle

The redeemed future is not owned by:

The former oppressor.

CXLV. TERROR DOES NOT COME NEAR

Fear’s reach:

Limited.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What once lived at your doorstep does not have permanent residency.

CXLVI. ATTACK WITHOUT DIVINE APPROVAL

Enemies act:

Responsibly.

Spiritual Principle

God’s sovereignty does not make every hostile action:

Morally approved.

CXLVII. ATTACKERS FALL

God’s purpose:

Stands.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Opposition can be serious without being sovereign.

CXLVIII. CREATED BLACKSMITH

God is upstream from:

Human power.

Spiritual Principle

No craftsman exists independently of:

The Creator.

CXLIX. CREATED DESTROYER

Even destructive power has:

Limits.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is no destroyer who can step outside the sovereignty of God.

CL. WEAPON FORGED

Real preparation:

Against.

Spiritual Principle

God’s promise does not depend on enemies being:

Unprepared.

CLI. WEAPON DOES NOT PREVAIL

Outcome controlled by:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The enemy may sharpen the blade, but he cannot sharpen it beyond the boundary of God’s purpose.

CLII. TONGUES IN JUDGMENT

Reputation attacked.

Spiritual Principle

God cares about:

False accusation.

CLIII. SILENCED ACCUSATIONS

Final truth emerges.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The loudness of an accusation does not determine its truth.

CLIV. HERITAGE

Inheritance.

Spiritual Principle

God gives His servants:

A future.

CLV. VINDICATION FROM GOD

Final word.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not spend your life begging humans for a verdict God has already promised to handle.

CLVI. ISAIAH 54 AS A CHAPTER OF REVERSAL

Barren:

Fruitful.

Ashamed:

Honored.

Forsaken:

Gathered.

Anger:

Kindness.

Shaken:

Secure.

Storm-tossed:

Beautiful.

Oppressed:

Established.

Attacked:

Vindicated.

Key Truth

The God of Isaiah 54 specializes in reversing what judgment, grief, shame, and opposition appeared to make permanent.

CLVII. ISAIAH 54 AS A COVENANT CHAPTER

Husband.

Redeemer.

Noah.

Unfailing love.

Covenant of peace.

Compassion.

Spiritual Principle

The chapter’s security rests in:

Relationship.

Promise.

CLVIII. ISAIAH 54 AS A RESTORATION CHAPTER

Sing.

Enlarge.

Forget shame.

Gather.

Rebuild.

Teach.

Establish.

Vindicate.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoration reaches emotions, relationships, families, cities, and future generations.

CLIX. ISAIAH 54 AS A MISSIONARY CHAPTER

Spread:

Right.

Left.

Descendants connected with:

Nations.

Paul later quotes the chapter within the expanding covenant people of God.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration moves:

Outward.

CLX. ISAIAH 54 AS A FAMILY CHAPTER

Children:

Numerous.

Taught.

Peaceful.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The chapter does not imagine restoration ending with one generation.

CLXI. ISAIAH 54 AS A SECURITY CHAPTER

Mountains move.

Enemies attack.

Weapons form.

Tongues accuse.

Yet:

Covenant remains.

Key Truth

Biblical security is not the absence of threats; it is the presence of a promise stronger than every threat.

CLXII. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 54

1. The Barren Woman Sings

God announces fruitfulness before visible fulfillment.

2. The Tent Is Enlarged

Faith prepares for unexpected expansion.

3. Shame Is Removed

The past loses authority over Zion’s future.

4. The Maker Is Revealed as Husband

Covenant love replaces alienation.

5. Great Compassion Gathers

Temporary discipline gives way to everlasting kindness.

6. The Covenant of Peace Is Established

Even mountains cannot outlast God’s love.

7. The Storm-Tossed City Is Rebuilt

Precious beauty replaces ruins.

8. The Children Are Taught by God

Peace becomes generational.

9. Zion Is Established in Righteousness

Oppression and terror lose their hold.

10. Weapons and Accusations Fail

The heritage of God’s servants is divine vindication.

Key Truth

Isaiah 54 moves from barrenness to abundance, from shame to covenant love, from discipline to compassion, from ruins to glory, and from opposition to vindication because the Redeemer Himself guarantees the future of His people.

CLXIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 54 begins with one of the strangest commands imaginable:

> **“Sing, O barren woman.”**

Why sing?

Nothing has changed yet.

No child:

Visible.

No evidence:

Present.

No proof:

In her arms.

Still:

Sing.

Why?

Because God has:

Spoken.

Faith sometimes sings before:

Fulfillment.

Then God says:

“Enlarge the place of your tent.”

Do you see the order?

Promise.

Then preparation.

God says:

More is coming.

So make:

Room.

Maybe you have been praying for:

Growth.

Ministry.

Restoration.

Fruit.

Opportunity.

But have you prepared:

The tent?

And then:

“Strengthen your stakes.”

Expansion without foundation becomes:

Instability.

God does not merely want:

Bigger.

He wants:

Stronger.

Then He says:

“Do not be afraid.”

Why?

Because shame is not:

Your future.

Maybe your past has spoken:

Loudly.

Failure.

Rejection.

Humiliation.

Loss.

God says:

You will not remain:

Disgraced.

Then:

“Your Maker is your husband.”

What a statement.

The One who made:

The universe.

The One commanding:

Hosts.

The Holy One.

The God of all the earth.

Says:

I am committed to:

You.

Then God speaks about:

A brief moment.

And:

Everlasting kindness.

Maybe you have lived through a season when it felt like:

God hid His face.

Isaiah does not deny:

The pain.

But it does challenge:

The conclusion.

Do not turn a:

Moment.

Into:

Forever.

Especially when God calls His kindness:

Everlasting.

Then:

Mountains shake.

Hills move.

Things you thought were:

Stable.

Collapse.

God says:

My love will not:

Move.

My covenant of peace will not:

Disappear.

That is where security belongs.

Not:

In circumstances.

Not:

In institutions.

Not:

In health.

Not:

In money.

Not:

In governments.

Not:

In people.

In:

God.

Then God looks at the storm-tossed city.

Not comforted.

And says:

I will rebuild.

Not with:

Trash.

With:

Beauty.

Sapphires.

Rubies.

Precious stones.

But then He gives something better than:

Jewels.

“All your children will be taught by the Lord.”

That is worth more than:

Every precious stone.

Children who:

Know God.

Hear God.

Learn God’s truth.

Walk in peace.

Then God says:

“In righteousness you will be established.”

That is the foundation.

Not appearances.

Righteousness.

Then:

Enemies may come.

God does not say:

No one will ever attack.

He says:

The attack will not have:

The final word.

Then:

Weapons are forged.

Again:

God does not say:

No weapon exists.

He says:

“No weapon forged against you will prevail.”

That is different.

The weapon may:

Exist.

Be sharpened.

Be aimed.

Be used.

But it cannot finally:

Cancel God’s purpose.

And weapons are not always:

Steel.

Sometimes:

Words.

“Every tongue that rises against you in judgment.”

Accusation.

Slander.

Condemnation.

False judgment.

God says:

That too will not:

Stand forever.

Why?

“Their vindication is from Me.”

That is the resting place.

You do not have to:

Win every argument.

Answer every critic.

Correct every rumor.

Fight every battle.

Destroy every accusation.

Your vindication:

Comes from God.

And never forget where this chapter stands.

Immediately after:

Isaiah 53.

The Servant was:

Pierced.

So Zion can:

Know peace.

The Servant was:

Crushed.

So the barren woman can:

Sing.

The Servant bore:

Iniquity.

So God can speak:

Covenant mercy.

The Servant suffered:

Shame.

So the redeemed can:

Leave shame behind.

So when you read Isaiah 54:

Do not separate the song from:

The Servant.

Do not separate the covenant of peace from:

The One who bore the punishment bringing peace.

And when you face:

Barrenness—

Sing in faith.

When God promises:

Growth—

Make room.

When you expand—

Strengthen the stakes.

When shame speaks—

Remember the Redeemer.

When God seems distant—

Remember everlasting kindness.

When mountains move—

Trust the covenant.

When storms hit—

Remember God rebuilds.

When you pray for children—

Pray they are taught by the Lord.

When enemies attack—

Remember attack is not sovereignty.

When weapons form—

Remember formed does not mean victorious.

When accusations rise—

Remember rising does not mean standing.

And when you wonder where your final vindication will come from—

Hear the Lord:

> **“Their vindication is from Me.”**

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You are:

Our Maker.

Our Redeemer.

Our Covenant Lord.

The God of all the earth.

Father, speak hope into every:

Barren place.

Teach us to sing before:

Fulfillment.

Teach us to trust:

Your promise.

Where You are bringing:

Growth—

Help us enlarge the tent.

Where You are expanding our reach—

Help us strengthen the stakes.

Protect us from:

Growth without depth.

Father, free us from:

Shame.

Past failure.

Humiliation.

Reproach.

Fear.

Remind us that our past does not own:

Our future.

Thank You for Your:

Great compassion.

Everlasting kindness.

Unfailing love.

Covenant of peace.

Father, when it feels like:

Mountains are shaking—

Keep our hearts anchored in:

You.

When everything familiar changes—

Remind us:

Your love does not.

Father, rebuild:

Storm-tossed lives.

Storm-tossed homes.

Storm-tossed churches.

Storm-tossed hearts.

Lay foundations that are:

Strong.

Beautiful.

Righteous.

Father, teach our:

Children.

Grandchildren.

Families.

Churches.

May great peace rest on those who are:

Taught by You.

Establish us in:

Righteousness.

Drive fear far from:

Our hearts.

Father, when attacks come:

Keep us from assuming You have abandoned us.

When weapons form:

Remind us You are still sovereign.

When accusations rise:

Guard our hearts from panic.

Help us entrust our:

Reputation.

Defense.

Vindication.

To:

You.

Thank You that no weapon can finally overturn:

Your purpose.

Thank You that the final verdict comes from:

You.

And Father, thank You for:

The suffering Servant.

Thank You that the peace of Isaiah 54 follows the sacrifice of:

Isaiah 53.

Thank You that Jesus bore:

Our punishment.

So we may know:

Peace.

Thank You that His wounds opened the way for:

Restoration.

Let our lives become:

Songs of grace.

Enlarged tents of faith.

Strong stakes of truth.

Homes of peace.

Testimonies of redemption.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet My unfailing love for you will not be shaken, nor My covenant of peace be removed, says the Lord, who has compassion on you." — Isaiah 54:10**

Central Truth

Because the suffering Servant has borne sin and secured peace, the Lord calls barren Zion to sing, prepare for unexpected fruitfulness, leave shame behind, rest in Him as faithful Husband and Redeemer, trust His everlasting kindness and unshakable covenant of peace, anticipate a glorious future in which her children are taught by God, and stand confidently against opposition because no weapon or accusation can finally overturn the people whose vindication comes from the Lord.

Isaiah 54 in One Sentence

Isaiah calls barren and humiliated Zion to sing and enlarge her tent because the Lord will restore her with unexpected fruitfulness, remove her shame, gather her with great compassion, love her with everlasting kindness, establish an unshakable covenant of peace, rebuild her storm-tossed ruins in beauty, teach her children and give them great peace, establish her in righteousness, and guarantee that no weapon or accusation can finally defeat His servants because their vindication comes from Him.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 55 — The Free Gift of God’s Salvation

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 55 is one of Scripture’s great invitations.

The chapter begins with one word:

> **“Come.”**

Come:

Thirsty.

Come:

Without money.

Come:

Hungry.

Come:

Empty.

Come:

Listen.

Come:

Live.

After Isaiah 53 revealed:

The suffering Servant.

And Isaiah 54 revealed:

The covenant of peace.

Isaiah 55 opens the doors and announces:

The feast is ready.

The water is available.

The covenant is offered.

Mercy is near.

Pardon is abundant.

The chapter asks a searching question:

> **“Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy?”**

Humanity spends enormous:

Time.

Energy.

Money.

Attention.

Emotion.

Searching for what will:

Satisfy.

Yet much of what people chase cannot:

Feed the soul.

God does not merely condemn:

Thirst.

He says:

Come to:

The water.

He does not merely rebuke:

Hunger.

He says:

Eat what is:

Good.

He does not merely expose:

Emptiness.

He offers:

Abundance.

Then He connects the invitation to:

An everlasting covenant.

The faithful love promised to:

David.

The chapter expands again toward:

The nations.

The covenant promises connected with the Davidic king reach beyond:

Israel.

Nations will:

Come.

Then comes the urgent command:

“Seek the Lord while He may be found.”

Grace is free.

But grace should not be treated as:

Trivial.

God’s invitation demands:

Response.

The wicked must:

Forsake his way.

The unrighteous must:

Forsake his thoughts.

Then:

Turn.

And what happens when the sinner turns?

God:

Has mercy.

God:

Freely pardons.

The next verses are among the most quoted in Isaiah:

> **“My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways.”**

These words certainly reveal:

God’s infinite wisdom.

But in context they are connected especially with:

Mercy.

Human beings may think:

That person has gone too far.

That sin cannot be forgiven.

That rebel does not deserve another chance.

God says:

My thoughts are:

Higher.

His higher ways are demonstrated in:

Abundant pardon.

Then Isaiah compares:

God’s Word.

To:

Rain.

Snow.

Water comes from heaven.

Soaks the earth.

Produces:

Seed.

Bread.

Life.

Then God says:

So is:

My Word.

It will accomplish:

My purpose.

God’s Word is not:

Empty sound.

It carries:

Divine intention.

Finally the chapter ends with:

Joy.

Peace.

Singing mountains.

Clapping trees.

Thorns replaced by:

Pine.

Briers replaced by:

Myrtle.

The effects of sin and curse give way to:

Restoration.

And all of it becomes:

“For the Lord’s renown.”

The chapter therefore moves from:

Thirst.

To:

Water.

Hunger.

To:

Food.

Poverty.

To:

Free grace.

Death.

To:

Life.

Wickedness.

To:

Pardon.

Human thoughts.

To:

God’s higher thoughts.

Dry ground.

To:

Rain.

Emptiness.

To:

Fruitfulness.

Sorrow.

To:

Joy.

Thorns.

To:

Beauty.

The central truth of Isaiah 55 is:

God freely invites spiritually thirsty and empty people to receive His salvation without price, calls sinners to seek Him and repent while mercy is near, promises abundant pardon according to His higher thoughts and ways, assures that His Word will accomplish His purpose, and leads the redeemed into joy, peace, fruitfulness, and restoration that display His everlasting glory.

I. COME TO THE WATERS

Isaiah 55:1 — Salvation Without Money

> **“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.”**

The invitation is addressed to:

The thirsty.

The poor.

The empty-handed.

Three times:

Come.

The price?

Nothing.

Cross References

John 7:37

Jesus stands and calls anyone who is thirsty to come to Him and drink.

Revelation 22:17

The Spirit and the bride invite the thirsty to come and freely receive the water of life.

Revelation 21:6

God promises to give the thirsty water freely from the spring of life.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation is:

Received.

Not purchased.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The qualification for coming is not wealth in your hand but thirst in your soul.

II. “YOU WHO HAVE NO MONEY”

God intentionally invites:

Those who cannot pay.

Spiritual Principle

Grace excludes:

Spiritual purchasing power.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If salvation could be bought, the poor would be disadvantaged and the proud would boast; God makes it free so everyone must come the same way.

III. WATER, WINE, AND MILK

These images communicate:

Life.

Joy.

Nourishment.

Abundance.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation is not:

Bare survival.

It satisfies:

Deep need.

IV. WHY SPEND MONEY ON WHAT IS NOT BREAD?

Isaiah 55:2 — The Tragedy of False Satisfaction

> **“Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance.”**

This question exposes:

Misplaced appetite.

People labor for:

What cannot satisfy.

Cross References

John 6:27

Jesus warns against laboring only for food that perishes and calls people to seek the food that endures to eternal life.

Jeremiah 2:13

God condemns His people for abandoning the fountain of living water and digging broken cisterns unable to hold water.

Matthew 4:4

Jesus teaches that human life cannot be sustained by bread alone but depends upon every word that comes from God.

Spiritual Principle

The soul can consume much and still remain:

Hungry.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Not everything you can afford is worth buying, and not everything you can chase is capable of feeding your soul.

V. LABOR THAT DOES NOT SATISFY

Money.

Success.

Pleasure.

Recognition.

Possessions.

Power.

None can take God’s place.

Spiritual Principle

Created things become disappointing when asked to do:

The Creator’s job.

VI. “LISTEN CAREFULLY”

The path toward satisfaction begins with:

Hearing God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A hungry soul does not need louder distractions; it needs to listen to the One who knows what truly nourishes.

VII. DELIGHT IN ABUNDANCE

God does not invite people into:

Spiritual starvation.

Spiritual Principle

God Himself is:

Satisfying.

VIII. LISTEN SO YOUR SOUL MAY LIVE

Isaiah 55:3 — The Everlasting Covenant

> **“Give ear and come to Me; listen, so that your soul may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, My faithful love promised to David.”**

Three movements:

Hear.

Come.

Live.

Then:

Covenant.

Cross References

Acts 13:34

Paul connects the sure covenant blessings promised to David with the resurrection and messianic fulfillment in Christ.

John 5:25

Jesus says the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

Jeremiah 32:40

God promises an everlasting covenant in which He remains faithfully committed to His people.

Spiritual Principle

God’s invitation is:

Life-giving.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The voice of God does not merely inform the soul; when received in faith, it calls the soul into life.

IX. THE FAITHFUL LOVE PROMISED TO DAVID

The covenant reaches back toward:

David.

Kingship.

Messianic hope.

Spiritual Principle

God’s promises do not:

Expire.

X. EVERLASTING COVENANT

Not:

Temporary arrangement.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not offer a trial-version covenant.

XI. A WITNESS TO THE PEOPLES

Isaiah 55:4 — Leader and Commander

> **“See, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of nations.”**

The Davidic figure is presented as:

Witness.

Leader.

Commander.

His influence reaches:

Peoples.

Nations.

Cross References

Revelation 1:5

Jesus Christ is called the faithful witness and ruler of the kings of the earth.

John 18:37

Jesus says He came into the world to testify to the truth.

Psalm 18:43

The king is given authority over peoples and nations beyond his immediate kingdom.

Spiritual Principle

The Davidic promise reaches toward:

Worldwide kingship.

XII. THE COVENANT IS NOT NARROW

The promise moves:

From David.

To:

Nations.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s covenant faithfulness to David ultimately opens outward toward peoples David never knew.

XIII. NATIONS WILL HASTEN

Isaiah 55:5 — The Holy One Has Glorified You

> **“Surely you will summon nations you do not know, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for He has glorified you.”**

The movement is:

Missionary.

Nations come because of:

The Lord.

Cross References

Romans 15:9

Paul describes the nations glorifying God for His mercy.

Isaiah 11:10

The Root of Jesse becomes a banner for the peoples, and nations seek Him.

Psalm 22:27

All the ends of the earth are called to remember the Lord and turn to Him.

Spiritual Principle

God’s glory attracts:

The nations.

XIV. SEEK THE LORD

Isaiah 55:6 — The Urgency of Grace

> **“Seek the Lord while He may be found; call on Him while He is near.”**

Grace is:

Available.

But the call is:

Urgent.

Cross References

2 Corinthians 6:2

Paul declares that now is the favorable time and now is the day of salvation.

Psalm 32:6

The faithful are urged to pray to God while He may be found.

Matthew 7:7

Jesus says to ask, seek, and knock with confidence in the Father’s response.

Spiritual Principle

The proper response to grace is:

Now.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not turn “someday” into a hiding place from the God who says “seek Me now.”

XV. “WHILE HE MAY BE FOUND”

This does not mean God is:

Lost.

It emphasizes:

Opportunity.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual opportunity should never be:

Presumed upon.

XVI. CALL ON HIM WHILE HE IS NEAR

God’s nearness is an:

Invitation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God draws near in conviction and grace, do not answer Him with delay.

XVII. THE WICKED MUST FORSAKE HIS WAY

Isaiah 55:7 — Repentance and Abundant Pardon

> **“Let the wicked forsake their ways, and the unrighteous their thoughts. Let them turn to the Lord, and He will have mercy, and to our God, for He will freely pardon.”**

Repentance includes:

Ways.

Thoughts.

Turning.

Cross References

Ezekiel 18:27

When the wicked person turns from wickedness and does what is just and right, he turns away from destruction.

1 John 1:9

God is faithful and just to forgive confessed sins and cleanse His people from unrighteousness.

Proverbs 28:13

The person who hides sin does not prosper, but the one who confesses and forsakes it finds mercy.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical repentance involves:

Change of direction.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace does not say, “Stay where you are and call it repentance.” Grace says, “Turn—and mercy is waiting.”

XVIII. FORSAKE THE WAY

Behavior.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance affects:

Conduct.

XIX. FORSAKE THE THOUGHTS

Inner life.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance reaches:

Mind.

Motives.

Desires.

XX. RETURN TO THE LORD

Repentance is not merely:

Turning from sin.

It is:

Turning to God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True repentance is not merely leaving the wrong road; it is returning to the right Person.

XXI. HE WILL HAVE MERCY

Not:

Reluctantly tolerate.

Mercy.

Spiritual Principle

God welcomes:

Repentant sinners.

XXII. HE WILL FREELY PARDON

The language emphasizes:

Abundance.

Generosity.

Full forgiveness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not forgive with a clenched fist.

He pardons freely.

XXIII. GOD’S THOUGHTS ARE HIGHER

Isaiah 55:8 — Divine Wisdom Beyond Human Wisdom

> **“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,’ declares the Lord.”**

This verse is often used generally.

And rightly so.

God’s wisdom exceeds:

Ours.

But the immediate context concerns:

Mercy.

Repentance.

Pardon.

Humans may think:

Too guilty.

Too far gone.

Too late.

God says:

My thoughts are:

Higher.

Cross References

Romans 11:33

Paul marvels at the depth of God’s wisdom and knowledge, whose judgments and ways surpass human tracing.

Job 11:7

Human beings cannot fully search out or comprehend the infinite depths of God.

Psalm 92:5

God’s works are great and His thoughts exceedingly deep.

Spiritual Principle

God’s wisdom is:

Beyond ours.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes God’s higher thoughts are seen most clearly in how much more willing He is to pardon than we expected.

XXIV. HUMAN THINKING LIMITS GRACE

We say:

Impossible.

Unforgivable.

Unrecoverable.

God says:

Return.

Spiritual Principle

Never let human estimates of guilt become greater than:

God’s announced mercy.

XXV. HIGHER THAN THE EARTH

Isaiah 55:9 — The Distance Between Divine and Human Wisdom

> **“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts higher than your thoughts.”**

The comparison is:

Vast.

Heaven above:

Earth.

God’s wisdom above:

Human reasoning.

Cross References

Psalm 103:11

God’s steadfast love is pictured as high as the heavens above the earth.

Romans 11:34

No one has fully known the mind of the Lord or served as His counselor.

Job 38:33

God’s governance of the heavens reveals knowledge and authority beyond human ability.

Spiritual Principle

Trust is necessary because:

God sees what we cannot.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If God’s thoughts are higher, faith should not demand that His plan fit inside the limits of ours.

XXVI. GOD’S HIGHER WAYS ARE NOT RANDOM WAYS

Higher does not mean:

Irrational.

It means:

Superior.

Spiritual Principle

God’s wisdom is beyond:

Comprehension.

But never below:

Goodness.

XXVII. RAIN COMES DOWN FROM HEAVEN

Isaiah 55:10 — God’s Word Compared to Rain

> **“As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,”**

Rain:

Falls.

Waters.

Produces.

Multiplies.

Feeds.

Cross References

Hebrews 6:7

Land that receives rain and produces useful crops receives blessing from God.

John 4:14

Jesus describes the life He gives as living water springing up into eternal life.

Deuteronomy 32:2

God’s teaching is compared to rain and dew falling upon growing vegetation.

Spiritual Principle

God’s Word brings:

Life.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Rain does not have to shout at the ground to change it.

It falls, enters, and produces life.

XXVIII. RAIN MAKES THE EARTH BUD

The effect may begin:

Hidden.

Spiritual Principle

God’s Word can work beneath the surface before:

Visible fruit appears.

XXIX. SEED FOR THE SOWER

The rain provides:

Future potential.

Spiritual Principle

God’s Word produces:

More than immediate benefit.

XXX. BREAD FOR THE EATER

The same rain gives:

Seed.

Food.

Future.

Present.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s Word provides something to plant and something to live on.

XXXI. GOD’S WORD WILL NOT RETURN EMPTY

Isaiah 55:11 — The Word Accomplishes Its Purpose

> **“So is My word that goes out from My mouth: It will not return to Me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”**

God’s Word is:

Purposeful.

Effective.

Productive.

Cross References

Hebrews 4:12

God’s Word is living, active, penetrating, and discerning.

Jeremiah 23:29

God compares His Word to fire and to a hammer that breaks rock.

Matthew 24:35

Jesus says heaven and earth will pass away, but His words will never pass away.

Spiritual Principle

God’s Word never:

Fails its divine assignment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Word may not always produce the result we expected, but it always accomplishes the purpose God intended.

XXXII. “WHAT I DESIRE”

The standard is:

God’s purpose.

Not:

Our preferred outcome.

Spiritual Principle

The success of Scripture should be measured by:

God’s intention.

XXXIII. “FOR WHICH I SENT IT”

God’s Word is:

Sent.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every Word from God carries a destination and an assignment.

XXXIV. YOU WILL GO OUT IN JOY

Isaiah 55:12 — Creation Joins the Celebration

> **“You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.”**

What a picture.

Joy.

Peace.

Mountains singing.

Trees clapping.

Creation celebrates:

Redemption.

Cross References

Psalm 98:8

The rivers clap their hands and the mountains sing together before the Lord.

Isaiah 44:23

Heavens, earth, mountains, forests, and trees rejoice because God has redeemed His people.

Psalm 96:12

The fields and trees rejoice before the Lord who comes to judge in righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption creates:

Joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God restores His people, Isaiah cannot find enough human voices, so he makes the mountains sing and the trees clap.

XXXV. LED FORTH IN PEACE

Not merely:

Released.

Led.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation includes:

Guidance.

XXXVI. JOY AND PEACE TOGETHER

Joy without peace becomes:

Excitement.

Peace without joy can become:

Coldness.

God gives:

Both.

XXXVII. THORNS ARE REPLACED

Isaiah 55:13 — Creation Transformed

> **“Instead of the thornbush will grow the pine tree, and instead of briers the myrtle will grow. This will be for the Lord’s renown, for an everlasting sign, that will never be cut off.”**

Thorns and briers recall:

Curse.

Barrenness.

Hardship.

God replaces them with:

Useful.

Beautiful.

Living growth.

Cross References

Isaiah 35:1

The wilderness is promised blossoming and joy under divine restoration.

Romans 8:21

Creation itself will ultimately be liberated from bondage to decay into glorious freedom.

Isaiah 41:19

God promises to plant trees in the wilderness as a visible sign of His transforming power.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration reverses:

Curse-like conditions.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace does not merely trim the thorns; it can change what grows in the field.

XXXVIII. “INSTEAD OF”

One of the great words of:

Redemption.

Instead of:

Thorns.

Trees.

Instead of:

Briers.

Myrtle.

Spiritual Principle

God can create:

Holy replacement.

XXXIX. FOR THE LORD’S RENOWN

Restoration has a purpose:

God’s glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The transformed life becomes a sign pointing beyond itself to the One who transformed it.

XL. AN EVERLASTING SIGN

The work becomes:

Testimony.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration leaves:

Evidence.

XLI. THE GREAT INVITATION OF ISAIAH 55

Come.

Listen.

Seek.

Call.

Forsake.

Turn.

Receive.

Key Truth

The chapter is filled with divine invitation and human response.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT GRACE

No money.

No cost.

Come.

Spiritual Principle

Grace is:

Free to the recipient.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace costs the sinner nothing because the Servant has already borne the cost.

XLIII. ISAIAH 53 AND ISAIAH 55

Isaiah 53

The Servant pays through:

Suffering.

Isaiah 55

The thirsty receive:

Without price.

Key Truth

The free invitation of Isaiah 55 rests naturally after the costly sacrifice revealed in Isaiah 53.

XLIV. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT SPIRITUAL THIRST

Thirst is:

Real.

God does not mock:

It.

He directs it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The problem is not that people thirst; the problem is where they try to drink.

XLV. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT SATISFACTION

False bread:

Fails.

God’s provision:

Satisfies.

Spiritual Principle

The soul has appetites only God can:

Fill.

XLVI. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT LISTENING

Verse 2:

Listen carefully.

Verse 3:

Give ear.

Listen.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The chapter begins with hunger but repeatedly points to the ear, because spiritual life is fed by receiving God’s Word.

XLVII. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT THE DAVIDIC COVENANT

God’s faithful promises to:

David.

Reach:

Forward.

Spiritual Principle

Messianic hope stands behind:

The invitation.

XLVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT THE NATIONS

Nations:

Hasten.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s covenant grace refuses to stay confined within one ethnicity or border.

XLIX. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT URGENCY

Seek:

Now.

Call:

Now.

Spiritual Principle

Grace should produce:

Response.

Not:

Presumption.

L. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT REPENTANCE

Forsake:

Way.

Thought.

Turn:

To God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Repentance is not regret without movement.

LI. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT MERCY

God:

Has mercy.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance does not encounter:

Coldness.

LII. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT PARDON

Freely.

Abundantly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The repentant sinner discovers that God’s capacity to pardon is greater than the sinner’s expectation.

LIII. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S HIGHER WAYS

God thinks beyond:

Us.

Spiritual Principle

Human understanding is:

Finite.

LIV. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S WORD

Rain-like.

Life-giving.

Effective.

Purposeful.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s Word never returns home unemployed.

LV. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT JOY

The redeemed:

Go out.

In:

Joy.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation changes:

Atmosphere.

LVI. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE

The redeemed are:

Led.

In:

Peace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s salvation gives both a destination and a manner of travel.

LVII. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT CREATION

Mountains sing.

Trees clap.

Thorns replaced.

Spiritual Principle

God’s saving purpose ultimately has:

Creation-wide dimensions.

LVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 55 TEACHES ABOUT GLORY

Everything becomes:

For the Lord’s renown.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The goal of restoration is not merely our comfort but God’s glory through our transformation.

LIX. COME

The first word is:

Invitation.

Spiritual Principle

God initiates:

Grace.

LX. THIRSTY PEOPLE

Need is:

Acknowledged.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Thirst is not a disqualification; it is exactly what the invitation addresses.

LXI. COME TO WATER

God gives:

The right source.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual life depends on:

Divine supply.

LXII. NO MONEY

No spiritual bank account:

Required.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Empty pockets are not a problem at the table of grace.

LXIII. BUY WITHOUT COST

Paradox.

Receive what has:

Value.

Without:

Payment.

Spiritual Principle

Grace is:

Gift.

LXIV. WINE AND MILK

Abundance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s salvation does not offer only enough to keep the soul alive; it offers nourishment and delight.

LXV. WHY SPEND MONEY?

God questions:

Waste.

Spiritual Principle

Idolatry is expensive.

LXVI. WHAT IS NOT BREAD

Looks:

Useful.

Cannot:

Feed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Counterfeit satisfaction often has a price tag but no nourishment.

LXVII. LABOR WITHOUT SATISFACTION

Exhaustion.

Spiritual Principle

Sinful striving creates:

Weariness.

LXVIII. EAT WHAT IS GOOD

God offers:

True nourishment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely take false food away; He puts something better on the table.

LXIX. SOUL DELIGHT

Not merely:

Duty.

Spiritual Principle

God intends:

Joy.

LXX. GIVE EAR

Spiritual posture:

Attention.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A distracted heart can stand beside the banquet and still remain hungry.

LXXI. COME TO ME

The invitation is ultimately:

Personal.

Spiritual Principle

God gives not merely:

Benefits.

But:

Himself.

LXXII. YOUR SOUL MAY LIVE

Life is the:

Result.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The invitation is not religious decoration; it is a matter of life.

LXXIII. EVERLASTING COVENANT

Security.

Spiritual Principle

The gift has:

Durability.

LXXIV. DAVIDIC LOVE

Historical promise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s old promises become part of the foundation of new hope.

LXXV. WITNESS TO PEOPLES

Truth must be:

Declared.

Spiritual Principle

Messianic kingship includes:

Witness.

LXXVI. LEADER OF NATIONS

Authority extends:

Wide.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Davidic King does not remain a merely local figure.

LXXVII. NATIONS YOU DO NOT KNOW

Unexpected reach.

Spiritual Principle

God’s mission outruns:

Human familiarity.

LXXVIII. THEY WILL HASTEN

Attraction produced by:

God’s glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can draw people you never expected into the reach of His covenant grace.

LXXIX. SEEK THE LORD

Active response.

Spiritual Principle

Grace does not create:

Passivity.

LXXX. CALL ON HIM

Prayer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who invites sinners also invites them to speak.

LXXXI. WICKED WAY FORSAKEN

Behavior changed.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance has:

Feet.

LXXXII. UNRIGHTEOUS THOUGHTS FORSAKEN

Mind changed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not only want a new path under your feet; He wants a new pattern in your mind.

LXXXIII. RETURN

Homeward movement.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance is:

Relational restoration.

LXXXIV. MERCY

God’s response.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The returning sinner does not find a locked door.

LXXXV. FREE PARDON

Generous forgiveness.

Spiritual Principle

God’s grace is:

Abundant.

LXXXVI. HIGHER THOUGHTS

Infinite wisdom.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not insist that God think like you before you agree to trust Him.

LXXXVII. HIGHER WAYS

Superior purposes.

Spiritual Principle

Faith accepts:

Perspective limits.

LXXXVIII. HEAVENS ABOVE EARTH

Visual illustration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The distance between heaven and earth is still only an illustration of how far divine wisdom exceeds ours.

LXXXIX. RAIN FROM HEAVEN

Gift from:

Above.

Spiritual Principle

Fruitfulness begins with:

Provision.

XC. SNOW FROM HEAVEN

Slow-release:

Moisture.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some of God’s work soaks in quickly; some melts slowly—but both can nourish the ground.

XCI. WATERING EARTH

Preparation.

Spiritual Principle

God’s Word softens:

Soil.

XCII. BUD AND FLOURISH

Growth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Word that enters properly prepared soil tends toward life.

XCIII. SEED AND BREAD

Future and present.

Spiritual Principle

God supplies:

Continuation.

Sustenance.

XCIV. WORD FROM GOD’S MOUTH

Divine source.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The power of Scripture rests ultimately in the God who speaks it.

XCV. NOT RETURN EMPTY

Guaranteed purpose.

Spiritual Principle

No divine word is:

Meaningless.

XCVI. ACCOMPLISH WHAT GOD DESIRES

God defines:

Success.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Word succeeds by accomplishing God’s purpose, not by conforming to our preferred timetable.

XCVII. GO OUT IN JOY

Departure becomes:

Celebration.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation moves people:

Forward.

XCVIII. LED IN PEACE

The Shepherding theme remains.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s guidance does not end when the prison door opens.

XCIX. MOUNTAINS SING

Creation:

Responds.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption is:

Cosmic in scope.

C. TREES CLAP

Poetic praise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When grace transforms the landscape, creation becomes Isaiah’s congregation.

CI. THORNS REPLACED

Curse imagery:

Reversed.

Spiritual Principle

God transforms:

The fruit of brokenness.

CII. MYRTLE INSTEAD OF BRIER

Beauty replaces:

Pain.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoration is not merely subtraction; it is holy replacement.

CIII. FOR GOD’S RENOWN

Glory.

Spiritual Principle

The transformed field becomes:

Testimony.

CIV. EVERLASTING SIGN

Visible evidence of:

Divine faithfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoration becomes a signpost pointing future generations back to Him.

CV. ISAIAH 54 AND ISAIAH 55

Isaiah 54

God promises:

A covenant of peace.

Isaiah 55

God invites people to:

Enter covenant blessing.

Key Truth

Isaiah 54 announces the covenant; Isaiah 55 opens the invitation.

CVI. ISAIAH 53–55

Isaiah 53

The Servant:

Pays.

Isaiah 54

Peace:

Promised.

Isaiah 55

Salvation:

Offered freely.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The gospel movement is visible: sacrifice accomplished, peace secured, invitation extended.

CVII. ISAIAH 55 AND JOHN 7

Isaiah:

> **“Come, all you who are thirsty.”**

Jesus:

> **“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.”**

Key Truth

Jesus places Himself at the center of Isaiah’s invitation to the thirsty.

CVIII. ISAIAH 55 AND REVELATION 22

Isaiah begins:

> **“Come.”**

Revelation ends:

> **“Come.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Bible’s final invitation echoes the prophetic invitation: thirsty people are still welcome to receive living water freely.

CIX. ISAIAH 55 AND ACTS 13

The faithful mercies promised to:

David.

Are connected by Paul with:

Christ’s resurrection.

Spiritual Principle

The covenant reaches its messianic fulfillment in:

Jesus.

CX. ISAIAH 55 AND EVANGELISM

Come.

Seek.

Call.

Turn.

These are:

Evangelistic words.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s grace is free, but the invitation still calls for personal response.

CXI. ISAIAH 55 AND REPENTANCE

Repentance involves:

Way.

Thought.

Direction.

Key Truth

Biblical repentance is comprehensive: the sinner turns from false conduct and false thinking toward the merciful Lord.

CXII. ISAIAH 55 AND FORGIVENESS

The context of verses 8–9 matters.

God’s higher ways include:

His remarkable willingness to pardon.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not quote “My ways are higher” only when life is confusing; remember that in Isaiah 55 God’s higher way is also astonishing mercy toward repentant sinners.

CXIII. ISAIAH 55 AND THE WORD OF GOD

Rain:

Falls.

Produces.

Returns only after:

Purpose.

God’s Word:

Goes out.

Accomplishes.

Succeeds.

Spiritual Principle

Scripture is:

Effective.

CXIV. ISAIAH 55 AND CREATION

Rain.

Snow.

Earth.

Seed.

Bread.

Mountains.

Hills.

Trees.

Thorns.

Myrtle.

The whole chapter is full of:

Creation imagery.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah uses creation to show that grace is life-giving, fruitful, joyful, and transformative.

CXV. TEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 55

1. Thirst → Living Water

2. No Money → Free Grace

3. False Bread → True Satisfaction

4. Death → Life

5. Distance → Seeking the Near Lord

6. Wickedness → Mercy

7. Sin → Abundant Pardon

8. Human Thoughts → God’s Higher Thoughts

9. Dry Earth → Fruitful Rain

10. Thorns → Beautiful Growth

Key Truth

Isaiah 55 presents salvation as God’s answer to every form of spiritual emptiness: thirst, hunger, guilt, confusion, barrenness, and curse are answered by grace, pardon, revelation, fruitfulness, peace, and joy.

CXVI. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 55

1. Salvation Is Free

Principle:

The thirsty are invited without money and without price.

2. False Satisfaction Is Costly

Principle:

People spend heavily on things that cannot feed the soul.

3. Listening Leads to Life

Principle:

God’s voice brings true nourishment.

4. God’s Covenant Is Everlasting

Principle:

His faithful promise to David reaches forward into messianic salvation.

5. God’s Salvation Reaches the Nations

Principle:

Covenant grace expands beyond Israel.

6. Seek God While Opportunity Is Present

Principle:

Grace must not be answered with endless delay.

7. Repentance Involves Ways and Thoughts

Principle:

God calls for outward and inward turning.

8. God Pardons Freely

Principle:

Mercy is more abundant than repentant sinners expect.

9. God’s Wisdom Is Higher

Principle:

Trust Him beyond the limits of human understanding.

10. God’s Word Always Accomplishes Its Purpose

Principle:

Divine speech is never empty.

11. Salvation Produces Joy and Peace

Principle:

The redeemed are led forward in celebration.

12. God Transforms the Landscape of Life

Principle:

Thorns can give way to fruitful beauty for His glory.

CXVII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who is invited in verse 1?

Everyone who is thirsty.

Question 2

What do they need to bring?

No money.

Question 3

What does this teach about salvation?

It is received as a gift, not purchased.

Question 4

What does God ask in verse 2?

Why people spend money and labor on what does not satisfy.

Question 5

What should people do instead?

Listen carefully to God and receive what truly nourishes.

Question 6

What happens when people listen and come?

Their souls live.

Question 7

What covenant does God promise?

An everlasting covenant connected with His faithful love promised to David.

Question 8

How far does the covenant blessing extend?

To nations and peoples.

Question 9

When should people seek the Lord?

While He may be found.

Question 10

What should the wicked forsake?

Their ways.

Question 11

What should the unrighteous forsake?

Their thoughts.

Question 12

Where should they turn?

To the Lord.

Question 13

What will God show them?

Mercy.

Question 14

What will He do with their sin?

Freely pardon.

Question 15

How do God’s thoughts compare with ours?

They are higher.

Question 16

How do God’s ways compare with ours?

They are higher.

Question 17

What natural image illustrates God’s Word?

Rain and snow watering the earth.

Question 18

What does rain produce?

Growth, seed, and bread.

Question 19

What does God say His Word will never do?

Return empty.

Question 20

What will His Word accomplish?

The purpose for which He sends it.

Question 21

How will the redeemed go out?

In joy.

Question 22

How will they be led?

In peace.

Question 23

How does creation respond?

Mountains and hills sing, and trees clap their hands.

Question 24

What replaces thorns?

The pine tree.

Question 25

What replaces briers?

The myrtle.

Question 26

What is the purpose of this transformation?

The Lord’s renown and an everlasting sign.

Question 27

How does Isaiah 55 connect with Isaiah 53?

The salvation offered freely in Isaiah 55 rests naturally after the costly work of the suffering Servant.

Question 28

What is one of the strongest gospel themes in the chapter?

Salvation is freely offered to the spiritually thirsty.

CXVIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 55 asks several searching questions.

What Am I Thirsty For?

Approval?

Money?

Success?

Pleasure?

Control?

God?

Where Am I Trying to Drink?

Broken cisterns?

Or:

Living water?

What Am I Spending My Life On?

Is it:

Bread?

Or:

Something that cannot satisfy?

What consumes:

My time?

My labor?

My attention?

My money?

My thoughts?

Am I listening carefully to:

God?

Have I received salvation as:

Gift?

Or am I still trying to:

Earn it?

Am I resting in the everlasting covenant fulfilled through:

Christ?

Do I care about:

The nations?

Am I responding to God:

Now?

Or continually saying:

Later?

Is there a wicked way I need to:

Forsake?

Is there an unrighteous thought pattern I need to:

Reject?

Have I truly:

Turned to the Lord?

Do I believe God is willing to:

Pardon me?

Freely?

Have I made my understanding:

The standard God must meet?

Can I trust His:

Higher ways?

Do I believe Scripture will accomplish:

God’s purpose?

Even when I do not immediately see:

Results?

Am I allowing God’s Word to:

Water.

Grow.

Produce.

In me?

Is my salvation producing:

Joy?

Peace?

What thorny area of my life needs:

Transformation?

Is my life becoming a sign of:

God’s renown?

CXIX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Stop Paying for What Cannot Feed You When God Is Offering What Satisfies for Free”

Humanity often:

Pays dearly.

For emptiness.

God offers:

Life.

Without price.

Principle:

Sin is expensive and unsatisfying; grace is free and life-giving.

CXX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Qualification for Living Water Is Thirst, Not Wealth”

You do not need:

Money.

Status.

Achievement.

Religious merit.

Principle:

The empty-handed sinner is exactly the person grace invites to come.

CXXI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God’s Higher Ways Include Higher Mercy”

The sinner says:

I cannot be forgiven.

Others say:

That person should never be forgiven.

God says:

Return.

I will:

Pardon.

Principle:

Never use human limits on mercy to define the heart of the God who says His thoughts are higher.

CXXII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Word Does Not Return Empty”

Preach it.

Teach it.

Read it.

Believe it.

Live it.

Principle:

We are responsible to faithfully release God’s Word; God remains responsible for accomplishing His purpose through it.

CXXIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Grace Does Not Merely Remove Thorns—It Plants Something Better”

God replaces:

Thorn.

With:

Tree.

Brier.

With:

Myrtle.

Principle:

Redemption is not only the removal of what destroys; it is the creation of what gives life and brings glory to God.

CXXIV. THE FREE INVITATION

Come.

Spiritual Principle

God is:

Welcoming.

CXXV. THE THIRSTY

Need recognized.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You do not have to pretend you are full before coming to the One who offers water.

CXXVI. NO MONEY

Human inability:

Acknowledged.

Spiritual Principle

Grace begins where:

Self-payment ends.

CXXVII. FREE WINE AND MILK

Rich supply.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not invite starving souls to an empty table.

CXXVIII. FALSE BREAD

Looks nourishing.

Fails.

Spiritual Principle

Counterfeits exist because:

Real hunger exists.

CXXIX. WASTED LABOR

Striving.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some exhaustion comes not from doing too much, but from chasing what can never satisfy.

CXXX. SOUL ABUNDANCE

True fullness.

Spiritual Principle

God feeds the:

Inner person.

CXXXI. LISTEN AND LIVE

Hearing connects with:

Life.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes spiritual death continues because people keep speaking to themselves instead of listening to God.

CXXXII. DAVIDIC COVENANT

Promise carries:

History.

Spiritual Principle

The gospel rests on:

God’s faithfulness.

CXXXIII. WITNESS TO PEOPLES

The king testifies:

Truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Messiah rules and reveals.

CXXXIV. COMMANDER OF NATIONS

Royal authority.

Spiritual Principle

The covenant King possesses:

Global reach.

CXXXV. NATIONS HASTEN

God glorifies:

His chosen one.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can turn strangers into seekers.

CXXXVI. SEEK WHILE FOUND

Opportunity:

Present.

Spiritual Principle

Do not waste:

Grace.

CXXXVII. CALL WHILE NEAR

Response:

Urgent.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Conviction should become prayer before it becomes another forgotten moment.

CXXXVIII. FORSAKE WICKED WAYS

Turn from:

Behavior.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance is:

Visible.

CXXXIX. FORSAKE UNRIGHTEOUS THOUGHTS

Turn from:

Mental rebellion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God wants more than cleaner actions; He wants renewed thinking.

CXL. TURN TO THE LORD

Destination:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance ends at:

Relationship.

CXLI. MERCY WAITS

God receives:

Returners.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The road of repentance does not end at humiliation; it ends at mercy.

CXLII. FREE PARDON

No stinginess.

Spiritual Principle

God forgives:

Generously.

CXLIII. THOUGHTS HIGHER

Infinite mind.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not need our advice before He can govern wisely.

CXLIV. WAYS HIGHER

Infinite wisdom.

Spiritual Principle

Trust goes where understanding:

Stops.

CXLV. RAIN AND SNOW

Heaven-sent provision.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God sends what the earth cannot manufacture for itself.

CXLVI. WATERING

Quiet work.

Spiritual Principle

Transformation may be:

Gradual.

CXLVII. BUDDING

Early evidence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not despise the first green shoot produced by God’s Word.

CXLVIII. FLOURISHING

Maturity.

Spiritual Principle

The Word aims at:

Fruit.

CXLIX. SEED

Future.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God grows today can become what someone plants tomorrow.

CL. BREAD

Present sustenance.

Spiritual Principle

The Word feeds:

Now.

CLI. WORD GOES OUT

Movement.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s Word is never passive when He sends it.

CLII. WORD RETURNS

Mission completed.

Spiritual Principle

God’s speech is:

Effective.

CLIII. ACCOMPLISHES DESIRE

God’s will:

Done.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No human resistance can force God’s Word to fail its divine purpose.

CLIV. JOYFUL DEPARTURE

Captivity ends:

Joyfully.

Spiritual Principle

Grace changes the:

Exit.

CLV. PEACEFUL LEADING

No panic.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Shepherd does not merely open the gate; He leads the flock out.

CLVI. MOUNTAINS SING

Creation joins:

Praise.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation affects more than:

Individuals.

CLVII. TREES CLAP

Poetry celebrates:

Restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah makes creation worship because ordinary language is not enough for the joy of redemption.

CLVIII. THORNBUSH REPLACED

Curse imagery:

Removed.

Spiritual Principle

Grace changes what grows.

CLIX. MYRTLE GROWS

Beauty emerges.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can grow something beautiful where pain had rooted itself.

CLX. LORD’S RENOWN

Final purpose:

Glory.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration points upward.

CLXI. ISAIAH 55 AS A GOSPEL CHAPTER

Come.

Water.

No money.

Listen.

Live.

Seek.

Turn.

Mercy.

Pardon.

Key Truth

Isaiah 55 presents salvation as a free divine invitation received through responsive faith and repentance.

CLXII. ISAIAH 55 AS A REPENTANCE CHAPTER

Forsake.

Turn.

Seek.

Call.

Spiritual Principle

Grace and repentance are not:

Enemies.

Grace creates the possibility and invitation to:

Return.

CLXIII. ISAIAH 55 AS A WORD-OF-GOD CHAPTER

God speaks.

People listen.

Rain illustrates.

Word accomplishes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The chapter begins with an invitation from God’s mouth and ends with creation transformed by the effect of God’s purpose.

CLXIV. ISAIAH 55 AS A MISSIONARY CHAPTER

Peoples.

Nations.

Unknown nations.

Worldwide movement.

Spiritual Principle

The gospel invitation is:

Expansive.

CLXV. ISAIAH 55 AS A CREATION-RESTORATION CHAPTER

Water.

Earth.

Rain.

Snow.

Seed.

Bread.

Mountains.

Trees.

Thorns.

Myrtle.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Creator who saves souls also promises transformation so extensive that the landscape itself becomes part of the testimony.

CLXVI. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 55

1. The Thirsty Are Invited

Salvation is offered freely.

2. False Satisfaction Is Exposed

Human labor cannot feed the soul.

3. The Everlasting Covenant Is Announced

God’s faithful Davidic promise stands.

4. The Nations Are Summoned

The covenant reaches beyond Israel.

5. Sinners Are Urged to Seek God

Grace has urgency.

6. The Wicked Are Called to Repent

Ways and thoughts must change.

7. God Promises Abundant Pardon

Mercy greets the returning sinner.

8. God’s Higher Wisdom Is Declared

His thoughts and ways exceed ours.

9. God’s Effective Word Is Celebrated

It accomplishes every purpose for which He sends it.

10. Redemption Ends in Joyful Restoration

Creation sings as thorns give way to beauty.

Key Truth

Isaiah 55 moves from thirst to satisfaction, guilt to pardon, human limitation to divine wisdom, dry ground to fruitful rain, and thorn-covered barrenness to joyful restoration through the free grace, faithful covenant, and unfailing Word of God.

CLXVII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 55 begins with:

> **“Come.”**

Not:

Clean yourself up first.

Not:

Earn enough.

Not:

Pay enough.

Not:

Become worthy.

Come.

Who?

The:

Thirsty.

The one without:

Money.

The hungry.

The empty.

That means spiritual poverty is not:

A barrier to grace.

Pride is a greater barrier than:

Poverty.

Then God asks:

“Why spend money on what is not bread?”

That question reaches into:

Modern life.

How much do people spend:

Trying to feel whole?

How many hours are invested in:

Things that disappear?

How much emotional energy goes into:

Approval?

Success?

Pleasure?

Possessions?

Status?

Recognition?

And after all of it:

Still thirsty.

Still hungry.

Still empty.

God says:

Listen to:

Me.

Then:

“Your soul may live.”

God does not merely offer:

Religion.

He offers:

Life.

Then He speaks of:

An everlasting covenant.

The promise to David.

A King.

A Witness.

A Leader.

A Commander.

And nations begin:

Coming.

The invitation keeps:

Expanding.

Then:

“Seek the Lord while He may be found.”

Do not postpone:

Grace.

Do not assume:

Tomorrow.

If God is:

Calling.

Convicting.

Drawing.

Respond:

Now.

Then comes:

Repentance.

Forsake:

The way.

Forsake:

The thought.

Return to:

The Lord.

And what will you find?

Not:

A reluctant God.

Not:

A closed door.

Not:

A small amount of mercy.

But:

“He will freely pardon.”

Then God says:

“My thoughts are not your thoughts.”

Sometimes we use this verse only when:

Something bad happens.

We say:

God’s ways are higher.

True.

But look at the context.

The sinner turns.

God:

Pardons.

Maybe God’s thoughts are higher partly because:

His mercy is greater than ours.

You may say:

I cannot forgive myself.

God says:

Return.

You may say:

I am too far gone.

God says:

Return.

You may say:

Too much sin.

God says:

I freely pardon.

Then God compares His Word with:

Rain.

Rain does not fall for:

Nothing.

It waters:

Earth.

Produces:

Seed.

Produces:

Bread.

So God’s Word:

Works.

Maybe you have:

Preached it.

Taught it.

Shared it.

Prayed it.

Read it.

And wondered:

Is anything happening?

God says:

My Word does not return:

Empty.

It will accomplish:

My purpose.

Then the chapter ends with:

Joy.

Peace.

Mountains:

Singing.

Trees:

Clapping.

Thorns:

Gone.

Myrtle:

Growing.

What a movement.

The thirsty become:

Satisfied.

The wicked become:

Pardoned.

The dry earth becomes:

Fruitful.

The captive becomes:

Joyful.

The thorny field becomes:

Beautiful.

That is:

Grace.

And all of it becomes:

“For the Lord’s renown.”

So when your soul is thirsty:

Come.

When false bread disappoints:

Come.

When you have nothing to pay:

Come.

When guilt says stay away:

Seek.

When sin has taken you down the wrong road:

Turn.

When you think forgiveness cannot reach you:

Remember God’s thoughts are higher.

When Scripture seems to produce no immediate result:

Remember the rain.

When the field looks covered in thorns:

Remember what God can plant instead.

And above everything:

Stop spending your life trying to purchase what God offers:

Freely.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for Your invitation:

> **“Come.”**

Thank You that You invite:

The thirsty.

The hungry.

The empty.

The poor.

Those who cannot:

Pay.

Father, forgive us for spending:

Time.

Energy.

Money.

Attention.

Emotion.

On things that cannot satisfy.

Turn us away from:

Broken cisterns.

False bread.

Empty promises.

Bring us again to:

Living water.

Feed our souls with:

What is good.

Teach us to delight in:

You.

Father, thank You for Your:

Everlasting covenant.

Thank You for Your faithfulness to:

David.

Thank You for the King who fulfills Your saving promises:

Jesus Christ.

Thank You that Your salvation reaches:

The nations.

Father, help us seek You:

Now.

Call on You:

Now.

Repent:

Now.

Do not let us hide behind:

Tomorrow.

Show us every wicked:

Way.

Every unrighteous:

Thought.

Give us grace to:

Forsake.

Turn.

Return.

Thank You that You have:

Mercy.

Thank You that You:

Freely pardon.

Father, when we cannot understand:

Your ways—

Help us trust:

Your wisdom.

When we question:

Your mercy—

Remind us Your thoughts are:

Higher.

When we see only:

Dry ground—

Send Your Word like:

Rain.

Let Your truth:

Water.

Grow.

Produce.

Feed.

Father, give us confidence that Your Word never returns:

Empty.

Help us preach it:

Faithfully.

Teach it:

Carefully.

Read it:

Hungrily.

Believe it:

Deeply.

Live it:

Consistently.

Father, lead us forth in:

Joy.

Lead us in:

Peace.

Replace:

Thorns.

Briers.

Barrenness.

With:

Life.

Beauty.

Fruitfulness.

Let every transformed place become:

A testimony.

For:

Your renown.

And may our lives become an everlasting sign that:

Your grace satisfies.

Your mercy pardons.

Your Word succeeds.

Your salvation restores.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"Seek the Lord while He may be found; call on Him while He is near." — Isaiah 55:6**

Central Truth

The Lord freely invites every spiritually thirsty and empty person to come without money and receive life, extends His everlasting covenant through the Davidic promise to the nations, calls sinners to seek Him and turn from wicked ways and thoughts, promises abundant mercy and pardon, reveals that His wisdom is infinitely higher than human understanding, guarantees that His Word will accomplish its purpose, and transforms the redeemed into people of joy, peace, fruitfulness, and testimony for His glory.

Isaiah 55 in One Sentence

Isaiah invites the thirsty and empty to receive God's salvation freely without price, exposes the futility of seeking satisfaction apart from Him, announces an everlasting covenant rooted in God's faithful promise to David and extended to the nations, calls sinners urgently to seek the Lord and repent with the assurance of abundant pardon, declares God's thoughts and ways infinitely higher than ours, compares His effective Word to life-giving rain, and concludes with redeemed people going out in joy and peace as creation itself is transformed for the everlasting renown of the Lord.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 56 — A House of Prayer for All Nations

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 56 opens a new movement in the book.

Isaiah 53 revealed:

The suffering Servant.

Isaiah 54 revealed:

The covenant of peace.

Isaiah 55 extended:

The free invitation of salvation.

Isaiah 56 now asks:

What should the redeemed community look like?

The answer includes:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Faithfulness.

Holiness.

Prayer.

Welcome.

Gathering.

And:

Responsible leadership.

The chapter begins with God saying:

“Maintain justice and do what is right.”

Why?

Because:

“My salvation is close at hand.”

Grace does not produce:

Moral carelessness.

The nearness of salvation calls for:

Faithful living.

Then Isaiah turns toward people who may have believed they were:

Outside.

Foreigners.

Eunuchs.

People who might say:

I do not belong.

I have no future.

I am:

A dry tree.

God answers:

Do not say that.

Those who:

Bind themselves to the Lord.

Love His name.

Serve Him.

Hold fast to His covenant.

Will receive:

Belonging.

Honor.

Joy.

A name.

Acceptance.

The promise reaches its climax in:

“My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.”

This becomes one of the most important lines in the chapter.

The God of Israel is gathering:

More than Israel.

He says:

“I will gather still others.”

That theme anticipates the widening mission later seen in:

The ministry of Jesus.

The inclusion of the nations.

The gathering of one people of God.

But then the tone changes dramatically.

The chapter moves from:

Welcomed outsiders.

To:

Corrupt insiders.

Foreigners and eunuchs are faithfully seeking:

God.

Meanwhile many of Israel’s watchmen are:

Blind.

Mute.

Lazy.

Greedy.

Self-serving.

The people thought to be:

Marginal.

May be faithful.

The leaders thought to be:

Privileged.

May be corrupt.

Isaiah exposes a frightening contrast.

The watchman’s job is:

To see.

But they are:

Blind.

The dog’s job is:

To bark.

But they are:

Mute.

The shepherd’s job is:

To care for the flock.

But they seek:

Their own gain.

The leader’s responsibility is:

To remain alert.

But they love:

Sleep.

And instead of preparing the people for judgment, they say:

> **“Tomorrow will be like today, or even far better.”**

That is:

Complacency.

Self-indulgence.

False security.

The chapter therefore holds together two great truths:

God welcomes sincere seekers who once seemed excluded.

God condemns leaders who possess privilege without faithfulness.

The central truth of Isaiah 56 is:

The Lord calls His people to live justly and faithfully in view of approaching salvation, welcomes foreigners and eunuchs who sincerely bind themselves to Him, declares His house to be a house of prayer for all nations, promises to gather still more people into His covenant community, and condemns blind, lazy, greedy leaders whose self-indulgence leaves the flock exposed to judgment.

I. MAINTAIN JUSTICE AND DO WHAT IS RIGHT

Isaiah 56:1 — Salvation Is Near

> **“This is what the Lord says: ‘Maintain justice and do what is right, for My salvation is close at hand, and My righteousness will soon be revealed.’”**

The command is:

Maintain justice.

Do what is right.

Why?

Because God’s salvation is:

Near.

Cross References

Micah 6:8

God requires His people to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with Him.

Isaiah 51:5

God’s righteousness draws near and His salvation goes out, while the nations wait for His saving power.

Psalm 106:3

Those who practice justice and continually do what is right are called blessed.

Spiritual Principle

Future salvation should shape:

Present conduct.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The closer God’s salvation comes, the less sense it makes to live as though righteousness does not matter.

II. SALVATION AND RIGHTEOUSNESS BELONG TOGETHER

God does not say:

Salvation is near, therefore:

Ignore obedience.

He says:

Live rightly.

Spiritual Principle

Grace and righteousness are:

Friends.

Not:

Enemies.

III. MAINTAIN JUSTICE

Justice must be:

Practiced.

Protected.

Continued.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Justice is not a slogan God’s people admire; it is a way of life they must maintain.

IV. DO WHAT IS RIGHT

Right belief should produce:

Right action.

Spiritual Principle

Orthodoxy without obedience is:

Incomplete.

V. BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO HOLDS FAST

Isaiah 56:2 — Sabbath and Moral Faithfulness

> **“Blessed is the one who does this—the person who holds it fast, who keeps the Sabbath without desecrating it, and keeps their hand from doing any evil.”**

Two dimensions:

Worship.

Ethics.

The Sabbath represented:

Covenant loyalty.

The hand kept from evil represented:

Moral obedience.

Cross References

Exodus 20:8

Israel was commanded to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

James 1:25

The person who hears God’s instruction and actually does it is blessed in faithful obedience.

Psalm 1:1

Blessing belongs to the one who refuses the counsel and path of wickedness.

Spiritual Principle

True devotion affects:

Worship.

And:

Conduct.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot honor God with a holy day while using the rest of your life for unholy deeds.

VI. HOLDS IT FAST

Faithfulness requires:

Perseverance.

Spiritual Principle

Obedience is not merely:

Starting.

It is:

Holding fast.

VII. KEEPS HIS HAND FROM EVIL

The hand represents:

Action.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Godly worship that never reaches the hands has not reached the whole life.

VIII. THE FOREIGNER MUST NOT SAY, “I AM EXCLUDED”

Isaiah 56:3 — Outsiders Invited In

> **“Let no foreigner who has bound himself to the Lord say, ‘The Lord will surely exclude me from His people.’ And let no eunuch complain, ‘I am only a dry tree.’”**

Two marginalized groups appear:

Foreigner.

Eunuch.

Both may fear:

Exclusion.

Cross References

Ephesians 2:12

Paul describes Gentiles as once separated from Israel’s covenant privileges and without the same historic access to the promises.

Acts 10:34

Peter declares that God does not show favoritism based on ethnicity or nationality.

Galatians 3:28

In Christ, ethnic, social, and gender distinctions do not determine access to covenant standing before God.

Spiritual Principle

God’s grace can reach people who believe:

They do not belong.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never let yesterday’s exclusion speak louder than God’s invitation.

IX. “BOUND HIMSELF TO THE LORD”

The foreigner is not merely:

Curious.

He has:

Joined himself.

Committed himself.

Belonged himself to:

The Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Inclusion is not:

Indifference.

It is covenant:

Commitment.

X. THE EUNUCH’S FEAR

> **“I am only a dry tree.”**

This means:

No descendants.

No family line.

No legacy.

Spiritual Principle

Human loss does not determine:

Divine worth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can give a person a name that outlives the family line they thought they needed in order to matter.

XI. EUNUCHS WHO PLEASE GOD

Isaiah 56:4 — Covenant Faithfulness Matters More Than Social Status

> **“For this is what the Lord says: ‘To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, who choose what pleases Me and hold fast to My covenant—’”**

What matters?

Not:

Social prestige.

Physical condition.

Public status.

But:

Faithfulness.

Cross References

Acts 8:27

An Ethiopian eunuch becomes one of the striking New Testament examples of an outsider seeking God and receiving the good news of Jesus.

Deuteronomy 23:1

Old covenant restrictions help us appreciate the remarkable inclusiveness of Isaiah’s promise here.

Matthew 19:12

Jesus speaks of eunuchs in several senses, including those who willingly remain unmarried for the sake of God’s kingdom.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant faithfulness matters more than:

Human category.

XII. CHOOSE WHAT PLEASES GOD

This is deliberate:

Obedience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Holiness is not merely avoiding what displeases God; it is choosing what pleases Him.

XIII. HOLD FAST TO THE COVENANT

Commitment must become:

Durability.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant loyalty is:

Relational faithfulness.

XIV. A NAME BETTER THAN SONS AND DAUGHTERS

Isaiah 56:5 — Everlasting Honor

> **“To them I will give within My house and within My walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will never be cut off.”**

The eunuch fears:

No descendants.

God offers:

An everlasting name.

Cross References

Revelation 2:17

Christ promises the overcomer a new name known personally within God’s covenant blessing.

Matthew 19:12

Jesus recognizes lives shaped by kingdom devotion beyond ordinary expectations of marriage and family.

Isaiah 62:2

God promises His restored people a new name given by the Lord Himself.

Spiritual Principle

God can give:

Legacy.

Where society sees:

Loss.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A name given by God is better than a reputation manufactured by people.

XV. “WITHIN MY HOUSE”

Belonging is:

Internal.

Not distant.

Spiritual Principle

God does not merely tolerate the outsider at:

The edge.

He gives a place:

Within.

XVI. EVERLASTING NAME

Earthly names:

Fade.

God-given identity:

Endures.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God writes into eternity cannot be erased by what people denied you in history.

XVII. FOREIGNERS WHO LOVE THE LORD’S NAME

Isaiah 56:6 — Servants from the Nations

> **“And the foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord, to minister to Him, to love the name of the Lord, and to be His servants, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to My covenant—”**

Notice the language:

Bind themselves.

Minister.

Love.

Serve.

Keep.

Hold fast.

Cross References

Ephesians 2:19

Gentile believers are no longer strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens and members of God’s household.

Galatians 3:28

All who belong to Christ share equal covenant standing regardless of former social distinctions.

Romans 10:12

There is no distinction in access to the Lord, for the same Lord richly blesses all who call upon Him.

Spiritual Principle

Belonging to God includes:

Love.

Service.

Faithfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s welcome is never merely an invitation to attend; it is an invitation to belong, love, serve, and worship.

XVIII. LOVE THE NAME OF THE LORD

Not merely:

Fear punishment.

Love:

His name.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant life is:

Relational.

XIX. TO BE HIS SERVANTS

The outsider becomes:

Servant.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The one once treated as outside can become someone who ministers inside the house of God.

XX. BROUGHT TO THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

Isaiah 56:7 — A House of Prayer for All Nations

> **“These I will bring to My holy mountain and give them joy in My house of prayer.**
> **Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.”**

What does God give?

Access.

Joy.

Acceptance.

Prayer.

Belonging.

Cross References

Matthew 21:13

Jesus quotes this verse when cleansing the temple, condemning corruption of a place meant for prayer.

Mark 11:17

Mark records Jesus emphasizing the full phrase:

> **“A house of prayer for all nations.”**

Luke 19:46

Jesus rebukes those who turned the temple from a place of prayer into a corrupt marketplace.

Spiritual Principle

God’s house is meant to be:

A place of prayer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A house bearing God’s name has failed part of its purpose when people can find commerce, performance, and activity there but not prayer.

XXI. “FOR ALL NATIONS”

This is one of the chapter’s great emphases.

Not:

One ethnicity only.

Not:

One social class.

Not:

One background.

Spiritual Principle

God’s redemptive purpose reaches:

Nations.

XXII. JOY IN THE HOUSE OF PRAYER

Prayer is not pictured as:

Miserable religious duty.

It is associated with:

Joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The house of prayer should not feel like the house of exclusion to people genuinely seeking the Lord.

XXIII. THEIR OFFERINGS ACCEPTED

Once marginalized.

Now:

Accepted.

Spiritual Principle

God grants:

Worshiping access.

XXIV. JESUS AND ISAIAH 56:7

When Jesus cleansed the temple, He quoted:

This verse.

Why?

Because worship had become:

Corrupted.

The place meant for:

Prayer.

Had become:

Exploitation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus was not merely angry about buying and selling; He was defending the purpose of His Father’s house.

XXV. THE GOD WHO GATHERS

Isaiah 56:8 — “I Will Gather Still Others”

> **“The Sovereign Lord declares—He who gathers the exiles of Israel: ‘I will gather still others to them besides those already gathered.’”**

God is:

Gatherer.

Israel:

Gathered.

Others:

Still to be gathered.

Cross References

John 10:16

Jesus speaks of other sheep not presently in the same fold whom He must also bring, resulting in one flock under one Shepherd.

Ephesians 2:14

Christ breaks down hostility and creates peace between formerly divided peoples.

John 11:52

Christ’s death is described as gathering together God’s scattered children.

Spiritual Principle

God’s gathering work is:

Expanding.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never assume God is finished gathering simply because the people you expected have already arrived.

XXVI. “STILL OTHERS”

Those words enlarge:

Expectation.

Spiritual Principle

God’s kingdom is:

Still gathering.

XXVII. ISRAEL AND THE NATIONS

The chapter does not erase:

Israel.

It expands:

The gathering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s inclusion of the nations does not require pretending Israel never mattered; it reveals how wide His saving purpose has always been.

XXVIII. THE TONE CHANGES

Verses 1–8:

Justice.

Faithfulness.

Welcome.

Prayer.

Gathering.

Verses 9–12:

Predators.

Blindness.

Greed.

Sleep.

Drunkenness.

Key Truth

The chapter moves from faithful outsiders being welcomed to unfaithful leaders being condemned.

XXIX. BEASTS OF THE FIELD ARE SUMMONED

Isaiah 56:9 — Judgment Approaches

> **“Come, all you beasts of the field, come and devour, all you beasts of the forest!”**

This is:

Judgment imagery.

Why are predators invited?

Because those responsible for protecting the flock have:

Failed.

Cross References

Jeremiah 12:9

Predatory birds and beasts are summoned against what has become exposed to judgment.

Zephaniah 3:8

God announces a day when nations are gathered for judgment.

Jeremiah 15:3

God appoints multiple forms of devastation against persistent rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

When watchmen fail, danger increases.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A sleeping guard does not make the enemy less dangerous; it makes the people more exposed.

XXX. WATCHMEN ARE BLIND

Isaiah 56:10 — Leaders Who Cannot See

> **“Israel’s watchmen are blind; they all lack knowledge. They are mute dogs, they cannot bark; they lie around and dream, they love to sleep.”**

Every image is:

Failure of function.

Watchman:

Blind.

Teacher:

Lacks knowledge.

Guard dog:

Mute.

Leader:

Sleeping.

Cross References

Ezekiel 3:17

A prophet is appointed as a watchman who must hear God’s warning and faithfully warn the people.

Ezekiel 34:2

God condemns shepherds who feed themselves instead of caring for the flock.

Jeremiah 6:17

God had placed watchmen to sound warning, yet the people refused to listen.

Spiritual Principle

Leadership is dangerous when:

Position remains.

Function disappears.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A title cannot compensate for blindness.

XXXI. A WATCHMAN WHO CANNOT SEE

The first qualification is:

Vision.

Spiritual Principle

Leaders must perceive:

Danger.

Truth.

Direction.

XXXII. LACK KNOWLEDGE

Ignorance in leadership is:

Dangerous.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

People should never be expected to follow confidently where leaders refuse to understand faithfully.

XXXIII. MUTE DOGS

A watchdog that cannot bark is:

Useless in danger.

Spiritual Principle

A spiritual leader who sees danger but refuses to warn is failing:

The flock.

XXXIV. THEY LOVE TO SLEEP

The issue is not:

Physical rest.

It is:

Negligence.

Complacency.

Unwatchfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is a difference between resting after faithful service and sleeping through your responsibility.

XXXV. GREEDY DOGS

Isaiah 56:11 — Leaders Seeking Their Own Gain

> **“They are greedy dogs, never satisfied. They are shepherds who lack understanding; they all turn to their own way, each seeks his own gain.”**

What drives them?

Greed.

Self.

Gain.

Cross References

Micah 3:11

Leaders, priests, and prophets are condemned for serving in spiritual roles for money while presuming upon God’s presence.

1 Timothy 3:8

Church leaders are warned against greed and dishonest gain.

Titus 1:7

An overseer must not be greedy for gain because leadership belongs to stewardship rather than self-enrichment.

Spiritual Principle

Self-interest corrupts:

Spiritual leadership.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The shepherd becomes dangerous when he begins calculating what the sheep can do for him.

XXXVI. NEVER SATISFIED

Greed has:

No finish line.

Spiritual Principle

Appetite without godliness becomes:

Endless.

XXXVII. SHEPHERDS WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING

A shepherd should know:

The flock.

The field.

The dangers.

The path.

These do not.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Leadership without understanding turns authority into hazard.

XXXVIII. “THEY ALL TURN TO THEIR OWN WAY”

This echoes Isaiah 53:6:

> **“Each of us has turned to his own way.”**

The difference is striking.

Isaiah 53:

The Servant bears the sin of straying sheep.

Isaiah 56:

The shepherds themselves turn to:

Their own way.

Spiritual Principle

Leaders need:

The Servant.

As much as:

The flock.

XXXIX. EACH SEEKS HIS OWN GAIN

The opposite of:

Servanthood.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The question of ministry is not, “What can I get?” but, “Whom am I responsible to serve?”

XL. “COME, LET US GET WINE”

Isaiah 56:12 — Complacent Leaders

> **“‘Come,’ they say, ‘let us get wine, let us drink our fill of strong drink; and tomorrow will be like today, or even far better.’”**

Their worldview:

Pleasure now.

No concern for:

Judgment.

Tomorrow will be:

Fine.

Better.

Cross References

Amos 6:6

The complacent elite drink abundantly and indulge themselves while remaining unconcerned about the ruin of God’s people.

Luke 12:19

Jesus describes the fool who tells himself to relax, eat, drink, and enjoy life while ignoring the nearness of divine accountability.

1 Corinthians 15:32

Paul cites the attitude:

Eat and drink, for tomorrow we die,

as the logic of life stripped of resurrection hope and divine accountability.

Spiritual Principle

Complacency assumes:

Tomorrow belongs to us.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One of the most dangerous sentences in spiritual life is: “Tomorrow will be just like today.”

XLI. INTOXICATION AND LEADERSHIP

They are not:

Watching.

They are:

Drinking.

Spiritual Principle

Self-indulgence dulls:

Spiritual awareness.

XLII. FALSE OPTIMISM

“Tomorrow will be like today, or even far better.”

There is no:

Repentance.

No:

Warning.

No:

Discernment.

Only:

Presumption.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Optimism without truth is not faith.

It is denial.

XLIII. WHAT ISAIAH 56 TEACHES ABOUT RIGHTEOUS LIVING

Justice.

Right conduct.

Avoiding evil.

Faithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation produces:

A moral response.

XLIV. WHAT ISAIAH 56 TEACHES ABOUT THE SABBATH

In its old covenant setting, Sabbath observance functions as:

A sign of covenant faithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people are called to order life around:

His authority.

XLV. WHAT ISAIAH 56 TEACHES ABOUT FOREIGNERS

The foreigner who joins himself to the Lord should not say:

I am excluded.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace creates belonging where ethnicity once appeared to create distance.

XLVI. WHAT ISAIAH 56 TEACHES ABOUT EUNUCHS

God gives:

A place.

A name.

An everlasting memorial.

Spiritual Principle

Human limitation cannot erase:

Divine dignity.

XLVII. WHAT ISAIAH 56 TEACHES ABOUT IDENTITY

God gives a name:

Better than descendants.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Your deepest identity is not finally determined by biology, social standing, or cultural recognition, but by the God who names His people.

XLVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 56 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S HOUSE

It is:

A house of prayer.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer belongs at the heart of:

Worship.

XLIX. WHAT ISAIAH 56 TEACHES ABOUT THE NATIONS

God says:

All nations.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s house is not designed to become a private religious club.

L. WHAT ISAIAH 56 TEACHES ABOUT GATHERING

God gathers:

Israel.

Others.

Still others.

Spiritual Principle

The mission continues.

LI. WHAT ISAIAH 56 TEACHES ABOUT LEADERSHIP

Leaders must:

See.

Know.

Warn.

Serve.

Watch.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A leader who cannot see, will not warn, and seeks personal gain has abandoned the very purpose of leadership.

LII. WHAT ISAIAH 56 TEACHES ABOUT GREED

Greed transforms shepherds into:

Dogs.

Spiritual Principle

Ministry becomes corrupted when:

Gain becomes the goal.

LIII. WHAT ISAIAH 56 TEACHES ABOUT COMPLACENCY

Tomorrow assumed.

Judgment ignored.

Pleasure pursued.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Complacency is dangerous because it treats unpromised tomorrows as guaranteed property.

LIV. WHAT ISAIAH 56 TEACHES ABOUT TRUE INCLUSION

Inclusion means:

Coming to the Lord.

Loving His name.

Serving Him.

Holding His covenant.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical welcome does not mean:

God has no standards.

It means people from every background are welcomed into:

Covenant faithfulness.

LV. GRACE AND HOLINESS

Foreigners welcomed.

But also:

Bind themselves to Lord.

Love His name.

Serve.

Obey.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace removes illegitimate barriers without removing God’s call to holiness.

LVI. THE OUTSIDER MAY BE FAITHFUL

Foreigners.

Eunuchs.

They seek:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Do not assume spiritual maturity based on:

Social position.

LVII. THE INSIDER MAY BE CORRUPT

Watchmen.

Shepherds.

Leaders.

They fail.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Religious position is not proof of spiritual faithfulness.

LVIII. ISAIAH 55 AND ISAIAH 56

Isaiah 55

> **“Come, all you who are thirsty.”**

Isaiah 56

Foreigners and eunuchs are:

Welcomed.

Key Truth

The free invitation of Isaiah 55 becomes visible in the expanding covenant community of Isaiah 56.

LIX. ISAIAH 54–56

Isaiah 54

Enlarge the:

Tent.

Isaiah 55

Invite the:

Thirsty.

Isaiah 56

Gather:

Foreigners and outsiders.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God enlarges the tent because He intends to fill it with people once considered far away.

LX. ISAIAH 49 AND ISAIAH 56

Isaiah 49

The Servant is light to:

Nations.

Isaiah 56

The nations are welcomed into:

Prayer and worship.

Spiritual Principle

Mission moves toward:

Worship.

LXI. ISAIAH 52 AND ISAIAH 56

Isaiah 52

All ends of earth see:

God’s salvation.

Isaiah 56

God’s house welcomes:

All nations.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Worldwide salvation naturally produces worldwide worship.

LXII. ISAIAH 53 AND ISAIAH 56

Isaiah 53

The Servant bears:

Sin.

Isaiah 56

The excluded receive:

A place.

Key Truth

The suffering Servant’s saving work provides the theological foundation for a covenant people broader than old social boundaries.

LXIII. JOHN 10 AND ISAIAH 56

Isaiah:

> **“I will gather still others.”**

Jesus:

> **“I have other sheep.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Shepherd always had more sheep in view than the current fold could see.

LXIV. EPHESIANS 2 AND ISAIAH 56

Foreigners once:

Far.

Now:

Fellow citizens.

Spiritual Principle

Christ creates:

Belonging.

LXV. ACTS 8 AND ISAIAH 56

Isaiah promises hope to:

Eunuchs.

Acts records:

An Ethiopian eunuch.

Reading:

Isaiah.

Hearing:

Jesus.

Receiving:

Baptism.

Going on his way:

Rejoicing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The man who might once have read “dry tree” can become a living example of God’s promise to outsiders.

LXVI. JESUS CLEANSING THE TEMPLE

Jesus cites:

Isaiah 56:7.

The issue:

God’s house.

Prayer.

Nations.

Corruption.

Spiritual Principle

God takes the purpose of worship seriously.

LXVII. A HOUSE OF PRAYER

Not primarily:

A house of entertainment.

Commerce.

Status.

Performance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When prayer becomes peripheral, a church should ask whether something central has been displaced.

LXVIII. ALL NATIONS

The nations are not:

An interruption.

They are part of:

The purpose.

Spiritual Principle

God’s mission is:

Global.

LXIX. HOLY MOUNTAIN

The outsider receives access to:

Sacred space.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace takes people from “I do not belong” to “God brought me near.”

LXX. ACCEPTED WORSHIP

God accepts:

Those He gathers.

Spiritual Principle

Belonging culminates in:

Worship.

LXXI. GOD GATHERS EXILES

Restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who scatters in judgment can gather in mercy.

LXXII. STILL OTHERS

Mission unfinished.

Spiritual Principle

Never close the guest list before:

God does.

LXXIII. BEASTS INVITED

Judgment appears because:

Leaders failed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Negligent leadership can create openings for destructive forces.

LXXIV. BLIND WATCHMEN

Contradiction in terms.

Spiritual Principle

Position cannot substitute for:

Perception.

LXXV. LACK KNOWLEDGE

Ignorance becomes:

Dangerous.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A leader who refuses to learn eventually forces others to suffer the cost of his ignorance.

LXXVI. MUTE DOGS

No warning.

Spiritual Principle

Silence can become:

Negligence.

LXXVII. DREAMING LEADERS

Detached from:

Reality.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The flock does not need leaders dreaming through danger; it needs leaders awake to truth.

LXXVIII. LOVE TO SLEEP

Pleasure over:

Responsibility.

Spiritual Principle

Comfort becomes sinful when it causes:

Neglect.

LXXIX. GREEDY DOGS

Never:

Enough.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Greed has no vocabulary for “enough.”

LXXX. SHEPHERDS SEEKING THEIR OWN WAY

Self-centered leadership.

Spiritual Principle

The shepherd must not become:

The center of the flock.

LXXXI. OWN GAIN

Profit over:

People.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Ministry dies when people become resources for the leader instead of souls entrusted to the leader.

LXXXII. WINE AND STRONG DRINK

Self-indulgence.

Spiritual Principle

Pleasure becomes dangerous when it replaces:

Watchfulness.

LXXXIII. “TOMORROW WILL BE BETTER”

Presumption.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith trusts God with tomorrow.

Presumption assumes tomorrow owes us comfort.

LXXXIV. RIGHTEOUS OUTSIDERS VERSUS CORRUPT INSIDERS

This may be one of the chapter’s strongest contrasts.

Outsiders:

Love God.

Insiders:

Love gain.

Outsiders:

Hold covenant.

Leaders:

Turn to own way.

Outsiders:

Seek prayer.

Leaders:

Seek wine.

Key Truth

God evaluates people by faithfulness, not by proximity to religious privilege.

LXXXV. RELIGIOUS PRIVILEGE CAN BECOME DANGEROUS

The leaders have:

Position.

Yet lack:

Faithfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The closer a person stands to holy things, the greater the danger of assuming proximity equals obedience.

LXXXVI. A NAME BETTER THAN HUMAN LEGACY

The eunuch fears:

No children.

God promises:

An everlasting name.

Spiritual Principle

God can give:

Eternal significance.

LXXXVII. SERVANTHOOD IS HONOR

The foreigners become:

Servants.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Serving God is not second-class citizenship in His kingdom; it is covenant honor.

LXXXVIII. LOVE AND SERVICE

Love:

The name.

Serve:

The Lord.

Spiritual Principle

True worship combines:

Affection.

Action.

LXXXIX. PRAYER AND MISSION

House of prayer.

All nations.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A missionary church should be a praying church, because the God who gathers nations is the God we seek in prayer.

XC. PRAYER AND PURITY

The chapter begins:

Justice.

Righteousness.

Avoid evil.

Then:

Prayer.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer does not excuse:

Unrighteous living.

XCI. PRAYER AND JOY

God gives:

Joy.

In:

House of prayer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prayer should not only be the place where burdens are carried; it should also become the place where God gives joy.

XCII. SALVATION IS NEAR

Verse 1.

Spiritual Principle

Urgency should create:

Faithfulness.

XCIII. RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL BE REVEALED

God’s future:

Approaches.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Live today in light of what God says He will reveal tomorrow.

XCIV. BLESSED IS THE ONE

Faithfulness has:

Blessing.

Spiritual Principle

God notices:

Obedience.

XCV. KEEP THE HAND FROM EVIL

Practical holiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spirituality must eventually reach what your hands do.

XCVI. DO NOT SAY, “EXCLUDE ME”

The foreigner’s fear is:

Rejected.

Spiritual Principle

God speaks against:

Hopeless self-exclusion.

XCVII. DO NOT SAY, “DRY TREE”

The eunuch’s identity statement is:

Corrected.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not make your limitation your name when God has promised you a better one.

XCVIII. A MEMORIAL IN GOD’S HOUSE

Remembered by:

God.

Spiritual Principle

God can preserve:

Legacy.

XCIX. AN EVERLASTING NAME

No expiration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human memory fades.

God’s naming does not.

C. MINISTER TO THE LORD

Service directed:

Upward.

Spiritual Principle

Ministry begins with:

God.

CI. LOVE HIS NAME

Affection directed:

Toward God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The servant who loves only the work and not the Lord will eventually lose the heart of ministry.

CII. JOY ON THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

The outsider becomes:

Worshiper.

Spiritual Principle

Grace brings people:

Near.

CIII. ACCEPTED ON THE ALTAR

Worship recognized.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who once seemed distant says: “Your worship is welcome here.”

CIV. HOUSE FOR ALL NATIONS

The temple points beyond:

Ethnic restriction.

Spiritual Principle

The worshiping people of God are:

International.

CV. GATHERER OF ISRAEL

God remains:

Faithful.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who widens the family does not become unfaithful to His earlier promises.

CVI. GATHER STILL OTHERS

Expansion.

Spiritual Principle

God’s grace keeps:

Moving outward.

CVII. BEASTS COME BECAUSE WATCHMEN FAIL

Leadership has:

Consequences.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When those assigned to guard refuse to watch, those assigned to follow become vulnerable.

CVIII. LEADERSHIP REQUIRES VISION

Watchman:

Must see.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual blindness at the top becomes:

Danger below.

CIX. LEADERSHIP REQUIRES COURAGE

Dog:

Must bark.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Love for people sometimes requires sounding an alarm they would rather not hear.

CX. LEADERSHIP REQUIRES KNOWLEDGE

Shepherd:

Must understand.

Spiritual Principle

Good intentions cannot substitute for:

Wisdom.

CXI. LEADERSHIP REQUIRES SELFLESSNESS

Shepherd:

Feeds flock.

Not:

Self.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A leader who consumes the flock is no shepherd at all.

CXII. LEADERSHIP REQUIRES WATCHFULNESS

Sleeping through danger:

Failure.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual leaders must remain:

Awake.

CXIII. LEADERSHIP REQUIRES SOBRIETY

Wine dominates:

Their thinking.

Spiritual Principle

The leader must not become enslaved to:

Appetite.

CXIV. LEADERSHIP REQUIRES REALISM

Tomorrow is not:

Guaranteed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A faithful leader does not soothe people with false optimism when Scripture calls for warning.

CXV. ISAIAH 56 AS A MISSIONARY CHAPTER

Foreigner.

All nations.

Still others.

Gather.

Key Truth

God’s house is designed for gathering people beyond the boundaries many humans would have drawn.

CXVI. ISAIAH 56 AS A HOLINESS CHAPTER

Justice.

Right.

Sabbath.

No evil.

Covenant.

Service.

Spiritual Principle

Inclusion does not erase:

Holiness.

CXVII. ISAIAH 56 AS A PRAYER CHAPTER

> **“My house will be called a house of prayer.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prayer is not a ministry among ministries; it is one of the defining activities of the people who live near God.

CXVIII. ISAIAH 56 AS A LEADERSHIP CHAPTER

Watchmen.

Dogs.

Shepherds.

Spiritual Principle

God holds leaders:

Accountable.

CXIX. ISAIAH 56 AS A WARNING CHAPTER

Welcome:

For seekers.

Warning:

For complacent leaders.

Key Truth

The chapter comforts the humble outsider and frightens the self-satisfied insider.

CXX. TWELVE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 56

1. Salvation Near → Righteous Living Now

2. Foreigner → Member of God’s People

3. Dry Tree → Everlasting Name

4. Excluded → Welcomed

5. Outsider → Servant

6. Distance → Holy Mountain

7. Marginalization → Joy in God’s House

8. One Nation → All Nations

9. Scattered → Gathered

10. Watchman → Blindness

11. Shepherd → Greed

12. Watchfulness → Complacency

Key Truth

Isaiah 56 reverses assumptions: outsiders may become faithful worshipers, while insiders with titles may prove spiritually blind and corrupt.

CXXI. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 56

1. Salvation Calls for Righteous Living

Principle:

Grace prepares people to live rightly.

2. Justice Matters to God

Principle:

Covenant faith includes moral responsibility.

3. Foreigners Are Welcomed

Principle:

Ethnicity does not place a sincere seeker beyond God’s grace.

4. Eunuchs Receive Honor

Principle:

Human limitation does not cancel divine belonging.

5. God Gives an Everlasting Name

Principle:

Identity in God is stronger than earthly loss.

6. God’s House Is for Prayer

Principle:

Prayer belongs at the heart of worship.

7. God’s House Is for All Nations

Principle:

God’s saving purpose is global.

8. God Continues Gathering

Principle:

There are always still others in His redemptive purpose.

9. Leaders Must See

Principle:

Blind leadership exposes people to danger.

10. Leaders Must Warn

Principle:

Silence in the face of danger is failure.

11. Leaders Must Not Seek Their Own Gain

Principle:

Greed corrupts spiritual responsibility.

12. Complacency Is Dangerous

Principle:

Tomorrow should never be presumed upon as though judgment cannot come.

CXXII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What does God command in verse 1?

Maintain justice and do what is right.

Question 2

Why?

Because His salvation is near and His righteousness will soon be revealed.

Question 3

Who is called blessed?

The person who holds fast to faithful obedience.

Question 4

What old covenant practice is specifically mentioned?

Keeping the Sabbath.

Question 5

What moral command accompanies it?

Keep the hand from doing evil.

Question 6

Who fears being excluded in verse 3?

The foreigner.

Question 7

What does the eunuch call himself?

A dry tree.

Question 8

What does God promise faithful eunuchs?

A place, memorial, and everlasting name within His house.

Question 9

What does God say is better than sons and daughters?

The everlasting name He gives.

Question 10

What are the foreigners described as doing?

Binding themselves to the Lord, loving His name, serving Him, and holding fast to His covenant.

Question 11

Where will God bring them?

To His holy mountain.

Question 12

What will He give them there?

Joy in His house of prayer.

Question 13

What will God’s house be called?

> **“A house of prayer for all nations.”**

Question 14

Who quotes this verse in the New Testament?

Jesus.

Question 15

What does God promise in verse 8?

To gather still others beyond those already gathered.

Question 16

What do the beasts in verse 9 symbolize?

Coming judgment and danger against an unprotected people.

Question 17

How are Israel’s watchmen described?

Blind and lacking knowledge.

Question 18

How are they like dogs?

They cannot bark and fail to warn.

Question 19

What do they love?

Sleep.

Question 20

How are they described morally?

Greedy and never satisfied.

Question 21

What do the shepherds seek?

Their own way and their own gain.

Question 22

What attitude appears in verse 12?

Self-indulgent complacency.

Question 23

What false assumption do they make about tomorrow?

That it will simply continue or be even better.

Question 24

What is one of the main contrasts of Isaiah 56?

Faithful outsiders are welcomed while corrupt insiders are condemned.

Question 25

What does this teach about religious position?

Religious position alone does not prove faithfulness.

Question 26

What does this chapter teach about God’s mission?

He is gathering worshipers from all nations.

CXXIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 56 asks several searching questions.

Am I Maintaining:

Justice?

Righteousness?

Or only talking about them?

Does my belief in salvation make me more:

Faithful?

Or more:

Careless?

Is worship affecting:

My hands?

My behavior?

My choices?

Have I ever assumed someone was too:

Far away?

Different?

Marginalized?

To belong among God’s people?

Have I allowed cultural barriers to become:

Spiritual barriers?

Have I ever called myself:

A dry tree?

Useless?

Without future?

Without legacy?

Can I believe God can give:

A better name?

Do I love:

The Lord’s name?

Or merely religious:

Activity?

Is my church truly:

A house of prayer?

Is prayer:

Central?

Or:

Peripheral?

Would people from different backgrounds experience:

Welcome?

Truth?

Holiness?

Prayer?

Do I believe God is still gathering:

Others?

If I am in leadership:

Can I see?

Do I understand?

Will I warn?

Am I awake?

Am I serving:

The flock?

Or:

Myself?

Have I allowed greed to influence:

Ministry?

Am I assuming:

Tomorrow will be like today?

Have comfort and routine made me:

Spiritually sleepy?

CXXIV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Call Yourself a Dry Tree When God Has Promised You an Everlasting Name”

The eunuch saw:

Loss.

God saw:

Belonging.

Principle:

Your limitation does not have authority to define your eternal usefulness to God.

CXXV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“A House of Prayer Must Never Become a House of Exclusion”

God says:

> **“For all nations.”**

Principle:

The people of God should reflect the welcome of the God who gathers worshipers from every people.

CXXVI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The God Who Has Already Gathered Some Is Still Gathering Others”

Verse 8:

> **“I will gather still others.”**

Principle:

Never let the present size of God’s people shrink your expectation of His missionary purpose.

CXXVII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“A Watchman Who Will Not Warn Has Forgotten Why He Is on the Wall”

Leadership exists for:

Responsibility.

Principle:

Spiritual authority is not permission to sleep above the people; it is responsibility to remain awake for them.

CXXVIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Shepherd Becomes Dangerous When His Appetite Becomes Bigger Than His Love for the Sheep”

Greedy dogs.

Never satisfied.

Own gain.

Principle:

Self-interest eventually turns ministry from care into consumption.

CXXIX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Faith Trusts God with Tomorrow; Complacency Assumes Tomorrow Owes Us More of Today”

The leaders said:

Tomorrow:

Better.

God saw:

Judgment.

Principle:

Biblical faith never requires pretending the future will automatically favor us.

CXXX. GOD’S SALVATION IS CLOSE

Not distant.

Spiritual Principle

Near salvation calls for:

Ready lives.

CXXXI. RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL SOON BE REVEALED

God will act.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God will reveal later should shape how we live now.

CXXXII. BLESSING AND OBEDIENCE

Blessed is:

The one who does.

Spiritual Principle

Faith becomes:

Practice.

CXXXIII. THE SABBATH AS COVENANT SIGN

For Isaiah’s audience, Sabbath observance visibly expressed:

Covenant loyalty.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people must take His covenant claims:

Seriously.

CXXXIV. KEEP HANDS FROM EVIL

Not theoretical.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Righteousness must reach fingers, feet, finances, and daily choices.

CXXXV. FOREIGNER BOUND TO THE LORD

Identity transformed.

Spiritual Principle

The outsider becomes:

Devoted.

CXXXVI. “THE LORD WILL EXCLUDE ME”

A fear:

Answered.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not assume God’s answer before He has spoken.

CXXXVII. EUNUCH AS DRY TREE

Human conclusion:

No fruit.

Spiritual Principle

God sees forms of fruitfulness beyond:

Biological continuation.

CXXXVIII. CHOOSE WHAT PLEASES GOD

Heart orientation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Maturity asks not merely, “What is allowed?” but, “What pleases the Lord?”

CXXXIX. HOLD FAST TO COVENANT

Faithful grip.

Spiritual Principle

Perseverance matters.

CXL. A PLACE IN THE HOUSE

Not:

Outside wall.

Inside.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does more than remove exclusion; He creates belonging.

CXLI. BETTER THAN SONS AND DAUGHTERS

God can compensate in:

Unexpected ways.

Spiritual Principle

Earthly loss does not set the maximum limit on:

Heavenly blessing.

CXLII. NAME NEVER CUT OFF

Permanent identity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

People may forget your name; God never loses the names He has written into His covenant purpose.

CXLIII. FOREIGNERS MINISTER

Once outside.

Now serving:

Inside.

Spiritual Principle

Grace transforms:

Status.

CXLIV. LOVE THE NAME

Affection.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Service without love becomes duty; love gives service its heart.

CXLV. HOLY MOUNTAIN

Access.

Spiritual Principle

God brings people:

Near.

CXLVI. JOY IN PRAYER

Worship with:

Gladness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who invites prayer also gives joy in His presence.

CXLVII. ACCEPTED SACRIFICES

Welcome confirmed.

Spiritual Principle

God receives:

Sincere worshipers.

CXLVIII. HOUSE OF PRAYER

Identity of:

God’s house.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If the house is known for everything except prayer, something important has been misplaced.

CXLIX. ALL NATIONS

No ethnic monopoly.

Spiritual Principle

The God of Israel seeks worship from:

The world.

CL. SOVEREIGN LORD GATHERS

His sovereignty is:

Missionary.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The sovereign God does not merely rule nations; He gathers people from them.

CLI. EXILES OF ISRAEL

God keeps:

His promises.

Spiritual Principle

Gathering begins with:

Faithfulness.

CLII. STILL OTHERS

Beyond:

Expectation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is always room in God’s mission for people we have not yet met.

CLIII. BEASTS OF FIELD

Danger approaching.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment is:

Real.

CLIV. BLIND LEADERS

No perception.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When leaders cannot discern truth, people inherit confusion.

CLV. IGNORANT WATCHMEN

No knowledge.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual responsibility requires:

Understanding.

CLVI. MUTE DOGS

No warning.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Silence is not always peace; sometimes it is negligence.

CLVII. DREAMERS

Disconnected.

Spiritual Principle

Leadership requires:

Awake attention.

CLVIII. LOVE SLEEP

Comfort over:

Calling.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The bed becomes an idol when rest consistently replaces responsibility.

CLIX. GREEDY DOGS

Appetite controls:

Leadership.

Spiritual Principle

Unchecked desire corrupts:

Service.

CLX. NEVER SATISFIED

More.

More.

More.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When “enough” disappears from a leader’s vocabulary, danger has already entered the ministry.

CLXI. SHEPHERDS LACK UNDERSTANDING

They hold:

Role.

But not:

Wisdom.

Spiritual Principle

Authority without wisdom becomes:

Destructive.

CLXII. OWN WAY

Self-direction.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah 53 says sheep went their own way; Isaiah 56 says the shepherds did too.

CLXIII. OWN GAIN

Personal benefit.

Spiritual Principle

Selfishness is incompatible with:

Shepherding.

CLXIV. “COME, LET US DRINK”

Their invitation contrasts God’s invitation in Isaiah 55.

Isaiah 55

> **“Come… buy wine and milk without money.”**

Isaiah 56

> **“Come… let us get wine.”**

One invitation leads to:

Life.

The other to:

Complacency.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Not every invitation to “come” leads to God.

CLXV. ISAIAH 55’S WINE AND ISAIAH 56’S WINE

Isaiah 55:

Symbol of divine abundance.

Isaiah 56:

Self-indulgence and spiritual dullness.

Spiritual Principle

Context determines:

Meaning.

CLXVI. TOMORROW WILL BE BETTER

They assume:

Continuation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never build your theology of tomorrow on the comfort of today.

CLXVII. FALSE PEACE

They enjoy:

Pleasure.

While danger approaches.

Spiritual Principle

Comfort can hide:

Judgment.

CLXVIII. TRUE LEADERSHIP VERSUS CORRUPT LEADERSHIP

True Watchman

Sees.

Corrupt Watchman

Blind.

True Dog

Warns.

Corrupt Dog

Mute.

True Shepherd

Feeds flock.

Corrupt Shepherd

Feeds self.

True Leader

Stays awake.

Corrupt Leader

Loves sleep.

Key Truth

God’s standard for leadership is responsibility, vigilance, wisdom, courage, and selfless care.

CLXIX. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 56

1. Salvation Draws Near

God’s people are called to justice and righteousness.

2. Faithfulness Is Blessed

Worship and moral obedience belong together.

3. Foreigners Are Welcomed

Those once distant may bind themselves to the Lord.

4. Eunuchs Receive an Everlasting Name

Human limitation does not cancel covenant dignity.

5. Outsiders Become Servants

They love God’s name and minister to Him.

6. God’s House Becomes a House of Prayer for All Nations

Prayer and worldwide worship stand at the heart of God’s purpose.

7. God Continues Gathering

Still others will be added to those already gathered.

8. Judgment Approaches an Unprotected People

The failure of leaders exposes the flock.

9. Blind and Greedy Leaders Are Condemned

They fail to see, warn, understand, or serve.

10. Complacency Ends the Chapter

Self-indulgent leaders assume tomorrow will always improve.

Key Truth

Isaiah 56 moves from the nearness of salvation and worldwide welcome into a severe warning that those nearest religious privilege must still remain awake, faithful, selfless, and obedient.

CLXX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 56 begins:

> **“Maintain justice and do what is right.”**

Why?

Because salvation is:

Near.

That means hope should not make us:

Careless.

It should make us:

Faithful.

Then God speaks to people who feel:

Outside.

The foreigner says:

> **“The Lord will surely exclude me.”**

The eunuch says:

> **“I am only a dry tree.”**

Maybe you have said something like that.

I do not:

Belong.

I do not have:

What others have.

My background disqualifies:

Me.

My past excludes:

Me.

My limitations mean:

I have no future.

God says:

Do not say that.

He promises:

A place.

A name.

An everlasting identity.

That means your greatest identity is not:

What people call you.

What you lost.

What you never had.

It is:

What God names you.

Then God speaks of:

Foreigners.

People from outside Israel.

And says:

They may:

Bind themselves to Me.

Love My name.

Serve Me.

Hold My covenant.

And I will bring them:

Near.

Then comes:

> **“My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.”**

What a vision.

A place where:

People pray.

Nations come.

Outsiders belong.

Worship is accepted.

Joy is found.

God is sought.

That should challenge every:

Church.

Do people find:

Prayer?

Do they find:

Truth?

Do they find:

Holiness?

Do sincere seekers from different backgrounds find:

Welcome?

Or do they find:

Barriers God did not build?

Then God says:

“I will gather still others.”

Never assume the gathering is:

Finished.

There are:

Still others.

People not here yet.

People not reached yet.

People not saved yet.

People we do not know yet.

God is still:

Gathering.

Then the chapter suddenly turns.

The outsiders are:

Faithful.

The leaders are:

Blind.

The watchmen cannot:

See.

The dogs will not:

Bark.

The shepherds seek:

Gain.

They love:

Sleep.

This is a warning to everyone in:

Leadership.

Pastor.

Teacher.

Elder.

Deacon.

Parent.

Ministry leader.

Watchman.

Do you:

See?

Will you:

Warn?

Do you:

Understand?

Are you:

Awake?

Do you seek:

The flock’s good?

Or:

Your own gain?

Leadership is not:

A title.

It is:

A responsibility.

The watchman who does not watch is:

Dangerous.

The dog that never barks is:

Useless.

The shepherd who feeds himself is:

Corrupt.

Then they say:

> **“Tomorrow will be like today, or even far better.”**

That is:

Presumption.

They assume:

Nothing will change.

Judgment will not come.

Comfort will continue.

But Scripture warns:

Tomorrow is not:

Ours.

So Isaiah 56 gives us two pictures.

The faithful outsider says:

I want the Lord.

The corrupt insider says:

I want more.

One loves:

God’s name.

The other seeks:

His own gain.

One enters:

The house of prayer.

The other enters:

Self-indulgence.

One holds:

The covenant.

The other sleeps through:

Responsibility.

So where are we?

Are we pursuing:

Justice?

Are we living:

Righteously?

Are we welcoming those:

God welcomes?

Are we praying for:

The nations?

Are we expecting:

Still others?

Are we serving:

Selflessly?

Are we awake?

Or have we assumed:

Tomorrow will always look like today?

The call of Isaiah 56 is:

Live faithfully.

Welcome humbly.

Pray globally.

Serve selflessly.

Lead watchfully.

And never forget:

God is still gathering.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that Your salvation is:

Near.

Teach us to live:

Justly.

Righteously.

Faithfully.

Keep our hands from:

Evil.

Let our worship affect:

Our lives.

Father, thank You for welcoming:

Foreigners.

Outsiders.

Those who feel:

Excluded.

Those who believe they are:

Dry trees.

Remind every discouraged heart that You can give:

A place.

A name.

A future.

An everlasting identity.

Father, make us people who:

Love Your name.

Serve You.

Hold fast to Your truth.

Worship You faithfully.

Thank You that Your house is:

A house of prayer.

Teach our churches to:

Pray.

Teach our families to:

Pray.

Teach us personally to:

Pray.

Give us joy in:

Your presence.

Father, give us a heart for:

All nations.

Help us remember:

There are still others.

Still more to:

Gather.

Still more to:

Reach.

Still more to:

Invite.

Father, guard those in leadership from:

Blindness.

Ignorance.

Silence.

Laziness.

Greed.

Selfishness.

Complacency.

Give us watchmen who:

See.

Shepherds who:

Care.

Teachers who:

Understand.

Leaders who:

Serve.

Voices that:

Warn.

Hearts that:

Love.

Father, keep us from seeking:

Our own gain.

Keep us from assuming:

Tomorrow belongs to us.

Make us:

Awake.

Sober.

Faithful.

Ready.

May Your people become:

A praying people.

A holy people.

A just people.

A welcoming people.

A missionary people.

A watchful people.

And may those who once believed they did not belong discover:

Joy.

Belonging.

Identity.

And salvation.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"These I will bring to My holy mountain and give them joy in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations." — Isaiah 56:7**

Central Truth

The Lord calls His people to practice justice and righteousness because His salvation is near, welcomes foreigners and eunuchs who sincerely love Him and hold fast to His covenant, gives the once-excluded an everlasting name and joyful place in His house, declares that His house is a house of prayer for all nations, promises to gather still others into His people, and warns that blind, lazy, greedy, self-indulgent leaders place the flock in danger when they abandon watchfulness and seek their own gain.

Isaiah 56 in One Sentence

Isaiah declares that God's approaching salvation calls for justice and faithful living, promises belonging, an everlasting name, and joyful worship to foreigners and eunuchs who bind themselves to the Lord, reveals God's house as a house of prayer for all nations and His continuing purpose to gather still others, and then sharply condemns Israel's blind, silent, lazy, greedy watchmen whose self-serving complacency leaves the people exposed to judgment.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 57 — Peace for the Humble, No Rest for the Wicked

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 57 presents one of the sharpest contrasts in Isaiah:

Peace for the righteous.

Restlessness for the wicked.

The chapter begins unexpectedly with:

Death.

> **“The righteous perish, and no one takes it to heart.”**

From a merely human perspective, the death of a righteous person can appear:

Tragic.

Premature.

Unfair.

But Isaiah reveals that God may sometimes remove a righteous person before:

Greater evil arrives.

Verse 2 says:

> **“Those who walk uprightly enter into peace.”**

For the righteous, death is not portrayed as:

Chaos.

Abandonment.

Defeat.

It is:

Peace.

Rest.

Then the chapter turns sharply.

The righteous have entered:

Peace.

But the rebellious are confronted for:

Idolatry.

Spiritual adultery.

Sorcery.

Child sacrifice.

False worship.

Political dependence.

Self-reliance.

Israel has abandoned:

The Lord.

They have sought satisfaction under:

Every green tree.

On:

High hills.

Among:

False gods.

Through:

Foreign alliances.

Yet their pursuit has brought:

Weariness.

Verse 10 says:

> **“You grew weary from your many journeys.”**

That is one of idolatry’s great ironies.

False gods promise:

Strength.

Pleasure.

Control.

Security.

But produce:

Weariness.

Then God asks:

> **“Whom have you so dreaded and feared that you have lied, and not remembered Me?”**

Fear of others had displaced:

Fear of God.

God’s patience had been misinterpreted as:

Indifference.

Because He had been silent, they concluded:

He did not see.

He would not act.

They no longer feared:

Him.

Then God says something devastating:

> **“I will expose your righteousness and your works, and they will not benefit you.”**

Their religion could not:

Save.

Their works could not:

Justify.

Their idols could not:

Deliver.

A breath would carry them:

Away.

But then comes another great contrast:

> **“Whoever puts their trust in Me will inherit the land and possess My holy mountain.”**

The chapter moves from:

False security.

To:

True refuge.

Then God reveals Himself as:

High.

Exalted.

Eternal.

Holy.

Yet this infinitely exalted God says:

> **“I dwell in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit.”**

What a statement.

God is not made smaller by drawing near to:

The humble.

The One who inhabits:

Eternity.

Also dwells with:

The contrite.

Why?

> **“To revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.”**

God does not draw near to crush:

The repentant.

He draws near to:

Revive.

Then comes surprising grace.

God says:

> **“I have seen their ways, but I will heal them.”**

He sees:

Everything.

Their stubbornness.

Their greed.

Their wandering.

Yet healing is still:

Offered.

God promises:

Guidance.

Comfort.

Praise.

Peace.

Healing.

And that peace is announced to:

Those far.

Those near.

The New Testament later echoes this language in:

Ephesians 2:17.

But the chapter ends with:

A warning.

The wicked are compared to:

A restless sea.

Always moving.

Always churning.

Casting up:

Mud.

Mire.

Dirt.

Then God says:

> **“There is no peace… for the wicked.”**

This is the second time Isaiah has used nearly the same declaration, following Isaiah 48:22.

The issue is clear.

Peace cannot be separated from:

God.

The wicked can pursue:

Pleasure.

Idols.

Power.

Alliances.

Money.

Human wisdom.

But they cannot manufacture:

Shalom.

The central truth of Isaiah 57 is:

The Lord exposes the emptiness of idolatry, self-righteousness, human fear, and false security, yet promises healing, revival, comfort, and peace to those who trust Him with humble and contrite hearts; the righteous ultimately enter peace, while the wicked remain restless like a storm-tossed sea because lasting peace cannot exist apart from God.

I. THE RIGHTEOUS PERISH AND FEW UNDERSTAND

Isaiah 57:1 — Sometimes God Removes the Righteous Before Evil Comes

> **“The righteous perish, and no one takes it to heart; merciful people are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from the evil to come.”**

Isaiah addresses something difficult:

The death of righteous people.

The community sees:

Loss.

God may see:

Merciful removal.

Cross References

Ecclesiastes 7:15

The writer observes that in this fallen world righteous people may die despite their righteousness, while wicked people may sometimes live long despite evil.

Revelation 14:13

Those who die in the Lord are called blessed because they rest from their labor and their faithful works follow them.

Micah 7:2

Micah describes a society in which godly and faithful people seem to disappear from the land.

Spiritual Principle

A death that appears:

Premature.

To us.

May still occur within:

God’s providence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We see the life that ended.

God also sees the evil from which that life may have been spared.

II. “NO ONE TAKES IT TO HEART”

A spiritually insensitive generation fails to ask:

What does this mean?

Spiritual Principle

A society can become so morally numb that even the loss of good people creates no:

Reflection.

III. MERCIFUL PEOPLE ARE TAKEN AWAY

The righteous are described as:

Merciful.

Godly.

Faithful.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes the removal of godly people is itself a warning to a culture that no longer values godliness.

IV. THE RIGHTEOUS ENTER PEACE

Isaiah 57:2 — Rest Beyond Death

> **“Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death.”**

Death is described for the righteous as:

Peace.

Rest.

Cross References

Revelation 14:13

Those who die in the Lord are blessed and rest from their labors.

Job 3:17

Job speaks of the grave as a place where earthly turmoil ceases and the weary find rest.

Psalm 116:15

The death of God’s faithful people is precious in His sight and never insignificant to Him.

Spiritual Principle

For the righteous, death is not:

God losing control.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The grave is not peaceful because death is good; it is peaceful because the righteous belong to the God who receives them.

V. PEACE AT DEATH VERSUS RESTLESSNESS IN WICKEDNESS

Verse 2:

The righteous rest.

Verse 20:

The wicked cannot rest.

Key Truth

Isaiah 57 begins and ends with the same question: where can true rest be found?

VI. GOD SUMMONS THE REBELLIOUS

Isaiah 57:3 — Children of Spiritual Adultery

> **“But you—come here, you children of the sorceress, offspring of the adulterer and the prostitute!”**

The language is severe.

Why?

Because idolatry is not:

Harmless religious experimentation.

It is:

Covenant betrayal.

Cross References

Ezekiel 23:37

God describes idolatrous Israel and Judah as committing spiritual adultery by pursuing false gods.

Hosea 4:12

Israel seeks guidance from idols and practices spiritual prostitution by abandoning the Lord.

Jeremiah 3:9

Idolatry is portrayed as adultery committed with stone and wood.

Spiritual Principle

Idolatry is personal:

Betrayal.

VII. SPIRITUAL ADULTERY

God’s covenant is relational.

Therefore idolatry is not merely:

Wrong theology.

It is:

Unfaithfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

False worship is never only an intellectual mistake; it is the heart giving to another what belongs to God.

VIII. MOCKING GOD

Isaiah 57:4 — Rebellion and Deceit

> **“Who are you mocking? At whom do you sneer, and stick out your tongue? Are you not children of rebellion, offspring of deceit—”**

They mock:

God.

His prophets.

His truth.

Cross References

Ezekiel 16:15

Israel trusted in her own beauty and prostituted the gifts God had given her.

Jeremiah 2:20

God’s people rejected His yoke and pursued spiritual prostitution on the hills and under green trees.

Isaiah 57:20

The same wickedness soon receives the picture of a restless and polluted sea.

Spiritual Principle

Rebellion eventually becomes:

Contempt.

IX. THE TONGUE OF MOCKERY

The tongue reveals:

The heart.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When rebellion remains long enough, it can stop apologizing and begin mocking what is holy.

X. IDOLATRY UNDER EVERY GREEN TREE

Isaiah 57:5 — Lust and Child Sacrifice

> **“You who burn with lust among the oaks, under every green tree, who slaughter your children in the valleys, and under the clefts of the rocks?”**

Idolatry had become:

Sensual.

Violent.

Murderous.

Children were:

Sacrificed.

Cross References

2 Kings 16:3

King Ahaz followed detestable pagan practices and even sacrificed his son in fire.

Jeremiah 7:31

The people built high places where sons and daughters were burned in sacrifice, something God strongly condemned.

Leviticus 18:21

Israel was explicitly forbidden from sacrificing children to Molech and profaning God’s name.

Spiritual Principle

False worship eventually damages:

People.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Any god demanding the destruction of children is not worthy of worship.

XI. SIN MOVES FROM PRIVATE DESIRE TO PUBLIC DESTRUCTION

Lust.

Idolatry.

Sacrifice.

Death.

Spiritual Principle

Sin rarely stays:

Small.

XII. STONES BECOME THEIR PORTION

Isaiah 57:6 — Trading the Lord for Lifeless Idols

> **“The smooth stones of the ravines are your portion; they, they are your lot. Yes, to them you have poured out drink offerings and presented grain offerings. Shall I relent because of these things?”**

Israel had exchanged:

God.

For:

Stones.

Cross References

Jeremiah 2:25

God warns His people to stop pursuing foreign gods, yet they stubbornly insist on following them.

Psalm 16:5

David says the Lord Himself is his portion and inheritance.

Deuteronomy 32:37

God mockingly asks where the false gods are when judgment comes and whether they can provide refuge.

Spiritual Principle

Everyone chooses:

A portion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If the Lord is not your portion, eventually you will settle for something you have to carry instead of Someone who can carry you.

XIII. “THEY ARE YOUR LOT”

God exposes:

The exchange.

Spiritual Principle

Idolatry gives people:

Less than God.

XIV. HIGH PLACES AND FALSE WORSHIP

Isaiah 57:7 — A Bed on the High Hill

> **“You have made your bed on a high and lofty hill; there you went up to offer your sacrifices.”**

High places were repeatedly associated with:

Idolatrous worship.

Cross References

Ezekiel 16:16

Israel used high places for immoral and idolatrous worship.

Jeremiah 3:6

Israel committed spiritual adultery on high hills and beneath spreading trees.

2 Kings 17:10

Idolatrous pillars and sacred objects were established on high hills and under trees.

Spiritual Principle

The places meant to display devotion became:

Places of betrayal.

XV. IDOLATRY BEHIND THE DOOR

Isaiah 57:8 — Secret Symbols and Spiritual Infidelity

> **“Behind your doors and doorposts you have put your pagan symbols. Forsaking Me, you uncovered yourself to another; you climbed into their bed and embraced their covenant. You loved their bed, and gazed upon their nakedness.”**

The imagery is deliberately:

Graphic.

Because covenant betrayal is:

Serious.

Cross References

Ezekiel 8:10

Ezekiel sees hidden idolatrous images within Jerusalem, exposing secret corruption.

Deuteronomy 6:9

God’s words were meant to be written on doorposts, making Isaiah’s reference especially striking when pagan symbols replace covenant truth.

Ezekiel 16:17

Israel took gifts received from God and transformed them into idols used for spiritual prostitution.

Spiritual Principle

What should have displayed:

God’s Word.

Displayed:

Idolatry.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When another symbol takes the place where God’s Word belonged, the problem is deeper than decoration.

XVI. FORSAKING GOD

The heart of idolatry:

> **“Forsaking Me.”**

Spiritual Principle

Idolatry is always an:

Exchange.

XVII. SEEKING FOREIGN POWER

Isaiah 57:9 — Political and Spiritual Dependence

> **“You went to the king with ointment, increased your perfumes, sent your ambassadors far away, and humbled yourself, even to the grave.”**

Israel sought:

Foreign kings.

Political alliances.

Human protection.

Cross References

Hosea 12:1

Israel pursued alliances with foreign powers rather than trusting the Lord.

Ezekiel 23:16

God’s people became infatuated with powerful foreign nations and pursued political alliances with them.

2 Kings 16:7

Ahaz appealed to the king of Assyria for rescue instead of trusting God.

Spiritual Principle

Political power becomes an idol when it replaces:

Dependence on God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

An alliance can become idolatry when confidence in human power becomes greater than confidence in God.

XVIII. “EVEN TO THE GRAVE”

Their search for security was:

Self-humiliating.

Destructive.

Spiritual Principle

Idolatry eventually lowers:

The worshiper.

XIX. WEARY BUT UNWILLING TO STOP

Isaiah 57:10 — Sinful Persistence

> **“You grew weary from your many journeys, but you would not say, ‘It is hopeless.’**
> **You found renewed strength in your own hand; therefore you did not faint.”**

They were:

Exhausted.

But kept going.

Why?

Self-reliance.

Cross References

Jeremiah 2:25

Israel refuses to stop chasing foreign gods despite the weariness and humiliation involved.

Jeremiah 44:17

The rebellious insist on continuing their chosen practices despite prophetic warning.

Jeremiah 18:12

The people declare that warning is useless because they intend to continue following their stubborn hearts.

Spiritual Principle

Sin can exhaust a person without persuading them to:

Repent.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One of sin’s strangest powers is that people can become exhausted by it and still defend it.

XX. “YOU FOUND STRENGTH IN YOUR OWN HAND”

Self-reliance keeps rebellion:

Alive.

Spiritual Principle

Human strength can prolong:

Wrong choices.

XXI. WHOM HAVE YOU FEARED?

Isaiah 57:11 — Fear of Man Replaces Fear of God

> **“Whom have you so dreaded and feared that you have lied, and not remembered Me, nor taken it to heart? Is it not because I have long kept silent, that you no longer fear Me?”**

Fear caused:

Lying.

Forgetfulness.

Compromise.

Cross References

Jeremiah 2:32

God asks whether a bride can forget her ornaments, yet His people have forgotten Him for countless days.

Proverbs 29:25

Fear of man becomes a snare, but trust in the Lord brings security.

Jeremiah 3:21

Israel’s spiritual wandering is connected with forgetting the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Fear reveals:

What dominates the heart.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Whenever fear of people becomes stronger than fear of God, compromise is already close.

XXII. “YOU HAVE NOT REMEMBERED ME”

Forgetfulness leads to:

Unfaithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

Remembering God is:

Moral protection.

XXIII. GOD’S SILENCE MISUNDERSTOOD

God had:

Waited.

They concluded:

He did not care.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never mistake God’s patience for God’s approval.

XXIV. SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS EXPOSED

Isaiah 57:12 — Works That Cannot Save

> **“I will expose your righteousness and your works, and they will not benefit you.”**

Their claimed righteousness was:

False.

Their works were:

Useless as a defense.

Cross References

Ezekiel 33:13

Past claims of righteousness cannot protect someone who turns deliberately into sin.

Isaiah 64:6

Human righteousness contaminated by sin cannot establish a person as righteous before the holy God.

Romans 3:20

No one is justified before God through works of law; the law exposes sin.

Spiritual Principle

Religious works cannot hide:

Rebellion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Works used to cover sin eventually become evidence when God exposes the heart behind them.

XXV. IDOLS CANNOT SAVE

Isaiah 57:13 — Trust Determines Refuge

> **“When you cry out for help, let your collection of idols save you! The wind will carry them all off, a mere breath will blow them away. But whoever puts their trust in Me will inherit the land and possess My holy mountain.”**

The contrast:

Idols blown away.

Trusting people established.

Cross References

Jeremiah 2:28

God tells Judah to call upon the many gods they created and see whether any can save them in trouble.

Psalm 37:9

Those who hope in the Lord inherit the land, while evildoers are cut off.

Matthew 5:5

Jesus says the meek are blessed because they will inherit the earth.

Spiritual Principle

What cannot survive:

The wind.

Cannot be trusted with:

Your soul.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A god one breath can remove cannot be your refuge when eternity comes.

XXVI. “YOUR COLLECTION OF IDOLS”

Quantity does not create:

Power.

Spiritual Principle

Many false saviors do not equal:

One true Savior.

XXVII. TRUST IN GOD

The alternative to idolatry is:

Trust.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The heart will always seek refuge somewhere; wisdom chooses the refuge that cannot be blown away.

XXVIII. PREPARE THE WAY

Isaiah 57:14 — Remove the Obstacles

> **“And it will be said: ‘Build up, build up, prepare the way! Remove the obstacles out of the way of My people.’”**

The imagery recalls:

Isaiah 40.

A highway prepared.

Obstacles removed.

Cross References

Isaiah 40:3

A voice calls for preparing the Lord’s way and making a straight highway in the wilderness.

Malachi 3:1

God promises a messenger who prepares the way before the Lord’s coming.

Isaiah 62:10

God commands His people to prepare the road, build the highway, and remove stones for those returning.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration creates:

A road home.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not only call people home; He removes obstacles from the road of restoration.

XXIX. REMOVE THE STUMBLING BLOCK

Restoration involves dealing with:

Obstacles.

Spiritual Principle

Some things must be:

Removed.

Before progress can:

Continue.

XXX. THE HIGH AND EXALTED ONE

Isaiah 57:15 — God Dwells with the Contrite

> **“For this is what the high and exalted One says—He who lives forever, whose name is Holy: ‘I dwell in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.’”**

This is one of Isaiah’s greatest descriptions of:

God.

High.

Exalted.

Eternal.

Holy.

Yet also:

Near.

To:

The humble.

Cross References

Isaiah 66:2

God looks with favor upon the humble, contrite person who trembles at His Word.

Psalm 34:18

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those crushed in spirit.

Psalm 51:17

God does not despise a broken and contrite heart.

Spiritual Principle

God’s transcendence does not cancel:

His nearness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who inhabits eternity also makes room for Himself in the broken heart.

XXXI. “HIGH AND HOLY PLACE”

God is:

Above.

Distinct.

Majestic.

Spiritual Principle

God is not:

Common.

XXXII. “WITH THE CONTRITE”

The high God dwells:

Low.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Humility does not bring God down to our level; it brings us into the place where He promises to meet us.

XXXIII. CONTRITION

Contrition is not:

Self-hatred.

It is:

Brokenness over sin.

Humility.

Repentance.

Spiritual Principle

God revives:

Those who stop defending themselves before Him.

XXXIV. GOD REVIVES THE LOWLY

Why does He dwell with them?

To:

Revive.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not move near the contrite heart to finish crushing it.

He moves near to revive it.

XXXV. GOD WILL NOT ACCUSE FOREVER

Isaiah 57:16 — Divine Anger Has a Limit

> **“I will not accuse forever, nor will I always be angry, for then the spirit of man would grow faint before Me—the breath of life that I made.”**

God knows:

Human frailty.

He made:

Human breath.

Cross References

Psalm 103:9

God does not continually accuse or remain angry forever.

Micah 7:18

God delights in mercy and does not hold onto anger forever.

Lamentations 3:33

God does not willingly afflict or grieve people from His heart as though suffering itself were His delight.

Spiritual Principle

God’s discipline is:

Measured.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who corrects you also knows exactly how fragile the life He created can be.

XXXVI. THE CREATOR KNOWS HUMAN LIMITS

He knows:

How much.

How long.

Spiritual Principle

Divine discipline is never:

Careless.

XXXVII. GREED BROUGHT JUDGMENT

Isaiah 57:17 — Stubbornness Continued

> **“Because of their sinful greed I was angry, I struck them and hid My face in wrath, yet they kept on in their stubborn ways.”**

The specific sin highlighted:

Greed.

God:

Struck.

Hid His face.

Yet the people:

Continued.

Cross References

Jeremiah 6:13

From least to greatest, many were consumed with greed and dishonest gain.

Ephesians 5:5

Greed is identified as a form of idolatry incompatible with life in God’s kingdom.

Jeremiah 8:5

The people persistently hold onto deceit and refuse to return.

Spiritual Principle

Discipline does not automatically create:

Repentance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pain may stop behavior temporarily, but only repentance changes direction.

XXXVIII. GREED AS IDOLATRY

Greed says:

More will save me.

Spiritual Principle

Greed gives possessions the role belonging to:

God.

XXXIX. STUBBORN WAYS

Even after:

Correction.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A hard heart can turn discipline into another excuse instead of a doorway to repentance.

XL. “I HAVE SEEN THEIR WAYS”

Isaiah 57:18 — God Heals What He Fully Sees

> **“I have seen their ways, but I will heal them; I will guide them and restore comfort to Israel’s mourners,”**

What astonishing grace.

God sees:

Their ways.

Not partial.

Not edited.

Not cleaned up.

Yet:

> **“I will heal.”**

Cross References

Hosea 14:4

God promises to heal His people’s backsliding and love them freely.

Jeremiah 30:17

God promises to restore health and heal the wounds of His afflicted people.

Jeremiah 3:22

God calls His faithless people to return and promises healing for their unfaithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

God’s mercy is not based on:

Ignorance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not heal you because He missed what you did.

He heals while knowing exactly what He saw.

XLI. “I WILL HEAL THEM”

The answer to:

Spiritual disease.

Is:

Divine healing.

Spiritual Principle

Grace restores:

What sin damaged.

XLII. “I WILL GUIDE THEM”

Healing followed by:

Guidance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not only heal the wounds of wandering; He teaches the wanderer where to walk next.

XLIII. COMFORT FOR MOURNERS

Those grieving:

Sin.

Loss.

Judgment.

Receive:

Comfort.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration reaches:

The heart.

XLIV. PRAISE CREATED ON THEIR LIPS

Isaiah 57:19 — Peace to the Far and Near

> **“Creating praise on their lips. Peace, peace, to those far and near,’ says the Lord. ‘And I will heal them.’”**

God creates:

Praise.

Peace.

Healing.

Cross References

Ephesians 2:17

Paul says Christ came proclaiming peace to those who were far away and peace to those who were near.

Hebrews 13:15

Believers offer to God a continual sacrifice of praise from lips that confess His name.

Colossians 1:20

Peace and reconciliation are connected with Christ’s work through the blood of His cross.

Spiritual Principle

God’s healing produces:

Praise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The lips once shaped by mourning can become lips shaped by praise.

XLV. “PEACE, PEACE”

The repetition emphasizes:

Fullness.

Certainty.

Spiritual Principle

God gives:

True shalom.

XLVI. FAR AND NEAR

This reaches beyond:

Geography.

It suggests the widening reach of:

God’s peace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No one is too far for the God who announces peace to both far and near.

XLVII. EPHESIANS 2 AND ISAIAH 57

Paul echoes:

> **“Peace… to those far and near.”**

In Christ, those far away are:

Brought near.

Key Truth

Isaiah’s promise of peace receives a powerful New Testament fulfillment in Christ’s reconciling work.

XLVIII. THE WICKED ARE LIKE A TOSSING SEA

Isaiah 57:20 — Restless and Polluted

> **“But the wicked are like the tossing sea, which cannot rest, whose waves cast up mire and mud.”**

The sea:

Moves.

Churns.

Tosses.

Never settles.

And continually produces:

Filth.

Cross References

Jude 1:13

False and wicked people are compared to wild waves of the sea foaming up their shame.

James 1:6

A doubting person is compared to a wave driven and tossed by the wind.

Isaiah 48:22

Isaiah has already declared that there is no peace for the wicked.

Spiritual Principle

Sin produces:

Restlessness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The wicked heart may look calm for a moment, but without God its inner sea never learns how to be still.

XLIX. “CANNOT REST”

The issue is not:

Lack of opportunities.

It is:

Lack of reconciliation with God.

Spiritual Principle

External comfort cannot create:

Internal peace.

L. MIRE AND MUD

What is inside eventually:

Surfaces.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A restless heart eventually throws its hidden mud onto the shore.

LI. NO PEACE FOR THE WICKED

Isaiah 57:21 — The Final Verdict

> **“‘There is no peace,’ says my God, ‘for the wicked.’”**

Short.

Direct.

Final.

Cross References

Isaiah 48:22

The same warning appeared earlier: wickedness and true peace cannot coexist.

Romans 3:17

Sinful humanity is described as not knowing the way of peace.

Job 15:20

The wicked person experiences continual inward trouble and unrest.

Spiritual Principle

Peace cannot be:

Separated from righteousness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot reject the Prince of Peace and still possess the peace only He can give.

LII. PEACE IS NOT MERELY A FEELING

Biblical peace is:

Reconciliation.

Wholeness.

Right relationship.

Spiritual Principle

Temporary calm is not the same as:

Shalom.

LIII. THE CHAPTER BEGINS AND ENDS WITH PEACE

Verse 2:

Righteous enter:

Peace.

Verse 19:

God announces:

Peace.

Verse 21:

Wicked receive:

No peace.

Key Truth

Peace is the great dividing line of Isaiah 57.

LIV. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT DEATH

The righteous may:

Die.

Yet enter:

Peace.

Spiritual Principle

Physical death is not the final measure of:

Divine favor.

LV. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT PROVIDENCE

God may spare a righteous person from:

Coming evil.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Not every early departure is evidence that God withheld mercy.

LVI. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT IDOLATRY

Idolatry produces:

Adultery.

Violence.

Weariness.

Humiliation.

False security.

Spiritual Principle

Idols always take:

More than they give.

LVII. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT CHILD SACRIFICE

God condemns:

The destruction of children in false worship.

Spiritual Principle

True worship protects:

Life.

LVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT FALSE SECURITY

Stones.

Kings.

Alliances.

Works.

Idols.

None can:

Save.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Everything trusted instead of God eventually has to answer one question: can it save when judgment comes?

LIX. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR OF MAN

Fear led to:

Lies.

Forgetfulness.

Compromise.

Spiritual Principle

Fear of man can become:

A spiritual master.

LX. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S SILENCE

Silence does not mean:

Approval.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can be silent and still be watching everything.

LXI. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS

God will expose:

Works.

Spiritual Principle

Human righteousness cannot:

Replace grace.

LXII. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT TRUST

Trust in God brings:

Inheritance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The idols blow away; the one trusting God remains.

LXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT HUMILITY

God dwells with:

Contrite.

Lowly.

Spiritual Principle

Humility attracts:

Divine nearness.

LXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S HOLINESS

His name is:

Holy.

His dwelling:

High and holy.

Spiritual Principle

God’s nearness never reduces:

His holiness.

LXV. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S COMPASSION

He will not:

Accuse forever.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Holy One knows when correction has reached the point where the human spirit would otherwise faint.

LXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT GREED

Greed provokes:

Judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Greed is:

Spiritual rebellion.

LXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT HEALING

God sees.

Then:

Heals.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine healing begins with truth, not denial.

LXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT GUIDANCE

God heals.

Then:

Guides.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration includes:

Direction.

LXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT PRAISE

God creates:

Praise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some songs exist only because God healed the person who sings them.

LXX. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE

Peace belongs to:

The humbled.

Healed.

Reconciled.

Spiritual Principle

Peace is a gift:

From God.

LXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 57 TEACHES ABOUT WICKEDNESS

Wickedness is:

Restless.

Polluting.

Unstable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin promises freedom but produces a sea that never stops tossing.

LXXII. ISAIAH 56 AND ISAIAH 57

Isaiah 56

Corrupt leaders say:

Tomorrow will be better.

Isaiah 57

The righteous may be removed before:

Coming evil.

Key Truth

Complacent leaders fail to recognize the seriousness of a society moving toward judgment.

LXXIII. ISAIAH 55 AND ISAIAH 57

Isaiah 55

The wicked are invited:

Turn.

And God will:

Pardon.

Isaiah 57

God says:

> **“I have seen their ways, but I will heal them.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah’s message of repentance is not hopeless condemnation; mercy remains open to those who return.

LXXIV. ISAIAH 54 AND ISAIAH 57

Isaiah 54

Covenant of:

Peace.

Isaiah 57

Peace announced:

Far and near.

Spiritual Principle

God’s covenant peace continues expanding.

LXXV. ISAIAH 53 AND ISAIAH 57

Isaiah 53:

The Servant bears the punishment bringing:

Peace.

Isaiah 57:

Peace is offered:

Far and near.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The peace of Isaiah 57 cannot be separated from the Servant who bore the punishment for peace in Isaiah 53.

LXXVI. HIGH AND LOW

God:

High.

Contrite:

Low.

Yet they dwell:

Together.

Key Truth

The distance between God’s exaltation and human humility does not prevent fellowship; pride does.

LXXVII. THE HIGH GOD LOVES THE LOWLY

This reverses:

Human values.

People often seek:

The powerful.

God draws near to:

The contrite.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The doorway into fellowship with the High One is not self-exaltation but humility.

LXXVIII. CONTRITE DOES NOT MEAN WORTHLESS

Humility is not:

Believing you have no value.

It is recognizing:

Truth about yourself before God.

Spiritual Principle

Contrition produces:

Repentance.

Not:

Despair.

LXXIX. GOD REVIVES THE CONTRITE

The result of true humility:

Revival.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Brokenness before God is not the grave of spiritual life; it can become the birthplace of revival.

LXXX. GOD SEES WAYS AND STILL HEALS

Grace after:

Exposure.

Spiritual Principle

Healing begins when:

Hiddenness ends.

LXXXI. HEALING AND PEACE

God says:

> **“I will heal them.”**

Then:

> **“Peace, peace.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s peace is not cosmetic; it grows out of His work of healing.

LXXXII. FAR AND NEAR

No distance:

Too far.

Spiritual Principle

Grace crosses:

Distance.

LXXXIII. THE RESTLESS SEA

Picture of:

Inner disorder.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A life without God may have calm weather outside and still have a storm beneath the surface.

LXXXIV. MUD FROM WAVES

Sin produces:

Residue.

Spiritual Principle

Inner rebellion eventually creates:

Visible consequences.

LXXXV. NO PEACE

Not:

Little peace.

No peace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Peace cannot be manufactured where reconciliation with God is refused.

LXXXVI. TEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 57

1. Righteous Death → Peace

2. Idolatry → Weariness

3. False Gods → Windblown Nothingness

4. Fear of Man → Forgetfulness of God

5. Self-Righteous Works → No Benefit

6. High and Holy God → Dwelling with the Lowly

7. Divine Anger → Healing Mercy

8. Stubborn Wandering → Divine Guidance

9. Mourning → Praise

10. Humble Peace → Wicked Restlessness

Key Truth

Isaiah 57 contrasts everything false—idols, human fear, self-righteousness, greed, stubbornness, and wickedness—with the healing, revival, comfort, and peace available in the holy God.

LXXXVII. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 57

1. The Death of the Righteous Is Not Ultimate Defeat

Principle:

They enter peace and rest under God’s care.

2. Idolatry Corrupts

Principle:

False worship damages both the worshiper and others.

3. Idols Cannot Save

Principle:

What can be blown away cannot be your refuge.

4. Fear of Man Produces Compromise

Principle:

Remembering God protects the heart from unhealthy fear.

5. God’s Silence Does Not Equal Approval

Principle:

Divine patience should lead to repentance, not presumption.

6. Human Works Cannot Save

Principle:

False righteousness will eventually be exposed.

7. God Dwells with the Humble

Principle:

The High and Holy One draws near to contrite hearts.

8. God Revives the Brokenhearted

Principle:

Contrition is not the end; revival is God’s purpose.

9. God’s Anger Is Not Endless Toward the Repentant

Principle:

He remembers human frailty and delights in mercy.

10. God Sees and Heals

Principle:

His mercy is fully informed mercy.

11. God Gives Peace to the Far and Near

Principle:

His healing grace reaches widely.

12. Wickedness Cannot Produce Peace

Principle:

A restless heart cannot find true shalom apart from God.

LXXXVIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What happens to some righteous people before coming evil?

They may be taken away and spared from what is coming.

Question 2

What do the upright enter?

Peace and rest.

Question 3

How does God describe Israel’s idolatry?

As spiritual adultery, rebellion, deceit, and false worship.

Question 4

What terrible practice accompanied some of their idolatry?

Child sacrifice.

Question 5

What had they done with stones and idols?

Made them their portion and offered sacrifices to them.

Question 6

Where did they practice idolatry?

On high hills, under trees, in valleys, and even within their homes.

Question 7

What else did they trust besides idols?

Foreign kings, alliances, and human power.

Question 8

What did their many journeys produce?

Weariness.

Question 9

Why did they keep going?

They found confidence in their own strength.

Question 10

What had fear caused them to do?

Lie, forget God, and fail to take Him seriously.

Question 11

How did they misunderstand God’s silence?

They assumed His delay meant they did not need to fear Him.

Question 12

What will God expose?

Their supposed righteousness and works.

Question 13

Can their idols save them?

No.

The wind can carry them away.

Question 14

Who receives inheritance?

Those who trust the Lord.

Question 15

How is God described in verse 15?

High, exalted, eternal, and holy.

Question 16

With whom does this exalted God also dwell?

The contrite and lowly in spirit.

Question 17

Why does He dwell with them?

To revive them.

Question 18

Will God remain angry forever?

No.

Question 19

What specific sin is mentioned in verse 17?

Greed.

Question 20

Did discipline immediately change the people?

No.

They continued stubbornly.

Question 21

What does God say after seeing their ways?

> **“I will heal them.”**

Question 22

What else will He do?

Guide them and restore comfort.

Question 23

What will He create on their lips?

Praise.

Question 24

To whom does He announce peace?

Those far and near.

Question 25

What are the wicked compared to?

A tossing sea.

Question 26

Why is that sea significant?

It cannot rest and continually throws up mire and mud.

Question 27

What final declaration closes the chapter?

> **“There is no peace… for the wicked.”**

LXXXIX. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 57 asks several searching questions.

Have I Ever Misunderstood the Death of a Righteous Person?

Can I trust that God sees:

What I cannot?

Am I Living in a Way That Leads Toward:

Peace?

Or:

Restlessness?

What Is My Functional Idol?

Money?

Politics?

Approval?

Relationships?

Success?

Pleasure?

Security?

My own strength?

Is Anything Receiving the Trust That Belongs to:

God?

Am I Exhausted from Chasing Something That Cannot:

Save?

Have I Become Weary in sin but still unwilling to say:

“This path is hopeless”?

Whom do I:

Fear?

Has fear of people caused me to:

Compromise?

Lie?

Remain silent?

Disobey?

Have I mistaken God’s patience for:

Approval?

Am I depending upon:

My works?

My reputation?

My morality?

My accomplishments?

Instead of:

God’s grace?

Am I:

Contrite?

Lowly?

Teachable?

Or:

Proud?

Do I believe the High and Holy One wants to:

Revive me?

Is there greed in:

My heart?

Have I continued stubbornly after:

Correction?

Can I believe God when He says:

> **“I have seen their ways, but I will heal them”?**

Do I need:

Healing?

Guidance?

Comfort?

Peace?

Is my inner life like:

A tossing sea?

Am I looking for peace everywhere except:

God?

XC. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Never Mistake God’s Silence for God’s Approval”

Israel said:

God has remained silent.

Therefore:

No fear.

But God was:

Watching.

Principle:

The delay of judgment is mercy giving time for repentance, not permission to continue rebellion.

XCI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The God Who Lives Forever Also Lives with the Brokenhearted”

God is:

High.

Holy.

Eternal.

Yet:

Near.

Principle:

No height of divine majesty makes God inaccessible to the humble heart.

XCII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Sees the Whole Road You Walked and Can Still Say, ‘I Will Heal You’”

Verse 18:

> **“I have seen their ways, but I will heal them.”**

Principle:

Grace is not God overlooking the truth; grace is God acting mercifully after fully seeing the truth.

XCIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“A Wind-Blown Idol Cannot Anchor a Storm-Tossed Soul”

Idols:

Blown away.

Wicked heart:

Tossed like sea.

Principle:

Only an unshakable God can give peace to an unstable heart.

XCIV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Contrition Is Not Where God Leaves You Broken; It Is Where He Begins to Revive You”

God dwells with:

The contrite.

Why?

To:

Revive.

Principle:

Biblical brokenness leads toward restoration when it drives the heart into the presence of God.

XCV. THE RIGHTEOUS TAKEN AWAY

Mystery.

Spiritual Principle

Providence sometimes makes sense only from:

God’s side.

XCVI. THE RIGHTEOUS REST

Peace beyond:

The grave.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The world may call it loss while heaven calls it rest.

XCVII. IDOLATRY MOCKS GOD

False worship eventually produces:

Bold rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual compromise rarely remains:

Neutral.

XCVIII. CHILDREN SACRIFICED

The darkest result of:

Idolatry.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Whenever religion requires cruelty toward the innocent, it has revealed its false nature.

XCIX. STONES AS PORTION

A terrible exchange.

Spiritual Principle

What we worship becomes:

Our portion.

C. HIGH HILLS

Public idolatry.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin hidden in the heart eventually builds an altar somewhere.

CI. DOORPOST SYMBOLS

Household corruption.

Spiritual Principle

Idolatry moves:

Inside.

CII. ALLIANCES FAR AWAY

Searching everywhere except:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Distance traveled does not improve a false refuge.

CIII. WEARY JOURNEYS

Sin exhausts.

Spiritual Principle

False worship is:

Hard labor.

CIV. OWN HAND

Self-strength.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Human strength becomes spiritually dangerous when it keeps us strong enough to continue the wrong direction.

CV. FEAR OF OTHERS

Compromise begins:

Inside.

Spiritual Principle

Wrong fear rearranges:

Loyalties.

CVI. FORGETTING GOD

The deepest tragedy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The heart usually does not forget God accidentally; something else has become more important.

CVII. SILENT GOD

Patience misunderstood.

Spiritual Principle

God’s delay has:

Purpose.

CVIII. FALSE RIGHTEOUSNESS

Exposed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not grade religious appearance while ignoring the heart.

CIX. USELESS WORKS

Cannot:

Benefit.

Spiritual Principle

Self-righteousness has no:

Saving power.

CX. IDOLS IN THE WIND

Weakness exposed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Judgment eventually reveals which refuges were only decorations.

CXI. TRUST IN GOD

Stable refuge.

Spiritual Principle

Trust leads to:

Inheritance.

CXII. BUILD THE ROAD

Restoration needs:

Preparation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God removes obstacles because His purpose is to bring His people home.

CXIII. HIGH AND EXALTED

Majesty.

Spiritual Principle

God is infinitely:

Above us.

CXIV. LIVES FOREVER

Eternal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One offering peace is not temporary like the idols.

CXV. NAME IS HOLY

Purity.

Spiritual Principle

God’s character is:

Perfect.

CXVI. CONTRITE AND LOWLY

True spiritual posture.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride builds distance; contrition prepares the heart for communion.

CXVII. REVIVE THE LOWLY

Divine purpose.

Spiritual Principle

God breathes life into:

Broken spirits.

CXVIII. NOT ANGRY FOREVER

Mercy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Discipline may be severe without becoming endless rejection.

CXIX. BREATH GOD MADE

Creator remembers:

Creature.

Spiritual Principle

God understands:

Human weakness.

CXX. GREED

Sin of:

Appetite.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Greed is the belief that more of creation can give what only the Creator can provide.

CXXI. GOD HID HIS FACE

Discipline.

Spiritual Principle

Sin damages:

Fellowship.

CXXII. THEY KEPT GOING

Stubbornness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The saddest response to correction is determination to continue.

CXXIII. “I HAVE SEEN”

Nothing hidden.

Spiritual Principle

God’s healing is:

Truthful.

CXXIV. “I WILL HEAL”

Grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God sees the disease more clearly than we do and still speaks the possibility of healing.

CXXV. “I WILL GUIDE”

Direction.

Spiritual Principle

Healing has a:

Path.

CXXVI. “I WILL RESTORE COMFORT”

Tenderness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God knows the heart needs more than correction; it also needs comfort.

CXXVII. PRAISE ON THE LIPS

Restoration becomes:

Worship.

Spiritual Principle

Healing creates:

Testimony.

CXXVIII. PEACE TO THE FAR

Distance overcome.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is no distance too great for divine peace to travel.

CXXIX. PEACE TO THE NEAR

Religious proximity also needs:

Grace.

Spiritual Principle

Nearness to holy things does not eliminate the need for:

Reconciliation.

CXXX. RESTLESS WICKEDNESS

Motion without:

Rest.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The soul can be busy every day and still never arrive at peace.

CXXXI. MIRE AND MUD

Pollution produced.

Spiritual Principle

Sin does not merely disturb:

The sinner.

It spills outward.

CXXXII. NO PEACE

Final warning.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is no shortcut around reconciliation with God.

CXXXIII. ISAIAH 57 AS A PEACE CHAPTER

Righteous:

Peace.

Humble:

Peace.

Far and near:

Peace.

Wicked:

No peace.

Key Truth

Isaiah 57 teaches that peace is ultimately relational: it belongs to those reconciled to God, not merely those living in comfortable circumstances.

CXXXIV. ISAIAH 57 AS AN IDOLATRY CHAPTER

Sorcery.

Trees.

Stones.

High places.

Symbols.

Kings.

Alliances.

Spiritual Principle

Anything trusted, loved, feared, or obeyed above God can become:

An idol.

CXXXV. ISAIAH 57 AS A HUMILITY CHAPTER

High God.

Lowly heart.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest meeting place in the universe is where divine holiness meets human contrition.

CXXXVI. ISAIAH 57 AS A HEALING CHAPTER

God says:

I have seen.

I will heal.

I will guide.

I will comfort.

Spiritual Principle

Grace is:

Restorative.

CXXXVII. ISAIAH 57 AS A WARNING CHAPTER

Idols fail.

Works fail.

Self-strength fails.

Wickedness lacks peace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Everything outside God eventually reveals its inability to carry the weight of the soul.

CXXXVIII. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 57

1. The Righteous Enter Peace

Their death may spare them from coming evil.

2. Idolatry Is Exposed

False worship has corrupted Israel deeply.

3. False Worship Produces Violence and Shame

Even children are sacrificed.

4. Human Alliances Replace Trust in God

Israel seeks kings and foreign power.

5. Sin Produces Weariness

Yet stubbornness keeps the people going.

6. God Exposes False Righteousness

Works and idols cannot save.

7. The High and Holy God Draws Near to the Humble

He revives contrite hearts.

8. God’s Anger Gives Way to Healing Mercy

He sees the people’s ways and still promises healing.

9. Peace Is Announced to the Far and Near

Healing creates praise and reconciliation.

10. The Wicked Remain Restless

Without God there is no true peace.

Key Truth

Isaiah 57 moves from the quiet peace of the righteous through the exhausting restlessness of idolatry and finally to God’s gracious promise that humble sinners can be healed, revived, guided, comforted, and given peace.

CXXXIX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 57 begins with:

Death.

The righteous person is:

Gone.

People look around and say:

Why?

Isaiah reminds us:

We do not see everything.

Sometimes God sees:

Coming evil.

And the righteous enter:

Peace.

Then the chapter turns toward people who are:

Alive.

But spiritually:

Dead.

They have:

Idols.

High places.

Foreign alliances.

Religious ceremonies.

Pleasure.

Human strength.

Yet no:

Peace.

They travel:

Far.

They work:

Hard.

They become:

Weary.

But they refuse to say:

This road is hopeless.

That is one of the great tragedies of sin.

People can become exhausted by:

The very thing destroying them.

And still say:

I will keep going.

Maybe that describes someone today.

Tired of:

The addiction.

The bitterness.

The money chase.

The approval chase.

The relationship.

The compromise.

The secret sin.

The false security.

Yet unwilling to say:

Enough.

Isaiah says:

The idols will eventually:

Blow away.

Then God asks:

“Whom have you feared?”

That question matters.

Whose opinion controls:

You?

Whose rejection frightens:

You?

Whose approval do you need so badly that you would:

Compromise?

Lie?

Forget God?

Then God says:

I have been silent.

And you stopped fearing:

Me.

Never mistake God’s patience for:

Permission.

Then He exposes:

Self-righteousness.

Your works cannot:

Save.

Your idols cannot:

Save.

Your alliances cannot:

Save.

But:

“Whoever puts their trust in Me…”

There is still:

Refuge.

Then comes one of the greatest verses in Isaiah.

The God who is:

High.

Exalted.

Eternal.

Holy.

Says:

I also dwell with:

The contrite.

Think about that.

God inhabits:

Eternity.

And:

The broken heart.

God dwells:

Above creation.

And:

With the humble.

Why?

To:

Revive.

Not to:

Destroy.

If your heart is:

Broken.

Repentant.

Contrite.

Humble.

God is not saying:

Stay broken forever.

He says:

I will revive.

Then He says:

“I have seen their ways.”

Maybe that frightens you.

God has seen:

Everything.

The thought.

The action.

The compromise.

The stubbornness.

The wandering.

But the sentence does not end:

“I have seen their ways, therefore there is no hope.”

It says:

“I have seen their ways, but I will heal them.”

What grace.

He sees.

He heals.

He guides.

He comforts.

He creates praise.

He says:

“Peace, peace, to those far and near.”

But then the chapter ends with:

The sea.

Restless.

Tossing.

Mud.

Mire.

No rest.

That is wickedness.

It never produces:

Peace.

So Isaiah 57 leaves every reader with:

A choice.

The high and holy God who revives:

The humble.

Or:

The restless sea of self-directed wickedness.

One path leads to:

Peace.

The other:

No peace.

If you are:

Proud—

Humble yourself.

If you are:

Contrite—

Come near.

If you are:

Wounded—

Let God heal.

If you are:

Wandering—

Let God guide.

If you are:

Mourning—

Let God comfort.

If you are:

Far—

Hear:

Peace.

If you are:

Restless—

Stop asking idols to give you what only God possesses.

Because:

The wicked cannot manufacture peace.

But the Holy One can:

Create it.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are:

High.

Exalted.

Eternal.

Holy.

Yet You draw near to:

The humble.

The brokenhearted.

The contrite.

Thank You that Your greatness does not make You:

Distant.

Thank You that You dwell with the lowly to:

Revive.

Father, help us understand:

Life.

Death.

Providence.

When righteous people are taken away and we do not understand:

Give us faith.

Remind us that those who walk uprightly enter:

Peace.

Father, expose every:

Idol.

False refuge.

False security.

False righteousness.

Help us not trust:

Money.

Power.

Politics.

People.

Pleasure.

Our own strength.

Our own works.

Above:

You.

Forgive us for fearing:

People.

More than:

You.

Forgive us for mistaking Your patience for:

Approval.

Forgive us for continuing on roads that have already made us:

Weary.

Father, give us hearts that say:

Enough.

Turn us back to:

You.

Make us:

Contrite.

Lowly.

Teachable.

Repentant.

Father, thank You for saying:

“I have seen their ways, but I will heal them.”

You have seen:

Everything.

And still You call us toward:

Healing.

Guide us.

Restore us.

Comfort us.

Create praise on:

Our lips.

Give peace to:

Those far away.

Those near.

Those restless.

Those wounded.

Those grieving.

Father, calm the:

Tossing sea.

Remove the:

Mire.

Purify our:

Hearts.

Do not let us seek peace:

Apart from You.

Thank You for Jesus Christ,

the One through whom peace is proclaimed to:

Far.

Near.

Thank You for the Servant who bore the punishment that brings:

Peace.

Teach us to rest in:

Him.

Revive the lowly.

Heal the broken.

Guide the wandering.

Comfort the mourning.

And let our lives declare:

There is peace in the Lord.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“For this is what the high and exalted One says—He who lives forever, whose name is Holy: ‘I dwell in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.’” — Isaiah 57:15**

Central Truth

The high, holy, and eternal God exposes the emptiness of idolatry, human alliances, self-righteousness, greed, and fear-driven rebellion, yet graciously dwells with the humble and contrite to revive them, sees the full truth about His wandering people and still offers healing, guidance, comfort, praise, and peace; the righteous ultimately enter rest, while the wicked remain restless because lasting peace cannot exist apart from the Lord.

Isaiah 57 in One Sentence

Isaiah declares that the righteous may be taken from coming evil and enter peace, exposes Israel’s exhausting idolatry, spiritual adultery, false alliances, fear, greed, and useless self-righteousness, reveals the high and holy God dwelling with contrite and humble hearts to revive them, promises healing, guidance, comfort, praise, and peace to those far and near, and concludes that the wicked remain like a restless, polluted sea because there is no true peace apart from God.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 58 — True Fasting and Sabbath Delight

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 58 exposes one of the greatest dangers in religion:

Outward worship without inward righteousness.

The people of Judah were:

Fasting.

Seeking God.

Asking questions.

Observing religious practices.

Appearing eager to know:

God’s ways.

Yet something was deeply wrong.

Their worship looked:

Serious.

Their lives remained:

Selfish.

They fasted while:

Exploiting workers.

They humbled themselves outwardly while:

Quarreling.

They bowed their heads while:

Oppressing others.

They wore:

Sackcloth.

But refused to put away:

Sin.

God therefore commands Isaiah:

“Cry aloud, do not hold back!”

The prophet must expose the difference between:

Religious appearance.

And:

True devotion.

The people ask:

“Why have we fasted, and You have not seen it?”

They believe their religious activity should obligate:

God.

But God turns the question around.

The problem is not that:

He failed to see their fasting.

The problem is that:

He saw everything else too.

He saw:

The oppression.

The selfishness.

The fighting.

The hypocrisy.

The malicious speech.

The neglected hungry.

The unclothed poor.

The burdened worker.

Then God describes the fast He chooses.

It includes:

Loosing chains.

Removing yokes.

Freeing the oppressed.

Feeding the hungry.

Sheltering the homeless.

Clothing the naked.

Caring for one’s own family.

This does not mean fasting itself is:

Wrong.

Scripture contains many examples of sincere fasting.

The problem is:

Fasting separated from righteousness.

God refuses to allow religious discipline to become:

A substitute for obedience.

True fasting must be joined with:

Justice.

Mercy.

Compassion.

Repentance.

Then comes a repeated word:

“Then.”

Then:

Your light will break forth.

Then:

Healing will appear.

Then:

God will answer.

Then:

Darkness becomes light.

Then:

The Lord will guide.

Then:

He will satisfy.

Then:

He will strengthen.

Then:

You become a watered garden.

Then:

Ancient ruins are rebuilt.

True worship produces:

A transformed life.

And transformed lives become:

Repairers.

Restorers.

Builders.

Then the chapter closes with:

The Sabbath.

God does not describe the Sabbath merely as:

Restriction.

He calls it:

> **“A delight.”**

The people were to stop treating God’s holy day as another opportunity for:

Self-interest.

Instead they were to honor:

The Lord.

And the result would be:

> **“You will find your joy in the Lord.”**

That is the great destination of Isaiah 58.

Not merely:

Correct fasting.

Not merely:

Correct Sabbath observance.

But:

Delight in God Himself.

The central truth of Isaiah 58 is:

God rejects religious rituals that are separated from justice, mercy, humility, and obedience; the fasting He desires loosens oppression, feeds the hungry, shelters the vulnerable, clothes the needy, and cares for others, while genuine devotion produces light, healing, answered prayer, guidance, restoration, and ultimately delight in the Lord.

I. CRY ALOUD AND DO NOT HOLD BACK

Isaiah 58:1 — Sin Must Be Exposed

> **“Cry aloud, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Show My people their rebellion, and the house of Jacob their sins.”**

God does not tell Isaiah to:

Whisper.

Hint.

Avoid offense.

He says:

Cry aloud.

Speak like:

A trumpet.

Why?

Because the people were:

Religious.

But rebellious.

Cross References

Ezekiel 33:7

God appoints Ezekiel as a watchman responsible to hear His warning and faithfully communicate it to the people.

Micah 3:8

Micah declares that God’s Spirit gives him power, justice, and courage to expose Jacob’s rebellion and Israel’s sin.

Ezekiel 22:2

The prophet is instructed to confront Jerusalem with the reality of its sinful and violent practices.

Spiritual Principle

Love does not require:

Silence about sin.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A trumpet that refuses to sound because the alarm may offend someone has forgotten why it was made.

II. “SHOW MY PEOPLE THEIR REBELLION”

These are:

God’s people.

Yet they still need:

Correction.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant privilege does not eliminate:

Accountability.

III. THE PROPHET MUST NOT HOLD BACK

The message is:

Uncomfortable.

Still necessary.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faithful preaching does not invent sin, but neither does it hide sin God has already exposed.

IV. THEY SEEK GOD EVERY DAY

Isaiah 58:2 — Religious Appearance Without Obedience

> **“For day after day they seek Me; they seem eager to know My ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ask Me for just decisions and seem eager to draw near to God.”**

Outwardly:

Excellent.

They seek.

Ask.

Draw near.

But God says:

> **“As if.”**

That phrase exposes:

Hypocrisy.

Cross References

Ezekiel 33:31

The people sit before God’s prophet and listen to his words, but they do not put them into practice because their hearts pursue selfish gain.

Matthew 15:8

Jesus describes people who honor God with their lips while their hearts remain far from Him.

Titus 1:16

Some profess to know God but deny Him through their actions.

Spiritual Principle

Religious activity can exist without:

Spiritual reality.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Seeking God with your calendar means little if your conduct keeps rejecting His ways.

V. THEY “SEEM” EAGER

Appearance can fool:

People.

Not:

God.

Spiritual Principle

God evaluates:

The heart.

And:

The life.

VI. ASKING FOR JUSTICE WHILE PRACTICING INJUSTICE

They wanted:

God’s justice.

Without practicing:

Justice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

It is hypocrisy to demand that God be righteous toward us while refusing to be righteous toward others.

VII. “WHY HAVE WE FASTED?”

Isaiah 58:3 — Religious Performance and Exploitation

> **“‘Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and You have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and You take no notice?’ Yet on the day of your fasting you do as you please and exploit all your workers.”**

They expected fasting to:

Earn attention.

They thought:

We did the ritual.

Why did God not respond?

God answers:

I saw.

Everything.

Cross References

Zechariah 7:5

God asks whether Israel’s fasting was truly directed toward Him or centered on themselves.

Matthew 6:16

Jesus warns against fasting for outward appearance and public admiration.

Malachi 3:14

The people complain that serving God seems useless when they do not receive the outcomes they expected.

Spiritual Principle

Religious discipline cannot purchase:

God’s favor.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not impressed by the hunger in your stomach while you ignore the suffering caused by your hands.

VIII. “YOU DO AS YOU PLEASE”

Their fast had not produced:

Submission.

Spiritual Principle

True worship changes:

Self-will.

IX. THEY EXPLOIT WORKERS

Their religion and business ethics were:

Disconnected.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who sees you fast also sees how you treat people who work for you.

X. FASTING THAT ENDS IN FIGHTING

Isaiah 58:4 — Quarreling and Wicked Fists

> **“Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.”**

They deny themselves:

Food.

But not:

Anger.

Pride.

Violence.

Cross References

James 4:1

James explains that quarrels and conflicts arise from sinful desires battling within people.

1 Corinthians 11:18

Paul rebukes divisions among believers that corrupted their gathering and worship.

Proverbs 20:3

Avoiding unnecessary strife is honorable, while foolish people rush into quarrels.

Spiritual Principle

Self-denial without self-control is:

Incomplete.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A person can empty his stomach and still leave his heart full of anger.

XI. “EXPECT YOUR VOICE TO BE HEARD”

Prayer and life are:

Connected.

Spiritual Principle

God refuses to be manipulated by:

Ritual.

XII. THE FAST GOD DOES NOT CHOOSE

Isaiah 58:5 — Outward Humility Alone Is Not Enough

> **“Is this the kind of fast I have chosen—only a day for people to humble themselves? Is it only for bowing one’s head like a reed and for lying in sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord?”**

Bowed head.

Sackcloth.

Ashes.

All can be legitimate.

But outward posture without inward repentance becomes:

Theater.

Cross References

Zechariah 7:5

God questions whether ceremonial fasting truly centered on Him.

Joel 2:13

God calls the people to tear their hearts rather than merely their garments and return sincerely to Him.

Matthew 6:16

Jesus warns against deliberately appearing miserable so others will notice fasting.

Spiritual Principle

God desires:

Heart humility.

Not:

Religious acting.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A bowed head means little if the heart underneath it is still standing proudly.

XIII. SACKCLOTH WITHOUT REPENTANCE

External symbols can become:

Substitutes.

Spiritual Principle

Symbols are valuable only when they express:

Reality.

XIV. THE FAST GOD CHOOSES

Isaiah 58:6 — Freedom from Oppression

> **“Is not this the fast I have chosen: to loose the chains of wickedness, to untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?”**

God moves from:

Ritual.

To:

Justice.

Loose.

Untie.

Free.

Break.

Cross References

Luke 4:18

Jesus announces good news to the poor, liberty to captives, recovery of sight, and freedom for the oppressed.

Isaiah 61:1

The Spirit-anointed mission includes proclaiming freedom to captives and release to those bound.

Psalm 146:7

The Lord executes justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry, and sets prisoners free.

Spiritual Principle

True devotion produces concern for:

Freedom.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not looking for people who merely look humbled before Him while keeping others under their feet.

XV. LOOSE THE CHAINS

Some oppression is:

Systematic.

Relational.

Economic.

Personal.

Spiritual Principle

God cares about:

Burdened people.

XVI. BREAK EVERY YOKE

A yoke represents:

Burden.

Domination.

Oppression.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If our religion strengthens the yoke on someone else's neck, we have misunderstood the heart of God.

XVII. SHARE YOUR BREAD

Isaiah 58:7 — Practical Compassion

> **"Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh and blood?"**

True fasting moves resources:

Toward need.

Food.

Shelter.

Clothing.

Family responsibility.

Cross References

Matthew 25:35

Jesus identifies acts of feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, and caring for the needy as expressions of service rendered to Him.

James 1:27

Pure religion includes practical care for vulnerable people along with moral purity.

Ezekiel 18:7

A righteous person does not oppress others but gives food to the hungry and clothing to the naked.

Spiritual Principle

Compassion must become:

Action.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The bread you do not eat during a fast means little if you refuse to share bread with someone who has none.

XVIII. PROVIDE SHELTER

Faith notices:

Displacement.

Homelessness.

Vulnerability.

Spiritual Principle

Mercy is:

Practical.

XIX. CLOTHE THE NAKED

Need must not merely be:

Observed.

It must be:

Answered.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Seeing need without responding can become another form of hiding.

XX. “DO NOT HIDE YOURSELF”

Some people hide from:

Responsibility.

Spiritual Principle

True spirituality does not use religion to escape:

Human obligation.

XXI. THEN YOUR LIGHT WILL BREAK FORTH

Isaiah 58:8 — Light, Healing, Righteousness, Glory

> **“Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.”**

Notice:

Then.

Obedience leads into:

Blessing.

Cross References

Matthew 5:16

Jesus tells His followers to let their light shine so others see good works and glorify the Father.

Malachi 4:2

Those who fear God are promised healing and righteousness pictured like the rising sun.

Isaiah 52:12

God promises to go before His people and serve as their rear guard.

Spiritual Principle

True worship produces:

Visible light.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When compassion becomes visible, light becomes visible.

XXII. LIGHT LIKE THE DAWN

Gradual darkness gives way to:

Morning.

Spiritual Principle

Obedience changes:

Atmosphere.

XXIII. HEALING APPEARS

Hypocrisy wounds:

Community.

Righteousness begins:

Repair.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some healing begins when people stop asking God only to bless them and begin obeying Him toward others.

XXIV. RIGHTEOUSNESS GOES BEFORE

Character prepares:

The road.

Spiritual Principle

Righteousness becomes:

Testimony.

XXV. GLORY AS REAR GUARD

God behind:

Protecting.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God’s people walk in His ways, His glory becomes a better defense than religious appearance.

XXVI. “HERE I AM”

Isaiah 58:9 — Answered Prayer and Removed Oppression

> **“Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and He will say, ‘Here I am.’ If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk,”**

The people complained:

God does not answer.

God says:

Deal with:

The yoke.

The finger.

The speech.

Then:

Call.

Cross References

Isaiah 65:24

God promises a day when He answers before His people finish calling.

1 John 3:22

Confidence in prayer is connected with obedience and doing what pleases God.

Psalm 34:15

The Lord watches over the righteous and listens to their cries.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer cannot be separated from:

Character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before asking why heaven seems silent, ask whether God has already pointed to something on earth that needs to change.

XXVII. THE POINTING FINGER

Accusation.

Contempt.

Blame.

Spiritual Principle

Religion can coexist with:

Cruel speech.

But true righteousness cannot.

XXVIII. MALICIOUS TALK

Words matter.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A fasting mouth should also become a disciplined mouth.

XXIX. GIVE YOURSELF TO THE HUNGRY

Isaiah 58:10 — Light in Darkness

> **“And if you give yourself to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.”**

Not merely:

Give food.

But:

Give yourself.

Cross References

Proverbs 11:25

The generous person is refreshed, and the one who refreshes others will also be refreshed.

Daniel 12:3

Those who lead others toward righteousness are pictured shining brightly.

Matthew 5:16

Good works become visible light that directs glory toward God.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical compassion costs:

Something personal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not call us merely to throw help toward hurting people; He calls us to give ourselves.

XXX. LIGHT IN DARKNESS

Darkness is overcome by:

Faithful action.

Spiritual Principle

Mercy shines.

XXXI. NIGHT LIKE NOONDAY

The transformation is:

Dramatic.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can turn the darkest moral night into noonday when His people begin walking in His light.

XXXII. THE LORD WILL GUIDE YOU ALWAYS

Isaiah 58:11 — The Well-Watered Garden

> **“The Lord will guide you always; He will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your bones. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.”**

Four promises:

Guidance.

Satisfaction.

Strength.

Fruitfulness.

Cross References

Jeremiah 31:12

God’s restored people are compared to a well-watered garden and are promised abundance under His care.

John 4:14

Jesus describes the life He gives as water becoming an enduring spring within the believer.

Psalm 23:2

The Shepherd leads His people beside quiet waters and provides what they need.

Spiritual Principle

God nourishes those who live:

His way.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can make a garden out of a life surrounded by scorched land.

XXXIII. GUIDANCE ALWAYS

Not occasionally:

Always.

Spiritual Principle

God’s presence is:

Continual.

XXXIV. SATISFACTION IN A SUN-SCORCHED LAND

Environment:

Dry.

Soul:

Supplied.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not need your surroundings to become fertile before He can sustain you.

XXXV. STRENGTHEN YOUR BONES

Inner strength.

Spiritual Principle

God restores:

Vitality.

XXXVI. WELL-WATERED GARDEN

Fruitfulness.

Beauty.

Life.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The person who pours himself out for others does not become empty when God is the spring.

XXXVII. WATERS THAT NEVER FAIL

Human resources:

Run out.

God:

Does not.

Spiritual Principle

Dependence belongs on:

The unfailing Source.

XXXVIII. REBUILDING ANCIENT RUINS

Isaiah 58:12 — Repairers and Restorers

> **“Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the foundations of many generations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.”**

This is a powerful identity.

Not:

Destroyer.

Repairer.

Not:

Abandoner.

Restorer.

Cross References

Amos 9:11

God promises to rebuild what has fallen and restore ruins.

Ezekiel 22:30

God searches for someone willing to stand in the gap and repair what is broken.

Isaiah 61:4

God’s restored people rebuild ancient ruins and renew devastated places.

Spiritual Principle

True religion repairs:

What sin has broken.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not save people merely to admire ruins; He raises repairers who rebuild them.

XXXIX. FOUNDATIONS OF MANY GENERATIONS

Restoration must be:

Generational.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness today can strengthen:

Tomorrow.

XL. REPAIRER OF BROKEN WALLS

Broken walls represent:

Exposure.

Weakness.

Loss.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some believers are called to become the answer to breaches they once only complained about.

XLI. RESTORER OF STREETS

The goal is not just walls:

But life.

Streets.

Homes.

Community.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration returns:

Habitable life.

XLII. HONORING THE SABBATH

Isaiah 58:13 — Calling God’s Day a Delight

> **“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 or doing as you please or speaking idle words,”**

Three repeated ideas:

Not your own way.

Not your own pleasure.

Not empty speech.

Instead:

Delight.

Honor.

Cross References

Exodus 20:8

Israel is commanded to remember the Sabbath and set it apart as holy.

Nehemiah 13:18

Nehemiah rebukes Sabbath desecration because it repeated covenant unfaithfulness.

Isaiah 56:2

Isaiah has already connected Sabbath faithfulness with covenant obedience.

Spiritual Principle

God’s holy day was meant to redirect attention from:

Self.

To:

God.

XLIII. “CALL THE SABBATH A DELIGHT”

Not merely:

Duty.

Delight.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God never intended holiness to mean learning how to endure Him.

XLIV. HONOR THE DAY

The issue is:

God-centeredness.

Spiritual Principle

Sacred time teaches:

Priority.

XLV. “NOT GOING YOUR OWN WAY”

This echoes the larger biblical problem:

Self-direction.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Many spiritual problems begin when “my way” becomes more important than “God’s way.”

XLVI. IDLE WORDS

Even speech belongs under:

God’s lordship.

Spiritual Principle

Worship includes:

The tongue.

XLVII. JOY IN THE LORD

Isaiah 58:14 — The Highest Blessing

> **“Then you will find your joy in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride in triumph on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob.’ For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”**

The greatest promise is not:

Prosperity.

Land.

Inheritance.

It is:

> **“Joy in the Lord.”**

Cross References

Psalm 37:4

Those who delight themselves in the Lord find their deepest desires reshaped and answered in Him.

Deuteronomy 32:13

God is pictured bringing His people into abundance upon the heights of the land.

Deuteronomy 33:29

Israel is called blessed because the Lord saves, protects, and grants triumph over enemies.

Spiritual Principle

The goal of worship is:

God Himself.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If obedience gives you everything except delight in God, you have missed the highest blessing.

XLVIII. “THE MOUTH OF THE LORD HAS SPOKEN”

Final authority.

Spiritual Principle

The promise stands because:

God said it.

XLIX. WHAT ISAIAH 58 TEACHES ABOUT HYPOCRISY

Religious acts.

Unrighteous lives.

Spiritual Principle

God refuses to separate:

Worship.

From:

Conduct.

L. WHAT ISAIAH 58 TEACHES ABOUT FASTING

Fasting is not condemned.

Hypocritical fasting is.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The value of a fast is not measured only by what you refuse to eat, but by what God changes in your heart and life.

LI. WHAT ISAIAH 58 TEACHES ABOUT JUSTICE

Break yokes.

Free oppressed.

Stop exploitation.

Spiritual Principle

Justice belongs inside:

Biblical spirituality.

LII. WHAT ISAIAH 58 TEACHES ABOUT COMPASSION

Feed.

Shelter.

Clothe.

Care.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Compassion that never leaves the heart to reach the hands is still unfinished.

LIII. WHAT ISAIAH 58 TEACHES ABOUT PRAYER

Prayer and obedience are:

Connected.

Spiritual Principle

We cannot deliberately ignore God’s commands while demanding:

His response.

LIV. WHAT ISAIAH 58 TEACHES ABOUT SPEECH

Pointing finger.

Malicious talk.

Idle words.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah 58 treats the tongue as part of worship.

LV. WHAT ISAIAH 58 TEACHES ABOUT LIGHT

Compassion causes:

Light.

Spiritual Principle

Righteous action becomes:

Witness.

LVI. WHAT ISAIAH 58 TEACHES ABOUT HEALING

Healing follows:

Repentance and restored relationships.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Not every wound is physical; some communities need moral healing.

LVII. WHAT ISAIAH 58 TEACHES ABOUT GUIDANCE

The Lord guides:

Always.

Spiritual Principle

God leads people who desire:

His ways.

LVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 58 TEACHES ABOUT SATISFACTION

The sun-scorched land cannot stop:

God’s supply.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can satisfy you in a dry place without first moving you to a wet one.

LIX. WHAT ISAIAH 58 TEACHES ABOUT RESTORATION

Rebuild ruins.

Repair walls.

Restore streets.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption makes:

Builders.

LX. WHAT ISAIAH 58 TEACHES ABOUT SABBATH

For Israel, the Sabbath was:

Holy.

Covenantal.

A delight.

Spiritual Principle

Sacred rest teaches dependence on:

God.

LXI. WHAT ISAIAH 58 TEACHES ABOUT DELIGHT

The destination:

Joy in the Lord.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely want your religious schedule; He wants your delight.

LXII. ISAIAH 56 AND ISAIAH 58

Isaiah 56

Keep the Sabbath.

Practice righteousness.

Isaiah 58

Do not reduce Sabbath or fasting to:

Empty ritual.

Key Truth

The outward covenant signs matter only when joined with inward and practical faithfulness.

LXIII. ISAIAH 57 AND ISAIAH 58

Isaiah 57

God dwells with:

The contrite.

Isaiah 58

God rejects counterfeit:

Humility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True contrition revives the heart; fake humility only bows the head.

LXIV. ISAIAH 55 AND ISAIAH 58

Isaiah 55

Listen to God and receive:

True satisfaction.

Isaiah 58

Religious people ask why God does not:

Answer.

Spiritual Principle

Listening to God must precede demanding:

From God.

LXV. ISAIAH 52 AND ISAIAH 58

Isaiah 52

God is:

Rear guard.

Isaiah 58

The glory of the Lord becomes:

Rear guard.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who guarded the redeemed exiles still guards people walking in obedient righteousness.

LXVI. ISAIAH 61 AND ISAIAH 58

Isaiah 58:

Free oppressed.

Repair ruins.

Isaiah 61:

Liberty.

Rebuilding.

Restoration.

Key Truth

True worship participates in the restorative character of God’s kingdom.

LXVII. JESUS AND TRUE FASTING

Jesus taught that fasting should not become:

Performance.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual discipline must remain:

God-centered.

LXVIII. JESUS AND THE HUNGRY

Matthew 25 connects care for:

The hungry.

The stranger.

The naked.

With:

Service to Christ.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot claim to love the King while remaining indifferent to the people He tells you to see.

LXIX. FASTING AND JUSTICE

The fast God chooses has:

Social consequences.

Spiritual Principle

Private devotion should produce:

Public righteousness.

LXX. FASTING AND COMPASSION

The hungry become:

Central.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True fasting creates room not merely in the stomach but in the heart for someone else’s need.

LXXI. FASTING AND FREEDOM

Chains.

Yokes.

Oppression.

Spiritual Principle

God’s heart moves toward:

Liberation from unjust bondage.

LXXII. FASTING AND FAMILY

> **“Do not hide yourself from your own flesh and blood.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

It is possible to appear compassionate publicly while neglecting responsibilities privately.

LXXIII. RELIGIOUS HYPOCRISY

Looks near to:

God.

Lives far from:

His heart.

Spiritual Principle

Hypocrisy is:

Contradiction.

LXXIV. THE DANGER OF TRANSACTIONAL RELIGION

They say:

We fasted.

Why did You not act?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual disciplines are not coins inserted into heaven to purchase the answer we want.

LXXV. GOD SEES THE WORKER

The employer fasts.

Worker suffers.

God notices:

Both.

Spiritual Principle

God’s worship standards extend into:

Economics.

LXXVI. GOD SEES THE QUARREL

Religious observance does not hide:

Conflict.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot cover a clenched fist with sackcloth and call it holiness.

LXXVII. BOWED LIKE A REED

Flexible externally.

Stiff internally.

Spiritual Principle

Posture cannot replace:

Repentance.

LXXVIII. SACKCLOTH AND ASHES

Useful symbol.

Useless disguise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A symbol of repentance becomes hypocrisy when repentance itself is missing.

LXXIX. LOOSE WICKED CHAINS

Freedom begins by confronting:

Injustice.

Spiritual Principle

Righteousness acts.

LXXX. UNTIE THE YOKE

Some burdens were created by:

People.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not ask God to remove burdens you insist on placing on someone else.

LXXXI. SET THE OPPRESSED FREE

Freedom.

Spiritual Principle

God values:

Dignity.

LXXXII. BREAK EVERY YOKE

Not merely loosen:

Break.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some injustices do not need adjustment; they need removal.

LXXXIII. SHARE BREAD

Hospitality begins with:

What you have.

Spiritual Principle

Generosity requires:

Release.

LXXXIV. SHELTER THE WANDERER

Make room.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who gives us shelter teaches us not to be indifferent to those without it.

LXXXV. CLOTHE THE NAKED

Preserve:

Dignity.

Spiritual Principle

Compassion sees:

Embarrassment.

Need.

Humanity.

LXXXVI. DO NOT HIDE

Indifference often begins with:

Avoidance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If you never look at suffering, you can always tell yourself there was nothing you could do.

LXXXVII. LIGHT BREAKS FORTH

The result is:

Visible.

Spiritual Principle

Righteousness shines.

LXXXVIII. DAWN

Night ends:

Gradually.

Then decisively.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One obedient dawn can begin after a long religious night.

LXXXIX. HEALING QUICKLY APPEARS

Transformation follows:

Repentance.

Spiritual Principle

Restored obedience can begin repairing:

Long damage.

XC. GLORY BEHIND

Protection.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You do not need hypocrisy to protect your reputation when God’s glory guards your path.

XCI. CALL AND GOD ANSWERS

Prayer restored.

Spiritual Principle

Fellowship deepens with:

Obedience.

XCII. “HERE I AM”

What beautiful words.

God’s presence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The people wanted God to notice them; true repentance brings them to the place where God says, “Here I am.”

XCIII. REMOVE THE POINTING FINGER

Blame culture.

Spiritual Principle

Mercy and accusation cannot rule the heart:

Together.

XCIV. REMOVE MALICIOUS SPEECH

Words can:

Oppress.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some yokes are made from wood; others are made from words.

XCV. GIVE YOURSELF

Beyond:

Possessions.

Spiritual Principle

Love becomes:

Personal.

XCVI. SATISFY THE AFFLICTED

Not merely:

Acknowledge.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Compassion asks not only, “Did I notice?” but, “Did I help satisfy the need?”

XCVII. LIGHT RISES IN DARKNESS

Faithful living has:

Witness.

Spiritual Principle

Holiness brightens:

Dark places.

XCVIII. NIGHT BECOMES NOON

Radical change.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can transform a dark reputation through a genuinely transformed life.

XCIX. ALWAYS GUIDED

God’s response:

Leadership.

Spiritual Principle

Obedience and guidance are:

Connected.

C. SATISFIED IN DROUGHT

Divine supply.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God is the source, drought becomes the background rather than the ending.

CI. STRONG BONES

Durability.

Spiritual Principle

God gives strength to:

Continue.

CII. WATERED GARDEN

Life overflowing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A life watered by God becomes a place where others can find shade and fruit.

CIII. UNFAILING SPRING

Reliability.

Spiritual Principle

God’s supply is:

Deeper than circumstances.

CIV. ANCIENT RUINS

Damage from:

Generations.

Spiritual Principle

Old brokenness can still be:

Rebuilt.

CV. FOUNDATIONS OF MANY GENERATIONS

Long-term restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may use one faithful generation to repair damage inherited from several unfaithful ones.

CVI. REPAIRER OF BROKEN WALLS

Identity transformed.

Spiritual Principle

God names people by:

Restorative work.

CVII. RESTORER OF STREETS

Community renewed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Biblical revival should eventually make broken places more livable.

CVIII. FEET ON THE SABBATH

Even movement becomes:

Consecrated.

Spiritual Principle

Holiness affects:

Choices.

CIX. “MY HOLY DAY”

The day belongs:

To God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Sabbath was not Israel lending God a day; it was Israel recognizing the day was already His.

CX. SABBATH AS DELIGHT

Joyful holiness.

Spiritual Principle

God-centered rest is:

Gift.

CXI. HONORABLE

Value what God:

Values.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot call God holy while treating what He calls holy as insignificant.

CXII. NOT YOUR OWN WAY

Self-rule interrupted.

Spiritual Principle

Worship dethrones:

Self.

CXIII. NOT YOUR OWN PLEASURE

The Sabbath corrects:

Constant self-focus.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is a difference between receiving God’s gifts joyfully and making every day revolve around personal appetite.

CXIV. NOT IDLE WORDS

The tongue again appears.

Spiritual Principle

Sacred time requires:

Sacred attention.

CXV. DELIGHT IN THE LORD

Highest destination.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The deepest spiritual maturity is not merely enjoying what God gives, but enjoying God.

CXVI. RIDE ON THE HEIGHTS

Triumph.

Spiritual Principle

God lifts:

The obedient.

CXVII. INHERITANCE OF JACOB

Covenant blessing.

Spiritual Principle

God remains faithful to:

His promises.

CXVIII. “THE LORD HAS SPOKEN”

Certainty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The last word of faith is not, “I feel it,” but, “God has spoken.”

CXIX. TRUE FASTING VERSUS FALSE FASTING

False Fasting

Bows head.

Wears sackcloth.

Exploits workers.

Quarrels.

Fights.

Points fingers.

Speaks maliciously.

True Fasting

Breaks yokes.

Frees oppressed.

Feeds hungry.

Shelters homeless.

Clothes naked.

Supports family.

Key Truth

The difference is not how dramatic the ritual looks but how deeply the heart has been changed.

CXX. TRUE WORSHIP VERSUS RELIGIOUS PERFORMANCE

Performance

Wants to:

Be noticed.

Worship

Wants God to be:

Honored.

Performance

Looks:

Humble.

Worship

Lives:

Humbly.

Performance

Keeps rituals.

Worship

Practices:

Mercy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Religion asks, “Did people see what I did?”

True worship asks, “Did God change how I live?”

CXXI. THE “THEN” OF ISAIAH 58

Then:

Light.

Then:

Healing.

Then:

Answered prayer.

Then:

Guidance.

Then:

Satisfaction.

Then:

Strength.

Then:

Fruitfulness.

Then:

Restoration.

Then:

Joy in God.

Spiritual Principle

God’s blessings are connected to:

Covenant faithfulness.

CXXII. ISAIAH 58 AS A JUSTICE CHAPTER

Oppression.

Exploitation.

Yokes.

Workers.

Hungry.

Poor.

Naked.

Key Truth

Isaiah refuses to let worship become disconnected from how people treat people.

CXXIII. ISAIAH 58 AS A COMPASSION CHAPTER

Share.

Shelter.

Clothe.

Give yourself.

Satisfy needs.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Mercy is not peripheral to godliness; it is one of its visible fruits.

CXXIV. ISAIAH 58 AS A PRAYER CHAPTER

False fasting:

Prayer unheard.

True obedience:

> **“Here I am.”**

Spiritual Principle

A changed life restores integrity to:

Prayer.

CXXV. ISAIAH 58 AS A RESTORATION CHAPTER

Healing.

Garden.

Spring.

Rebuilding.

Repairing.

Restoring.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True revival leaves repairs behind.

CXXVI. ISAIAH 58 AS A DELIGHT CHAPTER

The chapter begins with:

Religious frustration.

It ends with:

Joy in the Lord.

Key Truth

God wants to move His people from duty without righteousness to obedience filled with delight.

CXXVII. TWELVE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 58

1. Loud Religion → Hidden Rebellion

2. Fasting → Exploitation

3. Bowed Head → Proud Heart

4. Sackcloth → Wicked Fists

5. Empty Ritual → Practical Mercy

6. Yokes → Freedom

7. Hunger → Shared Bread

8. Darkness → Light

9. Silence from Heaven → “Here I Am”

10. Drought → Well-Watered Garden

11. Ruins → Restored Streets

12. Religious Burden → Delight in the Lord

Key Truth

Isaiah 58 turns empty religion inside out and reveals worship as a life of righteousness, mercy, prayer, restoration, and delight in God.

CXXVIII. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 58

1. Sin Must Sometimes Be Confronted Clearly

Principle:

Faithful truth-telling is part of prophetic ministry.

2. Religious Activity Can Hide Rebellion

Principle:

Seeking God outwardly is not enough if obedience is absent.

3. Fasting Cannot Manipulate God

Principle:

Spiritual disciplines are not payment for divine favors.

4. True Humility Is More Than Appearance

Principle:

God wants broken hearts, not merely bowed heads.

5. God Cares About Justice

Principle:

Oppression contradicts true worship.

6. Compassion Must Become Practical

Principle:

Feed, shelter, clothe, and care.

7. True Obedience Produces Light

Principle:

A righteous life becomes visible testimony.

8. God Answers People Who Walk Sincerely with Him

Principle:

Integrity strengthens fellowship with God.

9. Generosity Leads to Fruitfulness

Principle:

Those who pour themselves out can become well-watered gardens.

10. God Makes His People Restorers

Principle:

Revival should rebuild broken places.

11. God’s Holy Day Was Meant to Be a Delight

Principle:

Holiness and joy are not enemies.

12. The Greatest Blessing Is Delight in God

Principle:

God Himself is the ultimate reward of true worship.

CXXIX. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What does God command Isaiah to do?

Cry aloud, raise his voice like a trumpet, and expose the people’s rebellion.

Question 2

Were the people outwardly religious?

Yes.

They sought God regularly and appeared eager to know His ways.

Question 3

What was wrong with their religion?

Their lives contradicted their worship.

Question 4

What did they ask God about fasting?

Why He had not noticed or responded to their fasting.

Question 5

What did God reveal about them?

They pursued selfish interests and exploited workers even on fasting days.

Question 6

What else accompanied their fasting?

Quarreling, strife, and violence.

Question 7

Why would God not accept that kind of fasting?

Because outward religious humility was contradicted by inward and practical wickedness.

Question 8

What kind of fast does God choose?

One that loosens wicked chains, breaks oppressive yokes, and frees the oppressed.

Question 9

What practical acts of compassion are mentioned?

Feeding the hungry, sheltering the poor, clothing the naked, and caring for family.

Question 10

What happens when people practice true righteousness?

Their light breaks forth like dawn.

Question 11

What happens to their healing?

It quickly appears.

Question 12

Who becomes their rear guard?

The glory of the Lord.

Question 13

What does God say when they cry for help?

> **“Here I am.”**

Question 14

What must be removed?

Oppression, pointing fingers, and malicious speech.

Question 15

What happens when people give themselves to the hungry?

Their light rises in darkness.

Question 16

How does God promise to guide them?

Always.

Question 17

What picture describes their fruitfulness?

A well-watered garden and unfailing spring.

Question 18

What restoration work will they do?

Rebuild ancient ruins and restore broken foundations, walls, and streets.

Question 19

What title will they receive?

Repairer of Broken Walls and Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.

Question 20

How should the Sabbath be regarded?

As holy, honorable, and a delight.

Question 21

What must not dominate the Sabbath?

Self-will, personal pursuits, and idle speech.

Question 22

What will those who honor God’s day find?

Joy in the Lord.

Question 23

What is the highest lesson of the chapter?

God wants genuine worship expressed through justice, compassion, obedience, and delight in Him.

CXXX. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 58 asks difficult questions.

Am I More Concerned with Looking Spiritual Than:

Living Righteously?

Do I Seek God Daily but Ignore:

Something He Already Told Me?

Do My Religious Practices Make Me:

More Loving?

More Just?

More Merciful?

More Patient?

Do I Think Prayer or Fasting Gives Me:

Leverage Over God?

Do I Complain When God Does Not Answer:

The Way I Want?

How Do I Treat:

Employees?

Coworkers?

Family?

Poor people?

People with less power?

Am I Fasting from Food but Still Feeding:

Anger?

Pride?

Gossip?

Bitterness?

Is My Head Bowed While My Heart Is:

Proud?

Am I Helping Loosen:

Yokes?

Or creating them?

Do I Share:

My Bread?

My Time?

My Resources?

Myself?

Am I Hiding from someone whose need I already:

See?

Is there a pointing finger I need to:

Lower?

Is there malicious speech I need to:

Stop?

Is my life producing:

Light?

Do I want God to say:

“Here I am”?

Am I becoming a:

Well-watered garden?

Or spiritually:

Dry?

What broken wall could God use me to:

Repair?

What ruined foundation could I help:

Rebuild?

What broken relationship could I help:

Restore?

Do I see worship as:

Burden?

Or:

Delight?

Is my deepest joy found in:

God Himself?

CXXXI. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Sees More Than the Fast”

The people thought God should notice:

Their hunger.

God also noticed:

Their injustice.

Principle:

God never evaluates a spiritual discipline apart from the life surrounding it.

CXXXII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“A Bowed Head Cannot Substitute for a Changed Heart”

The reed bends.

The heart:

Does not.

Principle:

Outward humility is worthless when inward pride remains untouched.

CXXXIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Fast God Chooses Breaks More Than Appetite—it Breaks Yokes”

Principle:

True spiritual discipline should make us more sensitive to the burdens others carry.

CXXXIV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Some Yokes Are Made from Ropes; Others Are Made from Words”

Isaiah condemns:

Oppression.

Pointing fingers.

Malicious talk.

Principle:

Our words can become instruments of bondage or instruments of restoration.

CXXXV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“You Can Become a Well-Watered Garden in a Sun-Scorched Land”

The environment may remain:

Dry.

God can still make you:

Fruitful.

Principle:

Fruitfulness depends more on the Source watering you than the climate surrounding you.

CXXXVI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Saves People Who Then Become Repairers”

Ruins.

Walls.

Streets.

Foundations.

Principle:

Grace does not merely rescue us from brokenness; it can commission us to repair brokenness around us.

CXXXVII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Highest Reward of Worship Is Not What God Gives You but God Himself”

Isaiah ends:

> **“You will find your joy in the Lord.”**

Principle:

True worship eventually moves beyond seeking blessings from God into delighting in God Himself.

CXXXVIII. THE TRUMPET VOICE

Urgent correction.

Spiritual Principle

Some sins require:

Clear speech.

CXXXIX. DAILY SEEKING

Frequency does not guarantee:

Sincerity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You can repeat a spiritual practice every day and still resist the God the practice is supposed to help you seek.

CXL. “AS IF”

God sees the difference between:

Appearance.

Reality.

Spiritual Principle

Hypocrisy lives in:

The gap.

CXLI. FASTING WITHOUT JUSTICE

Contradiction.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot become holy by denying yourself food while denying someone else fairness.

CXLII. EXPLOITED WORKERS

God notices:

Power relationships.

Spiritual Principle

Workplace conduct is:

Spiritual conduct.

CXLIII. QUARRELING

Uncontrolled desires.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The discipline of hunger has accomplished little if the appetite for conflict remains untouched.

CXLIV. WICKED FISTS

Religious violence.

Spiritual Principle

Violence invalidates claims of:

Humility.

CXLV. HEAD LIKE A REED

Appearance of:

Submission.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A reed bends because the wind moves it; true humility bows because the heart has surrendered.

CXLVI. SACKCLOTH

Symbol.

Spiritual Principle

Symbols must serve:

Truth.

CXLVII. CHAINS OF WICKEDNESS

Sin binds.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True worship should make us enemies of unnecessary bondage.

CXLVIII. CORDS OF THE YOKE

Oppression organized.

Spiritual Principle

Injustice can become:

Structured.

CXLIX. SET THE OPPRESSED FREE

God values:

Liberation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The worshiper who loves God should care when another person is crushed beneath a burden.

CL. SHARE YOUR BREAD

Sacrifice becomes:

Generosity.

Spiritual Principle

True fasting should make someone else:

Less hungry.

CLI. SHELTER THE POOR WANDERER

Hospitality.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A roof becomes ministry when it shelters someone who has none.

CLII. CLOTHE THE NAKED

Preserve dignity.

Spiritual Principle

Mercy covers:

Shame.

CLIII. CARE FOR FAMILY

Responsibility begins:

Near.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not travel far to perform compassion while neglecting the person God placed at your door.

CLIV. LIGHT LIKE DAWN

Hope.

Spiritual Principle

True righteousness has:

Brightness.

CLV. HEALING

Restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The same community wounded by hypocrisy can begin healing through obedience.

CLVI. RIGHTEOUSNESS BEFORE YOU

Character becomes:

Forerunner.

Spiritual Principle

Integrity opens:

Credibility.

CLVII. GLORY BEHIND YOU

God protects.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When righteousness goes before and God’s glory stands behind, the believer is surrounded by what hypocrisy could never provide.

CLVIII. “HERE I AM”

Presence.

Spiritual Principle

The reward of restored fellowship is:

God Himself.

CLIX. REMOVE OPPRESSION

Repentance is:

Specific.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely say “be better”; He identifies what must go.

CLX. REMOVE THE FINGER

Stop:

Blaming.

Spiritual Principle

Humility loosens:

Accusation.

CLXI. REMOVE MALICIOUS TALK

Speech purified.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One test of revival is whether the tongue has changed.

CLXII. GIVE YOURSELF

Love requires:

Presence.

Spiritual Principle

Compassion is more than:

Donation.

CLXIII. SATISFY NEEDS

Effective mercy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Good intentions are not the same as needs actually met.

CLXIV. DARKNESS BECOMES NOONDAY

Transformation.

Spiritual Principle

God creates:

Clarity.

CLXV. GUIDANCE ALWAYS

Continuity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s guidance is not reserved only for dramatic crossroads.

CLXVI. SATISFY IN DROUGHT

Provision.

Spiritual Principle

God supplies:

Internally.

CLXVII. STRONG BONES

Resilience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely make His servants busy; He strengthens them to endure.

CLXVIII. GARDEN

Fruit.

Spiritual Principle

A restored life becomes:

Productive.

CLXIX. SPRING

Overflow.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A spring receives and releases water continually; so should a life sustained by grace.

CLXX. ANCIENT RUINS REBUILT

Old damage:

Repaired.

Spiritual Principle

Age does not make brokenness:

Irreversible.

CLXXI. MANY-GENERATION FOUNDATIONS

Legacy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What you rebuild today may support people you will never meet.

CLXXII. REPAIRER

Identity from:

Service.

Spiritual Principle

God can rename a person through:

Restoration.

CLXXIII. RESTORER

Not destroyer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Ask whether your presence leaves places more broken or more restored.

CLXXIV. SABBATH FEET

Choices restrained.

Spiritual Principle

Worship changes:

Movement.

CLXXV. SABBATH DELIGHT

Holiness enjoyed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A holy day becomes a burden when God Himself is not our delight.

CLXXVI. LORD’S DAY HONOR

Priority.

Spiritual Principle

God deserves:

Attention.

CLXXVII. OWN WAY

Self displaced.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Sabbath trained Israel to remember that life does not revolve around human productivity or preference.

CLXXVIII. JOY IN THE LORD

Final reward.

Spiritual Principle

God is:

Enough.

CLXXIX. ISAIAH 58 AS A WHOLE

The chapter moves:

From religious hypocrisy.

To:

True compassion.

From unanswered complaint.

To:

> **“Here I am.”**

From darkness.

To:

Light.

From drought.

To:

Garden.

From ruins.

To:

Restoration.

From religious obligation.

To:

Delight.

Key Truth

God’s goal is not to produce people who merely perform religious duties but people whose worship transforms their treatment of others, their speech, their priorities, their communities, and their delight in Him.

CLXXX. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 58

1. Hypocrisy Is Exposed

The people appear religious while continuing in rebellion.

2. False Fasting Is Rejected

Ritual cannot cover exploitation, fighting, and selfishness.

3. True Fasting Is Defined

Yokes are broken and oppressed people are freed.

4. Compassion Becomes Practical

The hungry are fed, the homeless sheltered, and the naked clothed.

5. Light Breaks Forth

True righteousness becomes visible.

6. Prayer Is Restored

God answers:

> **“Here I am.”**

7. Darkness Becomes Noonday

Merciful living produces testimony.

8. God Gives Guidance and Fruitfulness

His people become like well-watered gardens.

9. Ruins Are Rebuilt

The redeemed become repairers and restorers.

10. Worship Becomes Delight

The chapter ends with joy in the Lord.

Key Truth

Isaiah 58 moves from counterfeit religion to authentic worship by showing that devotion to God must transform how His people treat others and ultimately lead them into delight in Him.

CLXXXI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 58 begins with:

A trumpet.

God says:

> **“Cry aloud.”**

Why?

Because His people were:

Religious.

But not:

Righteous.

That may be harder to confront than:

Open unbelief.

They prayed.

They fasted.

They sought God.

They asked questions.

They appeared:

Spiritual.

But God looked past:

The ritual.

And saw:

Workers being exploited.

Arguments.

Anger.

Violence.

Selfishness.

Malicious speech.

Neglected poor.

So the people said:

Why does God not:

See us?

God’s answer was:

I see more than you think.

I see the fast.

I also see:

The rest of your life.

That is sobering.

God does not evaluate worship by:

Sunday alone.

Or:

The fast.

Or:

The prayer meeting.

Or:

The Bible study.

Or:

The offering.

He sees:

How we treat people.

How we use power.

How we speak.

How we work.

How we give.

How we forgive.

How we respond to:

Need.

Then God says:

This is the fast I choose.

Break:

Chains.

Undo:

Yokes.

Free:

Oppressed people.

Feed:

The hungry.

Shelter:

The homeless.

Clothe:

The naked.

Care for:

Your family.

That means true worship must eventually become:

Visible.

Then:

Light breaks forth.

Then:

Healing.

Then:

God says:

“Here I am.”

What a reversal.

At the beginning they complained:

God does not notice us.

Now God says:

Here I am.

What changed?

Not:

God’s location.

Their:

Lives.

Then God says:

Stop pointing:

Fingers.

Stop malicious:

Speech.

Give yourself to:

The hungry.

And your darkness becomes:

Noonday.

Then He promises:

Guidance.

Satisfaction.

Strength.

Water.

Fruitfulness.

You become:

A garden.

A spring.

Then:

A repairer.

That may be one of the greatest ministry pictures in the chapter.

What does a godly person do?

Repairs:

Broken walls.

Restores:

Streets.

Raises:

Foundations.

Maybe there is something broken around:

You.

Family.

Church.

Community.

Relationship.

Ministry.

Faith.

Trust.

Truth.

God may not have called you merely to:

Point at the breach.

He may be calling you to:

Repair it.

Then the chapter ends with:

The Sabbath.

God says:

Call it:

A delight.

What a way to end a chapter exposing:

Empty religion.

The answer to dead religion is not:

No devotion.

It is:

True devotion.

Not:

No fasting.

But:

True fasting.

Not:

No holy day.

But:

A holy day enjoyed rightly.

Not:

No obedience.

But:

Obedience flowing from delight.

And the final promise is:

“You will find your joy in the Lord.”

That is where true religion ends.

Not:

Look at me.

Not:

Reward me.

Not:

See my fasting.

Not:

Notice my sacrifice.

But:

I delight in:

The Lord.

So Isaiah 58 asks:

Do I look religious?

Or:

Am I righteous?

Do I fast?

Or:

Do I change?

Do I bow my head?

Or:

Has my heart bowed?

Do I point fingers?

Or:

Repair breaches?

Do I talk about compassion?

Or:

Share bread?

Do I complain that God is distant?

Or:

Remove what He says is blocking fellowship?

Do I want:

His gifts?

Or:

His presence?

And when all is said and done:

Is God Himself:

My delight?

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Search our:

Hearts.

Expose:

Hypocrisy.

Rebellion.

Selfishness.

Empty religion.

Forgive us when we have looked:

Spiritual.

Without living:

Righteously.

Father, help us not use:

Prayer.

Fasting.

Church attendance.

Bible study.

Giving.

Religious activity.

As substitutes for:

Obedience.

Teach us true:

Humility.

Give us hearts that are:

Broken before You.

Not merely heads that are:

Bowed before people.

Father, show us every:

Yoke.

Chain.

Burden.

Injustice.

That we have helped create or failed to confront.

Teach us to:

Feed the hungry.

Shelter the vulnerable.

Clothe the needy.

Care for family.

Give ourselves to:

The afflicted.

Father, remove from us:

Pointing fingers.

Malicious words.

Gossip.

Accusation.

Cruel speech.

Give us mouths that:

Heal.

Encourage.

Bless.

Father, let our light:

Rise.

Bring healing where there has been:

Brokenness.

Let righteousness go:

Before us.

Let Your glory stand:

Behind us.

When we call:

Answer.

Let us hear:

“Here I am.”

Father, guide us:

Always.

Satisfy us even in:

Dry places.

Strengthen us.

Make our lives like:

Well-watered gardens.

Unfailing springs.

Use us to:

Rebuild ruins.

Raise foundations.

Repair broken walls.

Restore streets.

Father, teach us to honor what:

You call holy.

Move us beyond:

Duty.

Into:

Delight.

And above every blessing You could give:

Teach us to find our deepest joy in:

You.

May our worship be:

True.

Our compassion:

Practical.

Our righteousness:

Visible.

Our prayer:

Sincere.

Our lives:

Restorative.

And our joy:

In You.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“Is not this the fast I have chosen: to loose the chains of wickedness, to untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?” — Isaiah 58:6**

Central Truth

The Lord rejects outward religious practices that coexist with injustice, exploitation, conflict, selfishness, and malicious speech, and instead calls His people to worship that produces repentance, liberation from oppression, generosity toward the hungry and vulnerable, care for others, integrity in speech, practical restoration, and delight in Him; such genuine devotion produces light, healing, answered prayer, divine guidance, fruitfulness, and lives known for repairing what sin has broken.

Isaiah 58 in One Sentence

Isaiah exposes Judah’s hypocritical fasting as empty religion because it coexists with exploitation, strife, violence, and selfishness, defines the fast God desires as freeing the oppressed and caring practically for the hungry and vulnerable, promises light, healing, answered prayer, guidance, fruitfulness, and restoration to those who practice genuine righteousness, and concludes by calling God’s people to honor the Sabbath as a delight so that their deepest joy may be found in the Lord Himself.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 59 — Sin Separates, But the Redeemer Saves

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 59 answers an important question:

Why does God sometimes seem:

Distant?

Why does prayer seem:

Unanswered?

Why does justice appear:

Absent?

Why does darkness seem:

So deep?

The chapter begins by immediately rejecting one explanation:

God is not:

Weak.

His arm is not:

Too short.

His ear is not:

Too dull.

The problem is not:

God’s inability.

The problem is:

Human sin.

Verse 2 gives the diagnosis:

“Your sins have separated you from your God.”

Sin damages:

Fellowship.

Prayer.

Justice.

Truth.

Peace.

Community.

The chapter then describes the spread of wickedness through every part of life.

Hands:

Bloodstained.

Fingers:

Guilty.

Lips:

Lying.

Tongues:

Wicked.

Feet:

Running toward sin.

Thoughts:

Evil.

Roads:

Crooked.

The picture is comprehensive.

Sin reaches:

Hands.

Mouth.

Mind.

Feet.

Society.

Justice system.

Public streets.

The result is:

No peace.

Isaiah then uses striking images.

Viper eggs.

Spider webs.

Crooked roads.

Darkness at noon.

Blind people feeling along walls.

Growling bears.

Mourning doves.

Truth stumbling in the street.

These images show that sin does not produce:

Freedom.

It produces:

Poison.

Fragility.

Confusion.

Darkness.

Restlessness.

Injustice.

Then something changes.

The language moves from:

“They.”

To:

“We.”

The people begin to:

Confess.

“Our offenses are many in Your sight.”

“Our sins testify against us.”

“We acknowledge our iniquities.”

This is an important movement.

Real revival begins when people stop talking only about:

Their sins.

And begin confessing:

Our sins.

Then God looks at society.

Justice has been:

Driven back.

Truth has:

Stumbled.

Honesty cannot:

Enter.

The person who avoids evil becomes:

A target.

God sees:

All of it.

Then verse 16 gives the great turning point:

“He saw that there was no one.”

No adequate human:

Intercessor.

No sufficient human:

Savior.

No righteous human solution.

So:

“His own arm worked salvation for Him.”

This is the answer to verse 1.

Verse 1:

God’s hand is not too short to save.

Verse 16:

God’s own arm works:

Salvation.

Then God appears as:

Warrior.

Righteousness:

Breastplate.

Salvation:

Helmet.

Vengeance:

Garment.

Zeal:

Cloak.

This imagery later echoes strongly in:

Ephesians 6.

But here the armor is worn first by:

God Himself.

He comes to:

Judge evil.

Defend righteousness.

Bring salvation.

Reveal His glory.

Then comes:

The Redeemer.

“The Redeemer will come to Zion.”

And the Redeemer comes to those who:

Turn from sin.

Finally the chapter ends not with:

Separation.

But with:

Covenant.

Spirit.

Word.

Generations.

The Spirit remains.

The Word remains.

Children receive it.

Descendants receive it.

God’s covenant reaches:

Forward.

The chapter therefore moves from:

Sin separating.

To:

Confession.

To:

God seeing.

To:

God acting.

To:

The Redeemer coming.

To:

The Spirit remaining.

The central truth of Isaiah 59 is:

Human sin—not divine weakness—creates separation, darkness, injustice, and lack of peace; when humanity has no adequate savior or intercessor, God Himself acts in righteousness, judges evil, reveals His saving arm, sends the Redeemer to those who turn from sin, and establishes an enduring covenant of His Spirit and Word from generation to generation.

I. GOD’S HAND IS NOT TOO SHORT

Isaiah 59:1 — God Has Not Lost the Power to Save

> **“Surely the Lord’s hand is not too short to save, nor His ear too dull to hear.”**

The problem is not:

God’s arm.

The problem is not:

God’s hearing.

God remains:

Able.

Attentive.

Powerful.

Cross References

Numbers 11:23

The Lord challenges Moses’ doubt by asking whether His power has somehow become limited and promises that His word will prove true.

Isaiah 50:2

God previously asked whether His hand had somehow become too short to redeem or whether He lacked power to deliver.

Isaiah 63:5

God looks and finds no adequate human helper, so His own arm brings salvation.

Spiritual Principle

God has not become:

Weaker.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When heaven seems silent, do not begin by assuming God has lost His power.

II. GOD’S EAR IS NOT DULL

He hears:

Perfectly.

Spiritual Principle

Divine silence does not mean:

Divine deafness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s silence may have reasons, but inability to hear is never one of them.

III. SIN CREATES SEPARATION

Isaiah 59:2 — The Real Barrier

> **“But your sins have separated you from your God; your iniquities have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.”**

Here is the diagnosis:

Sin.

Not divine weakness.

Cross References

Genesis 3:8

After sin, Adam and Eve hide from the presence of God, showing how rebellion disrupts fellowship.

Habakkuk 1:13

God’s eyes are too pure to look approvingly upon evil, emphasizing His holiness.

Micah 3:4

Persistent wickedness can result in God refusing the cries of those who repeatedly reject His ways.

Spiritual Principle

Sin damages:

Fellowship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The wall is not built because God moved away in weakness; the wall is built by sin.

IV. “YOUR GOD”

Even while rebuking them, Isaiah says:

Your God.

Spiritual Principle

Broken fellowship does not mean God has become:

Less holy.

V. SIN HIDES GOD’S FACE

This is covenant language.

The face of God represents:

Favor.

Presence.

Fellowship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One of sin’s greatest losses is not merely consequences—it is diminished fellowship with God.

VI. BLOODSTAINED HANDS AND LYING LIPS

Isaiah 59:3 — Sin Reaches Hands and Mouth

> **“For your hands are stained with blood, your fingers with guilt; your lips have spoken lies, and your tongue mutters wickedness.”**

Hands:

Violent.

Fingers:

Guilty.

Lips:

False.

Tongue:

Wicked.

Cross References

Isaiah 1:15

Earlier Isaiah said the people’s hands were full of blood, making hypocritical worship unacceptable.

1 John 1:8

Anyone claiming to be without sin deceives himself and rejects the truth.

Psalm 5:9

The wicked mouth contains no truth; speech becomes destructive and deceptive.

Spiritual Principle

Sin expresses itself through:

Actions.

Words.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The same hands lifted in worship cannot be ignored when they are stained by injustice.

VII. THE TONGUE PARTICIPATES IN SIN

Lying.

Muttering.

Deceiving.

Spiritual Principle

Speech reveals:

Moral condition.

VIII. JUSTICE IS NOT SOUGHT

Isaiah 59:4 — Lies Give Birth to Evil

> **“No one calls for justice; no one pleads truthfully. They rely on empty arguments and speak lies; they conceive trouble and give birth to evil.”**

Justice is:

Ignored.

Truth is:

Abandoned.

Arguments become:

Empty.

Lies become:

Normal.

Cross References

James 1:15

Sinful desire conceives and gives birth to sin, which when mature produces death.

Job 15:35

The wicked are pictured conceiving trouble and producing deceit.

Psalm 7:14

Those who conceive evil eventually give birth to falsehood and trouble.

Spiritual Principle

Sin has:

A reproductive pattern.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What the heart conceives, the life eventually gives birth to.

IX. EMPTY ARGUMENTS

People defend:

Wrong.

With:

Words.

Spiritual Principle

A sophisticated argument cannot make:

Evil righteous.

X. VIPER EGGS

Isaiah 59:5 — Sin Produces Poison

> **“They hatch viper’s eggs and spin a spider’s web. Whoever eats their eggs dies, and when one is broken, a viper is hatched.”**

Two images:

Poison.

Fragility.

Cross References

Job 8:14

False confidence is compared to a spider’s web—fragile and unable to support the person trusting it.

Matthew 23:33

Jesus calls hardened religious hypocrites serpents and a brood of vipers.

Matthew 3:7

John the Baptist addresses unrepentant religious leaders as a brood of vipers fleeing from coming wrath.

Spiritual Principle

Sin may begin small.

It still contains:

Poison.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not mistake the shell for safety; some things only need time to hatch what was already inside.

XI. SPIDER WEBS

A spider web looks:

Intricate.

But cannot become:

Clothing.

Spiritual Principle

Human schemes may be:

Clever.

Yet useless for:

Covering guilt.

XII. THEIR WORKS CANNOT COVER THEM

Isaiah 59:6 — Evil Cannot Become Clothing

> **“Their webs cannot be used for clothing; they cannot cover themselves with what they make. Their deeds are evil deeds, and acts of violence are in their hands.”**

Human efforts cannot:

Cover.

Protect.

Justify.

Cross References

Isaiah 64:6

Human righteousness polluted by sin cannot establish true righteousness before God.

Job 8:15

The person trusting in fragile supports finds they cannot hold him up.

Job 27:18

The wicked build temporary security like a fragile house or shelter.

Spiritual Principle

Sin cannot manufacture its own:

Covering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The web you spun to protect your sin will not become a garment when judgment comes.

XIII. THEIR DEEDS ARE EVIL

The problem is not merely:

Mistake.

But:

Moral corruption.

XIV. FEET RUSH INTO SIN

Isaiah 59:7 — Eagerness for Evil

> **“Their feet rush into sin; they are swift to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are evil thoughts; ruin and destruction mark their ways.”**

Feet.

Thoughts.

Actions.

All aligned toward:

Sin.

Cross References

Romans 3:15

Paul quotes this language to describe humanity’s universal sinfulness.

Proverbs 1:16

The wicked rush toward evil and hasten to shed blood.

Proverbs 6:18

God condemns hearts that devise wicked plans and feet eager to run toward evil.

Spiritual Principle

Sin can become:

Habitual momentum.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The danger is not only falling into sin; it is becoming eager to run toward it.

XV. EVIL THOUGHTS PRODUCE EVIL PATHS

What fills:

The mind.

Eventually shapes:

The road.

XVI. THEY DO NOT KNOW THE WAY OF PEACE

Isaiah 59:8 — Crooked Roads Cannot Produce Peace

> **“The way of peace they do not know; there is no justice in their paths. They have made crooked roads for themselves; no one who walks in them will know peace.”**

Peace has:

A road.

Wickedness chooses:

Another.

Cross References

Romans 3:17

Paul quotes Isaiah to describe sinful humanity:

The way of peace they have not known.

Luke 1:79

The Messiah comes to guide people into the way of peace.

Proverbs 4:19

The path of the wicked is like deep darkness; people stumble without understanding why.

Spiritual Principle

You cannot walk:

Crooked roads.

And arrive at:

Peace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Peace is not merely a destination; it has a road, and wickedness does not travel on it.

XVII. CROOKED ROADS ARE SELF-MADE

> **“They have made crooked roads for themselves.”**

Spiritual Principle

Some misery is:

Self-created.

XVIII. JUSTICE IS FAR AWAY

Isaiah 59:9 — Darkness Replaces Light

> **“So justice is far from us, and righteousness does not reach us. We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows.”**

The language changes:

They.

To:

We.

This is:

Confession.

Cross References

Jeremiah 8:15

The people look for peace and healing but find terror because sin has produced judgment.

Lamentations 3:2

The sufferer describes being driven into darkness rather than light.

Amos 5:18

Those expecting the Day of the Lord without repentance discover darkness rather than light.

Spiritual Principle

Confession begins when:

Blame becomes ownership.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Revival begins when “their sin” becomes “our sin.”

XIX. LOOKING FOR LIGHT WHILE WALKING IN DARKNESS

They desire:

Outcomes.

Without changing:

Paths.

Spiritual Principle

Light cannot be separated from:

Truth.

XX. BLIND AT NOONDAY

Isaiah 59:10 — Spiritual Disorientation

> **“Like the blind we grope along the wall, feeling our way like those without eyes. At midday we stumble as if it were twilight; among the strong, we are like the dead.”**

Noonday should mean:

Clarity.

Yet they stumble.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:29

Covenant rebellion is described as groping at midday like a blind person in darkness.

Job 5:14

Those under judgment may meet darkness even in daylight and grope as though it were night.

Job 12:25

Without light, people stagger and grope like someone wandering in darkness.

Spiritual Principle

Sin creates:

Moral disorientation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A person can stand in full daylight and still be spiritually blind.

XXI. “LIKE THE DEAD”

Sin drains:

Life.

Strength.

Direction.

XXII. GROWLING BEARS AND MOURNING DOVES

Isaiah 59:11 — Longing Without Deliverance

> **“We all growl like bears, we moan mournfully like doves. We look for justice, but it never comes; for deliverance, but it is far away.”**

Two sounds:

Growling.

Mourning.

Frustration.

Grief.

Cross References

Isaiah 38:14

Hezekiah describes weak, mournful sounds like a bird while suffering deeply.

Ezekiel 7:16

Survivors mourn like doves in the valleys because of their sin and judgment.

Nahum 2:7

Mourning voices are compared to doves in a scene of collapse and judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Unrepented sin creates:

Pain without peace.

XXIII. DELIVERANCE SEEMS FAR

Not because God’s arm is:

Short.

Because sin remains:

Unaddressed.

XXIV. OUR SINS TESTIFY AGAINST US

Isaiah 59:12 — Honest Confession

> **“For our offenses are many in Your sight, and our sins testify against us. Our offenses are ever with us, and we acknowledge our iniquities:”**

This is:

True confession.

Not:

Excuse.

Not:

Blame.

Acknowledgment.

Cross References

Ezra 9:6

Ezra confesses that the people’s sins have risen overwhelmingly before God.

Jeremiah 14:7

Jeremiah acknowledges that sins testify against the people and appeals to God’s mercy.

Psalm 51:3

David says his sin is constantly before him and openly acknowledges his transgression.

Spiritual Principle

Confession agrees with:

God’s verdict.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot confess a sin honestly while still arguing that it was not really wrong.

XXV. SINS AS WITNESSES

Sin itself gives:

Testimony.

Spiritual Principle

Guilt does not need:

Fabrication.

XXVI. REBELLION AND TREACHERY

Isaiah 59:13 — Turning Away from God

> **“Rebellion and treachery against the Lord, turning our backs on our God, uttering oppression and lies, conceiving and speaking falsehoods from the heart.”**

The confession gets:

Specific.

Rebellion.

Treachery.

Turning away.

Oppression.

Lies.

Falsehood.

Cross References

Jeremiah 5:12

The people deny the Lord’s warnings and speak falsely about His judgment.

Hebrews 3:12

Believers are warned against an evil, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.

Jeremiah 2:13

God condemns His people for abandoning Him, the fountain of living water, for broken cisterns.

Spiritual Principle

Real confession names:

Specific sins.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Vague repentance often protects specific rebellion.

XXVII. FALSEHOOD FROM THE HEART

Lies begin:

Inside.

Spiritual Principle

Speech problems are often:

Heart problems.

XXVIII. JUSTICE IS DRIVEN BACK

Isaiah 59:14 — Truth Stumbles in the Street

> **“So justice is driven back, and righteousness stands at a distance; truth has stumbled in the streets, honesty cannot enter.”**

This is one of Isaiah’s most vivid pictures of:

Social collapse.

Justice:

Driven back.

Righteousness:

Distant.

Truth:

Fallen.

Honesty:

Locked out.

Cross References

Amos 5:7

Some people turn justice into bitterness and cast righteousness down.

Hosea 4:1

God charges the land with lacking truth, covenant faithfulness, and knowledge of Him.

Micah 7:2

The faithful disappear and social violence increases.

Spiritual Principle

Sin eventually becomes:

Public culture.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When truth stumbles in the street, the problem is no longer merely private morality; the whole community is in danger.

XXIX. HONESTY CANNOT ENTER

The door is:

Closed.

Spiritual Principle

Corrupt systems can become hostile to:

Truth.

XXX. THE PERSON WHO AVOIDS EVIL BECOMES PREY

Isaiah 59:15 — God Sees the Absence of Justice

> **“Truth is nowhere to be found, and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey. The Lord looked and was displeased that there was no justice.”**

When society becomes corrupt:

Goodness becomes:

Dangerous.

Cross References

Micah 7:2

Godly and upright people disappear while violence and selfishness dominate.

2 Timothy 3:12

Those determined to live godly lives in Christ Jesus should expect persecution.

Amos 5:10

The wicked hate those who rebuke injustice and despise people who speak honestly.

Spiritual Principle

A corrupt culture can punish:

Righteousness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When avoiding evil makes you a target, society has reversed the moral signs.

XXXI. THE LORD LOOKED

Humans may:

Ignore injustice.

God:

Does not.

Spiritual Principle

God sees:

Public evil.

XXXII. THERE WAS NO INTERCESSOR

Isaiah 59:16 — God’s Own Arm Brings Salvation

> **“He saw that there was no one, He was appalled that there was no intercessor; so His own arm worked salvation for Him, and His righteousness sustained Him.”**

No one adequate:

Stood.

So God:

Acted.

Cross References

Ezekiel 22:30

God looked for someone to stand in the gap before Him for the land but found no one.

Isaiah 63:5

God again declares that when no helper was present, His own arm brought salvation.

Ezekiel 22:31

When no intercessor stands, judgment falls upon persistent wickedness.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation ultimately depends on:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When humanity has no savior strong enough to rescue itself, God does not surrender the field—His own arm acts.

XXXIII. NO HUMAN SOLUTION WAS ENOUGH

This is not:

Humanity helping God.

It is:

God saving.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption is:

Divine initiative.

XXXIV. HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS SUSTAINED HIM

God acts according to:

His character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not save by abandoning righteousness; He saves in perfect righteousness.

XXXV. GOD PUTS ON RIGHTEOUSNESS

Isaiah 59:17 — The Divine Warrior

> **“He put on righteousness as His breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on His head;**
> **He put on the garments of vengeance and wrapped Himself in zeal as in a cloak.”**

God appears as:

Warrior.

Armor:

Righteousness.

Salvation.

Vengeance.

Zeal.

Cross References

Ephesians 6:14

Paul later calls believers to put on spiritual armor, including righteousness, echoing Isaiah’s divine-warrior imagery.

1 Thessalonians 5:8

Believers are told to wear faith and love as a breastplate and the hope of salvation as a helmet.

Isaiah 11:5

The Messiah is described with righteousness and faithfulness as defining qualities.

Spiritual Principle

God fights:

Righteously.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God never needs sinful weapons to defeat sin.

XXXVI. RIGHTEOUSNESS AS BREASTPLATE

His actions are guarded by:

Perfect justice.

Spiritual Principle

God’s warfare is never:

Morally corrupt.

XXXVII. SALVATION AS HELMET

The Warrior comes not merely:

To destroy.

But:

To save.

XXXVIII. VENGEANCE AND ZEAL

God’s vengeance is not:

Personal spite.

It is:

Holy justice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine vengeance is not uncontrolled anger; it is righteous judgment against evil.

XXXIX. GOD REPAYS ACCORDING TO DEEDS

Isaiah 59:18 — Justice Reaches the Nations

> **“According to what they have done, so will He repay: wrath to His enemies and retribution to His foes; He will repay the islands their due.”**

God’s judgment is:

Measured.

According to:

Deeds.

Cross References

Romans 2:6

God repays each person according to deeds, emphasizing impartial judgment.

Revelation 20:13

At final judgment, people are judged according to what they have done.

Psalm 62:12

Power and steadfast love belong to God, who repays people according to their works.

Spiritual Principle

God’s judgment is:

Just.

XL. WRATH TO ENEMIES

Grace does not mean:

Evil never answered.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation includes:

Judgment against what destroys.

XLI. FROM WEST TO EAST

Isaiah 59:19 — God’s Name Feared Everywhere

> **“From the west, people will fear the name of the Lord, and from the rising of the sun, His glory. For when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.”**

The vision becomes:

Worldwide.

West.

East.

Everywhere.

Cross References

Malachi 1:11

God declares that His name will be great among the nations from sunrise to sunset.

Revelation 12:15

Flood imagery appears as a picture of overwhelming hostile attack.

Psalm 113:3

From the rising of the sun to its setting, the Lord’s name is worthy of praise.

Spiritual Principle

God’s glory cannot be contained:

Locally.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The enemy may rise like a flood, but God is not left searching for higher ground.

XLII. THE SPIRIT LIFTS A STANDARD

The picture is:

Divine resistance.

Spiritual Principle

The Spirit is not passive before:

Evil.

XLIII. “LIKE A FLOOD”

Some translations and interpretations punctuate this clause differently, but the core theological truth remains:

God’s Spirit acts decisively when evil surges.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When evil appears overwhelming, do not confuse intensity with sovereignty.

XLIV. THE REDEEMER COMES TO ZION

Isaiah 59:20 — Redemption and Repentance

> **“‘The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,’ declares the Lord.”**

The answer to:

Sin.

Is:

Redeemer.

Cross References

Romans 11:26

Paul quotes Isaiah in his discussion of Israel and God’s continuing redemptive purposes.

Psalm 14:7

The psalmist longs for salvation to come from Zion and for Jacob to rejoice in God’s restoration.

Zechariah 9:9

Zion is told to rejoice because her righteous and saving King comes to her.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption and repentance belong:

Together.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Redeemer does not come to make peace with rebellion; He comes to save people who turn from it.

XLV. “THE REDEEMER”

Not:

Advisor.

Not:

Motivator.

Redeemer.

Spiritual Principle

Humanity needs:

Rescue.

XLVI. “TO THOSE WHO REPENT”

Turning matters.

Spiritual Principle

Grace calls for:

Response.

XLVII. THE COVENANT OF SPIRIT AND WORD

Isaiah 59:21 — A Promise for Generations

> **“‘As for Me, this is My covenant with them,’ says the Lord. ‘My Spirit, who is on you, will not depart from you, and My words that I have put in your mouth will always be on your lips, on the lips of your children, and on the lips of their descendants—from this time on and forever,’ says the Lord.”**

The chapter ends with:

Covenant.

Spirit.

Word.

Children.

Descendants.

Forever.

Cross References

Romans 11:27

Paul connects Isaiah’s covenant promise with God’s removal of sin.

Jeremiah 31:33

God promises to place His law within His people and write it upon their hearts.

Hebrews 8:10

The new covenant includes God placing His laws in minds and writing them upon hearts.

Spiritual Principle

God’s covenant is:

Generational.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s answer to a generation of lies is not silence; it is His Spirit and His Word placed into future generations.

XLVIII. THE SPIRIT REMAINS

God’s presence is:

Covenantal.

Spiritual Principle

The Redeemer does not merely remove:

Guilt.

He gives:

The Spirit.

XLIX. THE WORD REMAINS

Spirit and Word:

Together.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A Spirit-filled people should also be a Word-filled people.

L. CHILDREN AND DESCENDANTS

The covenant vision extends:

Forward.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness should become:

Generational testimony.

LI. ISAIAH 58 AND ISAIAH 59

Isaiah 58

The people complain:

Why does God not answer?

Isaiah 59

The answer:

> **“Your sins have separated you from your God.”**

Key Truth

Isaiah 59 explains the spiritual condition underlying the hypocrisy exposed in Isaiah 58.

LII. ISAIAH 50 AND ISAIAH 59

Isaiah 50:2

> **“Is My hand too short to redeem you?”**

Isaiah 59:1

> **“The Lord’s hand is not too short to save.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God repeatedly rejects the idea that human bondage exists because He lacks strength.

LIII. ISAIAH 52 AND ISAIAH 59

Isaiah 52

God bares:

His holy arm.

Isaiah 59

His own arm works:

Salvation.

Spiritual Principle

The saving arm of the Lord is:

Active.

LIV. ISAIAH 53 AND ISAIAH 59

Isaiah 53

The Servant bears:

Iniquity.

Isaiah 59

Human iniquity separates:

From God.

Key Truth

The Redeemer is necessary because the separation caused by sin cannot be healed by human effort alone.

LV. ISAIAH 57 AND ISAIAH 59

Isaiah 57

“There is no peace… for the wicked.”

Isaiah 59

“The way of peace they do not know.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Wickedness does not merely lose peace; it loses the road leading to peace.

LVI. ROMANS 3 AND ISAIAH 59

Paul quotes:

Feet swift to blood.

Way of peace unknown.

As part of his demonstration that:

All are under sin.

Spiritual Principle

Isaiah’s diagnosis becomes part of the New Testament’s universal doctrine of:

Human sinfulness.

LVII. ROMANS 11 AND ISAIAH 59

Paul quotes the promise:

The Redeemer will come.

Spiritual Principle

Isaiah 59 remains significant for understanding:

God’s redemptive purposes.

LVIII. EPHESIANS 6 AND ISAIAH 59

Isaiah:

God wears righteousness and salvation.

Ephesians:

Believers receive armor imagery.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The armor believers wear reflects qualities first displayed perfectly in the Divine Warrior.

LIX. SIN AND SEPARATION

Sin:

Separates.

Spiritual Principle

Sin has:

Relational consequences.

LX. SIN AND PRAYER

Persistent rebellion can disrupt:

Communion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prayer cannot be treated as a spiritual escape hatch from a life committed to rebellion.

LXI. SIN AND VIOLENCE

Bloodstained hands.

Spiritual Principle

Sin harms:

Others.

LXII. SIN AND SPEECH

Lies.

Wickedness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Words can become evidence of inward separation from God.

LXIII. SIN AND JUSTICE

Justice:

Absent.

Spiritual Principle

Personal sin becomes:

Public injustice.

LXIV. SIN AND THOUGHTS

Evil thoughts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every destructive path begins long before the feet arrive there.

LXV. SIN AND PEACE

Crooked roads.

No peace.

Spiritual Principle

Sin produces:

Restlessness.

LXVI. SIN AND DARKNESS

Looking for light.

Finding:

Shadows.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A person cannot continually reject the light and still complain that the road has become dark.

LXVII. SIN AND BLINDNESS

Groping.

Stumbling.

Spiritual Principle

Sin damages:

Perception.

LXVIII. SIN AND CONFESSION

Eventually:

“We acknowledge.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Confession is the moment sinners stop editing the diagnosis.

LXIX. SIN AND SOCIETY

Truth stumbles.

Justice retreats.

Honesty excluded.

Spiritual Principle

Sin can become:

Structural.

LXX. SIN AND PERSECUTION OF THE GOOD

Whoever avoids evil:

Becomes prey.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When goodness is punished simply for being good, moral collapse has become visible.

LXXI. GOD SEES

Repeatedly:

The Lord looked.

He saw.

Spiritual Principle

Nothing in society escapes:

Divine sight.

LXXII. GOD IS DISPLEASED BY INJUSTICE

Not indifferent.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not watch injustice with moral neutrality.

LXXIII. NO INTERCESSOR

Human insufficiency exposed.

Spiritual Principle

Humanity cannot:

Save itself.

LXXIV. GOD’S OWN ARM

Divine action.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Salvation begins where human adequacy ends.

LXXV. RIGHTEOUSNESS SUSTAINS GOD’S ACTION

He acts:

Consistently.

Spiritual Principle

God’s saving acts never violate:

God’s holy character.

LXXVI. DIVINE ARMOR

Righteousness.

Salvation.

Vengeance.

Zeal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God enters the battlefield clothed in the very qualities evil lacks.

LXXVII. JUDGMENT ACCORDING TO DEEDS

No partiality.

Spiritual Principle

God judges:

Truthfully.

LXXVIII. NAME FEARED FROM WEST TO EAST

Global recognition.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God whom sinners ignored locally will be honored universally.

LXXIX. GLORY FROM SUNRISE

Creation itself marks:

The scope.

Spiritual Principle

God’s glory reaches:

Every horizon.

LXXX. ENEMY LIKE A FLOOD

Pressure.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The height of the flood does not determine the height of God’s authority.

LXXXI. SPIRIT RAISES A STANDARD

Resistance.

Spiritual Principle

God responds:

Actively.

LXXXII. THE REDEEMER COMES

Hope.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The chapter does not end with confession; it moves toward the Redeemer.

LXXXIII. REPENTANCE IN JACOB

Turning.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration requires:

Return.

LXXXIV. COVENANT

God binds Himself:

Faithfully.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who exposes sin also provides the covenant answer to sin.

LXXXV. SPIRIT

Presence.

Spiritual Principle

God’s solution includes:

Transformation.

LXXXVI. WORD

Truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Where lies dominated the beginning of the chapter, God’s Word dominates the end.

LXXXVII. GENERATIONS

Children.

Descendants.

Forever.

Spiritual Principle

The covenant has:

Future.

LXXXVIII. THE GREAT REVERSAL OF ISAIAH 59

Beginning:

Sin separates.

Ending:

Spirit remains.

Beginning:

Lies.

Ending:

God’s Word.

Beginning:

No peace.

Ending:

Redeemer.

Beginning:

No justice.

Ending:

Divine righteousness.

Beginning:

No intercessor.

Ending:

God’s own saving arm.

Key Truth

The chapter begins with everything humanity has ruined and ends with everything God provides.

LXXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 59 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S POWER

His hand is:

Not short.

Spiritual Principle

God remains:

Able.

XC. WHAT ISAIAH 59 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S HEARING

His ear is:

Not dull.

Spiritual Principle

God remains:

Aware.

XCI. WHAT ISAIAH 59 TEACHES ABOUT SIN

Sin separates.

Poisons.

Blinds.

Corrupts.

Destroys peace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin is never merely breaking a rule; it rearranges relationships, perception, conduct, and community.

XCII. WHAT ISAIAH 59 TEACHES ABOUT CONFESSION

“We acknowledge.”

Spiritual Principle

Healing begins with:

Truth.

XCIII. WHAT ISAIAH 59 TEACHES ABOUT JUSTICE

God is displeased when:

Justice disappears.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s people should never become comfortable in a culture where truth has fallen in the street.

XCIV. WHAT ISAIAH 59 TEACHES ABOUT INTERCESSION

No adequate human intercessor was found.

Spiritual Principle

We need:

Divine intervention.

XCV. WHAT ISAIAH 59 TEACHES ABOUT THE REDEEMER

He comes:

To Zion.

To:

Repentant people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The answer to human separation is not better self-rescue but the coming Redeemer.

XCVI. WHAT ISAIAH 59 TEACHES ABOUT THE SPIRIT

The Spirit:

Remains.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant salvation includes:

Divine presence.

XCVII. WHAT ISAIAH 59 TEACHES ABOUT THE WORD

God puts His Word:

In mouths.

Spiritual Principle

Truth must continue:

Generationally.

XCVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 59 TEACHES ABOUT FUTURE GENERATIONS

Children.

Grandchildren.

Descendants.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A faithful generation should desire not merely to survive but to put God’s Word into the mouths of those coming after it.

XCIX. HANDS STAINED

Actions exposed.

Spiritual Principle

God sees:

Deeds.

C. FINGERS GUILTY

Even detailed actions matter.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin is not vague before God.

CI. LYING LIPS

Truth corrupted.

Spiritual Principle

Falsehood separates:

People.

And dishonors:

God.

CII. WICKED TONGUE

Speech reveals:

Heart.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One of the fastest ways to diagnose the heart is to listen carefully to the tongue.

CIII. NO JUSTICE

Society compromised.

Spiritual Principle

God cares about:

Fairness.

CIV. NO TRUTHFUL PLEADING

Courts corrupted.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When truth becomes inconvenient, justice soon becomes impossible.

CV. TROUBLE CONCEIVED

Sin begins:

Inside.

Spiritual Principle

Conception precedes:

Birth.

CVI. EVIL BORN

Thought becomes:

Action.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Deal with sin at conception before it grows strong enough to demand a birth.

CVII. VIPER EGGS

Danger concealed.

Spiritual Principle

Sin can look:

Small.

CVIII. SPIDER WEB

False security.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A fragile refuge can feel strong until weight is placed upon it.

CIX. WEB CANNOT CLOTHE

No true covering.

Spiritual Principle

Human schemes cannot cover:

Guilt.

CX. VIOLENCE IN HANDS

Sin becomes:

Physical.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Violence is where corrupted hearts often become visible.

CXI. FEET RUN

Momentum.

Spiritual Principle

Repeated sin becomes:

Pattern.

CXII. SWIFT TO BLOOD

Urgency toward evil.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A heart trained in sin eventually stops needing persuasion.

CXIII. RUIN AND DESTRUCTION

Consequences.

Spiritual Principle

Sin leaves:

Damage.

CXIV. NO WAY OF PEACE

Ignorance of:

Shalom.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The road to peace cannot be discovered while refusing the God who built it.

CXV. JUSTICE FAR FROM US

Confession.

Spiritual Principle

Sin creates:

Distance.

CXVI. DEEP SHADOWS

Result:

Darkness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When truth is removed, darkness does not have to be invited—it arrives.

CXVII. GROPING AT MIDDAY

Moral confusion.

Spiritual Principle

Abundant information cannot replace:

Spiritual sight.

CXVIII. MOANING LIKE DOVES

Grief.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A sinful society can produce much noise and still have no song.

CXIX. OFFENSES MANY

Honesty.

Spiritual Principle

Confession does not minimize:

Quantity.

CXX. SINS TESTIFY

Evidence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin carries its own witness stand.

CXXI. REBELLION AGAINST LORD

Vertical sin.

Spiritual Principle

All sin is ultimately:

Against God.

CXXII. OPPRESSION AND LIES

Horizontal sin.

Spiritual Principle

Sin against God becomes sin against:

People.

CXXIII. TRUTH STUMBLES

Tragic image.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When truth cannot stand in public, lies have been given too much room.

CXXIV. HONESTY CANNOT ENTER

Door closed.

Spiritual Principle

Corruption excludes:

Integrity.

CXXV. GOOD PERSON BECOMES PREY

Moral reversal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When righteousness becomes dangerous, courage becomes necessary.

CXXVI. GOD IS DISPLEASED

Divine response.

Spiritual Principle

God has:

Moral judgment.

CXXVII. NO ONE

Human emptiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah strips away every illusion that society can ultimately redeem itself.

CXXVIII. NO INTERCESSOR

No sufficient mediator.

Spiritual Principle

Humanity needs:

Someone greater.

CXXIX. OWN ARM SAVES

Divine sufficiency.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The arm that was “not too short” becomes the arm that accomplishes salvation.

CXXX. BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Protection.

Spiritual Principle

God’s justice is:

Perfect.

CXXXI. HELMET OF SALVATION

Purpose.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Divine Warrior enters battle carrying salvation as part of His identity.

CXXXII. GARMENTS OF VENGEANCE

Justice.

Spiritual Principle

Evil will not:

Escape forever.

CXXXIII. CLOAK OF ZEAL

Intensity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not apathetic about salvation or justice.

CXXXIV. REPAYMENT

Moral accountability.

Spiritual Principle

Choices matter.

CXXXV. WEST AND EAST

Universal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s name is too great for one horizon.

CXXXVI. FLOOD OF ENEMY

Threat.

Spiritual Principle

Opposition can be:

Overwhelming.

CXXXVII. STANDARD OF SPIRIT

Divine response.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Spirit of God is never overwhelmed by the size of the attack.

CXXXVIII. REDEEMER IN ZION

Promise.

Spiritual Principle

God comes:

To save.

CXXXIX. REPENTANT JACOB

Response.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Redeemer calls people not merely out of trouble but out of sin.

CXL. COVENANT WITH THEM

Commitment.

Spiritual Principle

God gives:

Relationship.

CXLI. SPIRIT UPON THEM

Presence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s covenant is not merely written around His people; His Spirit works among them.

CXLII. WORD IN THEIR MOUTH

Witness.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant people become:

Speaking people.

CXLIII. WORD ON CHILDREN’S LIPS

Transmission.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Truth should travel farther than one generation.

CXLIV. FOREVER

Endurance.

Spiritual Principle

God’s covenant purpose has:

Permanence.

CXLV. ISAIAH 59 AS A SIN CHAPTER

Separation.

Blood.

Lies.

Violence.

Crookedness.

Darkness.

Key Truth

Isaiah refuses to treat sin as harmless behavior; it damages every level of human life.

CXLVI. ISAIAH 59 AS A CONFESSION CHAPTER

We.

Our.

Acknowledge.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is no national, church, family, or personal restoration without honest ownership of sin.

CXLVII. ISAIAH 59 AS A JUSTICE CHAPTER

Justice far.

Truth fallen.

Honesty excluded.

Spiritual Principle

God cares about:

Public righteousness.

CXLVIII. ISAIAH 59 AS A REDEEMER CHAPTER

No human savior.

God acts.

Redeemer comes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When the chapter proves humanity cannot save itself, God introduces the One who can.

CXLIX. ISAIAH 59 AS A SPIRIT-AND-WORD CHAPTER

Spirit remains.

Word remains.

Generations receive both.

Key Truth

God’s final answer to a culture of falsehood is a covenant people marked by His Spirit and His Word.

CL. TWELVE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 59

1. God’s Strong Arm → Human Sinful Hands

2. God’s Hearing Ear → Human Separation

3. Truth → Lies

4. Justice → Crookedness

5. Light → Darkness

6. Sight → Blindness

7. Peace → Restlessness

8. Excuse → Confession

9. Human Failure → Divine Intervention

10. Sinful Violence → Divine Righteousness

11. No Intercessor → Redeemer

12. Separation → Covenant Spirit and Word

Key Truth

Isaiah 59 moves from the consequences of human sin to the sufficiency of divine salvation.

CLI. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 59

1. God Is Still Able to Save

Principle:

His hand has not become too short.

2. Sin Creates Separation

Principle:

The problem is moral, not divine weakness.

3. Sin Corrupts Words and Actions

Principle:

Hands and tongues both reveal the heart.

4. Sin Produces Poison and Fragile Security

Principle:

Viper eggs and spider webs cannot give life or covering.

5. Wicked Roads Cannot Produce Peace

Principle:

Crooked paths lead away from shalom.

6. Confession Must Be Honest

Principle:

The people finally say, “Our sins testify against us.”

7. Social Corruption Matters to God

Principle:

Truth and justice belong in the streets.

8. God Sees When No One Else Acts

Principle:

He is never indifferent to injustice.

9. God Himself Brings Salvation

Principle:

His own arm acts when no human savior is sufficient.

10. God Judges Righteously

Principle:

The Divine Warrior is clothed in righteousness.

11. The Redeemer Comes

Principle:

Hope rests in God’s saving intervention.

12. God’s Spirit and Word Endure

Principle:

His covenant reaches from one generation to the next.

CLII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Is God’s hand too short to save?

No.

Question 2

Is His ear too dull to hear?

No.

Question 3

What creates separation from God?

Sin and iniquity.

Question 4

How are the people’s hands described?

Stained with blood.

Question 5

How are their lips described?

Speaking lies.

Question 6

What happens to justice?

No one truly seeks or pleads for it.

Question 7

What do evil plans resemble?

Viper eggs.

Question 8

What do false securities resemble?

Spider webs.

Question 9

Why can those webs not help?

They cannot provide real covering.

Question 10

What do the people’s feet do?

Rush toward sin.

Question 11

Do they know the way of peace?

No.

Question 12

What kind of roads have they made?

Crooked roads.

Question 13

What change occurs in verse 9?

The language moves into collective confession:

“We.”

Question 14

What do they look for?

Justice, righteousness, light, and deliverance.

Question 15

What do they experience?

Darkness, shadows, blindness, and distance.

Question 16

What do their sins do?

Testify against them.

Question 17

Do they finally acknowledge their iniquities?

Yes.

Question 18

What happens to truth in society?

It stumbles in the streets.

Question 19

What happens to honesty?

It cannot enter.

Question 20

What happens to someone who avoids evil?

That person becomes prey.

Question 21

What does the Lord see?

That there is no justice and no adequate intercessor.

Question 22

Who then works salvation?

God’s own arm.

Question 23

What does God put on?

Righteousness, salvation, vengeance, and zeal.

Question 24

How does God repay?

According to what people have done.

Question 25

How widespread will recognition of God become?

From west to east.

Question 26

What happens when the enemy rises like a flood?

The Spirit of the Lord raises a standard against him.

Question 27

Who comes to Zion?

The Redeemer.

Question 28

To whom does He come?

Those who turn from sin.

Question 29

What remains upon God’s people?

His Spirit.

Question 30

What remains in their mouths?

His Word.

Question 31

How far does this promise extend?

To children, descendants, and future generations.

CLIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 59 asks several searching questions.

Have I Ever Blamed God for Something My Own Sin Helped Create?

Have I Said:

Why does God not answer?

Without asking:

Is there something I refuse to repent of?

Do I Really Believe God Is:

Able?

Are My Hands:

Clean?

Is My Speech:

Truthful?

Have I Become Comfortable with:

Lies?

Do I Care about:

Justice?

Am I building anything in my life that resembles:

A spider web?

Complicated.

Impressive.

But unable to:

Hold me?

Is there something poisonous I am allowing to:

Hatch?

Are my feet moving toward:

Righteousness?

Or:

Sin?

Is my mind feeding:

Evil thoughts?

Am I walking a crooked path while asking God for:

Peace?

Have I moved from:

“Their sins.”

To:

“My sins.”

Can I say:

“My sins testify against me”?

Is there a specific sin I need to:

Name?

Confess?

Forsake?

Do I care when:

Truth falls?

Justice retreats?

Honesty is excluded?

Am I willing to stand for truth even if doing right makes me:

A target?

Am I trying to solve spiritually what only:

God can save?

Do I trust:

The Redeemer?

Have I truly turned from:

Sin?

Is God’s Spirit shaping:

My life?

Is God’s Word on:

My lips?

Am I passing God’s truth to:

The next generation?

CLIV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God’s Arm Is Not Too Short—But Sin Can Build a Wall”

The problem is not:

Divine weakness.

Principle:

Before accusing heaven of silence, let Scripture examine whether sin has disrupted fellowship.

CLV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Crooked Roads Cannot Produce Straight Peace”

They made:

Crooked paths.

Then wondered why:

Peace disappeared.

Principle:

Peace cannot be detached from righteousness.

CLVI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Revival Begins When ‘They’ Becomes ‘We’”

The chapter changes:

“They sin.”

To:

“Our sins testify against us.”

Principle:

Confession begins when we stop using other people’s failures to avoid our own.

CLVII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“When Truth Falls in the Street, God Still Sees”

Justice:

Driven back.

Honesty:

Cannot enter.

God:

Looked.

Principle:

Public corruption may overwhelm human institutions, but it never escapes divine attention.

CLVIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“When No One Could Save, God’s Own Arm Moved”

No:

Adequate intercessor.

No:

Human solution.

Yet:

Salvation.

Principle:

Human inability is not divine inability.

CLIX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Chapter Begins with Separation and Ends with Spirit and Word”

Sin:

Separates.

Redeemer:

Comes.

Spirit:

Remains.

Word:

Continues.

Principle:

God’s answer to sin is not merely removing punishment; it is restoring relationship, presence, truth, and future generations.

CLX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“A Spider Web Is Impressive Until You Need It to Hold Your Weight”

Human schemes may look:

Clever.

Principle:

Anything less than God becomes frighteningly fragile when eternity places weight upon it.

CLXI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Truth May Stumble, But It Does Not Die”

Truth falls in:

The street.

But God:

Acts.

Principle:

A corrupt generation can suppress truth publicly without abolishing the God who is truth’s final defender.

CLXII. THE HAND OF GOD

Strong enough:

To save.

Spiritual Principle

God’s ability is:

Undiminished.

CLXIII. THE EAR OF GOD

Able:

To hear.

Spiritual Principle

God is:

Attentive.

CLXIV. THE FACE OF GOD

Hidden because of:

Sin.

Spiritual Principle

Fellowship matters.

CLXV. HUMAN HANDS

Bloodstained.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The contrast is striking: God’s hand saves while sinful human hands destroy.

CLXVI. HUMAN LIPS

Lies.

Spiritual Principle

Sin corrupts:

Communication.

CLXVII. JUSTICE NEGLECTED

No one calls:

For it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Injustice grows fastest where righteous people stop caring whether justice survives.

CLXVIII. EVIL CONCEIVED

Internal stage.

Spiritual Principle

Guard the:

Heart.

CLXIX. VIPER HATCHED

Mature evil.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What looks manageable as an egg may become deadly once fully developed.

CLXX. WEB SPUN

False security.

Spiritual Principle

Self-deception can become:

Elaborate.

CLXXI. WEB CANNOT COVER

Failure.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot hide moral nakedness beneath something God already calls fragile.

CLXXII. FEET SWIFT

Sin practiced:

Eagerly.

Spiritual Principle

Habit forms:

Momentum.

CLXXIII. EVIL THOUGHTS

The mind is:

Involved.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Repentance must reach the thought before the foot can consistently change direction.

CLXXIV. RUIN IN THEIR PATH

Sin leaves:

Tracks.

Spiritual Principle

Actions have:

Consequences.

CLXXV. PEACE UNKNOWN

Tragedy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

People can spend years searching for peace without ever walking the road where peace lives.

CLXXVI. CONFESSION

The turning point.

Spiritual Principle

Honesty opens the door to:

Restoration.

CLXXVII. DARKNESS

Consequence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When people reject truth long enough, darkness begins to feel normal.

CLXXVIII. GROPING

No direction.

Spiritual Principle

Sin reduces:

Clarity.

CLXXIX. MOANING

Emotional consequence.

Spiritual Principle

Rebellion produces:

Grief.

CLXXX. OUR OFFENSES

Ownership.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The word “our” can become one of the most healing words in confession.

CLXXXI. TURNING BACKS ON GOD

Relational betrayal.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is not merely:

Rule-breaking.

It is:

Turning away.

CLXXXII. TRUTH STUMBLES IN THE STREET

Public crisis.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A society is in serious danger when truth becomes the one thing unwelcome in public life.

CLXXXIII. HONESTY LOCKED OUT

Systemic corruption.

Spiritual Principle

Truth needs:

Space.

CLXXXIV. GOOD PEOPLE BECOME TARGETS

Persecution.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The cost of righteousness rises when wickedness becomes culturally protected.

CLXXXV. GOD LOOKS

Divine attention.

Spiritual Principle

He sees:

Everything.

CLXXXVI. GOD IS DISPLEASED

Moral response.

Spiritual Principle

God is not:

Neutral.

CLXXXVII. NO HUMAN INTERCESSOR

Need exposed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The human race cannot be both the disease and the complete cure.

CLXXXVIII. GOD’S ARM WORKS SALVATION

Grace intervenes.

Spiritual Principle

God acts:

For redemption.

CLXXXIX. RIGHTEOUS WARRIOR

Holy action.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can wage war against evil without becoming evil.

CXC. SALVATION AND VENGEANCE

Both appear.

Spiritual Principle

Saving good includes judging:

Destructive evil.

CXCI. REPAYMENT

Justice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Judge does not forget what victims remember.

CXCII. WEST TO EAST

Universal recognition.

Spiritual Principle

God’s name will be:

Known.

CXCIII. FLOOD

Overwhelming threat.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A flood is overwhelming only until it meets the One who rules the waters.

CXCIV. STANDARD

Divine rallying point.

Spiritual Principle

God establishes:

Resistance.

CXCV. REDEEMER

Hope embodied.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah does not leave sinners with diagnosis; he points them to the Redeemer.

CXCVI. REPENTANCE

Turning.

Spiritual Principle

Grace restores:

Repentant people.

CXCVII. COVENANT SPIRIT

Presence promised.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s salvation is not merely rescue from something but union with Someone.

CXCVIII. COVENANT WORD

Truth promised.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people live by:

Revelation.

CXCIX. CHILDREN

Next generation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Word should not die in our mouths.

CC. DESCENDANTS

Long future.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant faithfulness is:

Generational.

CCI. ISAIAH 59 AS A WHOLE

The chapter moves:

From:

Sin.

To:

Separation.

From:

Separation.

To:

Confession.

From:

Confession.

To:

God seeing.

From:

God seeing.

To:

God acting.

From:

God acting.

To:

Redeemer.

From:

Redeemer.

To:

Spirit and Word.

Key Truth

Human sin creates the crisis, but divine righteousness creates the rescue.

CCII. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 59

1. God’s Power Is Defended

His hand is not too short and His ear is not too dull.

2. Sin Is Identified as the Barrier

Iniquity separates people from God.

3. Wickedness Corrupts the Whole Person

Hands, lips, thoughts, and feet become involved.

4. Peace Disappears

Crooked roads lead away from justice and shalom.

5. The People Confess

They acknowledge their offenses and rebellion.

6. Society Collapses Morally

Truth stumbles and honesty cannot enter.

7. God Sees the Crisis

He is displeased that justice has vanished.

8. God Himself Acts

His own arm accomplishes salvation.

9. The Redeemer Comes

Hope appears for those who turn from sin.

10. The Covenant Endures

God’s Spirit and Word remain through future generations.

Key Truth

Isaiah 59 moves from sin’s separating power to God’s redeeming power and ends by replacing lies with the Word, separation with covenant, and hopelessness with the promise of the Redeemer.

CCIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 59 begins by correcting:

A false accusation.

Maybe someone says:

God cannot help.

God is too far away.

God does not hear.

God has stopped caring.

Isaiah says:

No.

“The Lord’s hand is not too short to save.”

God has not become:

Weak.

“Nor His ear too dull to hear.”

God has not become:

Deaf.

Then comes:

The difficult truth.

“Your sins have separated you from your God.”

That means before we blame:

God.

We should examine:

Ourselves.

Sometimes we ask:

Why is there no:

Peace?

Why no:

Justice?

Why no:

Light?

Why no:

Answer?

Isaiah says:

Look at:

The road.

The hands.

The lips.

The thoughts.

The feet.

The culture.

Sin is not:

Harmless.

It stains:

Hands.

Corrupts:

Speech.

Poisons:

Thoughts.

Crooks:

Roads.

Destroys:

Peace.

Then Isaiah shows people:

Groping in daylight.

What a picture.

The sun is up.

Still:

Blind.

That is what sin can do.

Then something powerful happens.

The people stop saying:

They.

And begin saying:

We.

> **“Our offenses are many.”**
>
> **“Our sins testify against us.”**
>
> **“We acknowledge our iniquities.”**

That is where:

Hope begins.

Not when we:

Defend.

Minimize.

Compare.

Blame.

But when we:

Confess.

Then Isaiah looks at society.

Justice:

Driven back.

Truth:

Stumbling.

Honesty:

Unable to enter.

Those who avoid evil become:

Targets.

It looks:

Hopeless.

Then:

God looks.

And this is where everything changes.

“He saw that there was no one.”

No adequate:

Human answer.

No strong enough:

Intercessor.

No righteous enough:

Savior.

So:

“His own arm worked salvation.”

That is grace.

Humanity creates:

The problem.

God brings:

The salvation.

Then He puts on:

Righteousness.

Salvation.

Vengeance.

Zeal.

God is not passive.

He moves against:

Evil.

And for:

Redemption.

Then:

“The Redeemer will come to Zion.”

That is hope.

The answer is not:

Try harder.

Build a better web.

Make a straighter-looking crooked road.

Speak better excuses.

The answer is:

Redeemer.

The New Testament ultimately directs us toward:

Jesus Christ.

The One who:

Bears sin.

Brings peace.

Intercedes.

Redeems.

Then the chapter ends with:

Spirit.

Word.

Children.

Descendants.

Forever.

Think about the contrast.

At the beginning:

Lying lips.

At the end:

God’s Word on lips.

At the beginning:

Sin separating.

At the end:

God’s Spirit remaining.

At the beginning:

No peace.

At the end:

Redeemer.

At the beginning:

Human failure.

At the end:

Divine covenant.

So Isaiah 59 asks:

Is there sin separating me from:

Fellowship with God?

Are my hands:

Clean?

Are my lips:

Truthful?

Are my roads:

Straight?

Am I asking for peace while walking:

Crookedly?

Have I confessed:

My sin?

Do I care when:

Truth falls?

Am I willing to stand for righteousness if it makes me:

A target?

Have I realized I cannot:

Save myself?

Do I trust:

The Redeemer?

Is the Spirit of God shaping:

My life?

Is the Word of God on:

My lips?

Am I teaching it to:

My children?

Will it continue after:

Me?

The chapter’s message is clear.

Sin separates.

Sin corrupts.

Sin blinds.

Sin destroys peace.

But God’s hand is still:

Long enough.

God’s ear still:

Hears.

God’s eye still:

Sees.

God’s righteousness still:

Acts.

God’s Redeemer still:

Saves.

God’s Spirit still:

Works.

And God’s Word still:

Stands.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that Your hand is not:

Too short to save.

Thank You that Your ear is not:

Too dull to hear.

Father, search us.

Show us every sin that damages:

Fellowship.

Every iniquity we have:

Excused.

Every lie we have:

Spoken.

Every crooked road we have:

Chosen.

Every evil thought we have:

Fed.

Every injustice we have:

Ignored.

Forgive us for blaming:

You.

For things our rebellion has helped create.

Father, bring us to honest:

Confession.

Teach us to say:

Our sins testify against us.

We acknowledge:

Our iniquities.

Keep us from:

Blaming.

Minimizing.

Hiding.

Father, restore:

Truth.

Justice.

Honesty.

Righteousness.

Where truth has stumbled:

Lift it.

Where justice has been driven back:

Restore it.

Where the righteous are targeted:

Strengthen them.

Father, thank You that when no human savior was enough:

Your own arm brought salvation.

Thank You for:

The Redeemer.

Thank You for:

Jesus Christ.

Thank You that He came to deal with:

Sin.

Separation.

Guilt.

Death.

Father, clothe us with:

Righteousness.

Salvation.

Truth.

Give us courage to stand against:

Evil.

When enemies rise like:

Floods—

Remind us that Your Spirit is:

Greater.

Father, let Your Spirit remain:

Upon us.

Put Your Word:

In our mouths.

On the lips of:

Our children.

Our grandchildren.

Those who come after us.

Make us a generation that passes on:

Truth.

Faith.

The gospel.

Your Word.

May the lies of one generation be replaced by:

Truth in the next.

May separation give way to:

Reconciliation.

Darkness to:

Light.

Crooked roads to:

Peace.

Human helplessness to:

Divine salvation.

And may all glory belong to:

You.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"But your sins have separated you from your God; your iniquities have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear." — Isaiah 59:2**

Central Truth

The Lord remains fully able to save and hear, but human sin creates separation, corrupts actions and speech, destroys justice, blinds hearts, and removes peace; when confession exposes humanity's complete inability to rescue itself, God Himself acts in righteousness, brings salvation through His own arm, judges evil, sends the Redeemer to those who turn from sin, and establishes an enduring covenant in which His Spirit and Word remain with His people through every generation.

Isaiah 59 in One Sentence

Isaiah declares that God’s power and hearing have not failed but that human sin creates separation, lies, violence, crooked paths, darkness, injustice, and loss of peace; after the people acknowledge their guilt and society’s truth and justice collapse, the Lord Himself intervenes as the righteous Warrior, works salvation through His own arm, sends the Redeemer to those who repent, and ends the chapter with a covenant promise that His Spirit and Word will remain with His people and their descendants forever.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 60 — The Glory of Zion

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 60 is a chapter of:

Light.

Glory.

Gathering.

Restoration.

Peace.

Righteousness.

And everlasting hope.

Isaiah 59 ended with:

The Redeemer coming.

The Spirit remaining.

The Word continuing through:

Future generations.

Isaiah 60 now opens with the result:

“Arise, shine, for your light has come.”

The contrast is immediate.

The earth is covered with:

Darkness.

The peoples are covered with:

Deep darkness.

But Zion is covered with:

The glory of the Lord.

The chapter therefore begins with two competing realities:

Worldwide darkness.

Divine glory.

Darkness is real.

But it is not:

Final.

The Lord rises upon:

Zion.

His glory becomes:

Visible.

Then something remarkable happens.

The nations begin:

Coming.

Verse 3 says:

“Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.”

Zion is not glorified merely for:

Zion’s sake.

The glory upon her becomes:

A witness to the nations.

Then the chapter develops one of Isaiah’s great themes:

Gathering.

Sons return.

Daughters return.

Nations bring:

Resources.

Kings come.

Ships arrive.

Caravans approach.

Offerings are brought.

Foreigners help rebuild.

Gates remain:

Open.

The city once:

Forsaken.

Hated.

Empty.

Becomes:

Honored.

Beautiful.

Secure.

The transformation is dramatic.

Forsaken becomes:

Everlasting pride.

Violence becomes:

Peace.

Ruin becomes:

Salvation.

Destruction becomes:

Praise.

Darkness becomes:

Everlasting light.

Mourning becomes:

Joy.

Smallness becomes:

Abundance.

And at the center of all this restoration stands:

The Lord.

The chapter repeatedly reminds us that the purpose of Zion's glory is not:

Self-exaltation.

It is:

God's glory.

Verse 9 says:

> **"For the honor of the Lord your God."**

Verse 16 says:

> **"Then you will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior, your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."**

Verse 21 says that the people are:

> **"The work of My hands, for the display of My splendor."**

The restored city exists to reveal:

The Restorer.

The beautiful people exist to reveal:

The God who made them beautiful.

The chapter also reaches beyond immediate historical restoration.

The language eventually becomes so expansive that it points toward:

The final glory of God's redeemed people.

Especially verses 19–20:

> **"The Lord will be your everlasting light."**

Revelation 21 and 22 echo this imagery when describing the New Jerusalem.

There the city does not need:

Sun.

Moon.

Because God’s glory gives:

Light.

This does not mean every verse of Isaiah 60 should be flattened into only one future interpretation.

The chapter grows out of:

Zion’s historical restoration.

But its language expands beyond a temporary return from exile toward:

Messianic.

Worldwide.

And ultimately consummated restoration.

The central truth of Isaiah 60 is:

The Lord transforms Zion from darkness, shame, abandonment, violence, and ruin into a radiant, gathered, peaceful, righteous, and glorious people whose light draws the nations, whose restoration displays God’s splendor, and whose ultimate hope is found in the Lord Himself as their everlasting light.

I. ARISE AND SHINE

Isaiah 60:1 — The Glory of the Lord Has Come

> **“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.”**

Two commands:

Arise.

Shine.

Why?

Because:

The light has come.

Cross References

Ephesians 5:14

Paul calls the spiritually sleeping person to wake and rise so that Christ may shine upon them.

Revelation 21:23

The final holy city needs no sun or moon because God’s glory illuminates it and the Lamb is its lamp.

John 8:12

Jesus identifies Himself as the Light of the world and promises that those who follow Him will not remain in darkness but have the light of life.

Spiritual Principle

God’s light creates:

Responsibility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God gives light, He also calls His people to stop living as though darkness still owns them.

II. “YOUR LIGHT HAS COME”

Zion does not manufacture:

The light.

It comes from:

God.

Spiritual Principle

True spiritual light is:

Received.

Not invented.

III. GLORY RISES UPON YOU

The source of radiance is:

The Lord.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Zion shines because God shines upon her.

IV. DARKNESS COVERS THE EARTH

Isaiah 60:2 — Light in a Dark World

> **“Darkness covers the earth, and deep darkness covers the peoples; but the Lord rises upon you, and His glory appears over you.”**

Isaiah does not deny:

Darkness.

It is:

Deep.

Widespread.

Real.

But:

The Lord rises.

Cross References

John 1:5

The light shines in darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it.

Isaiah 9:2

People walking in deep darkness see a great light.

Matthew 4:16

Matthew applies Isaiah’s great-light imagery to the ministry of Jesus.

Spiritual Principle

Darkness is powerful.

But not:

Ultimate.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never judge the future only by the darkness on the earth; look also for the glory rising from God.

V. “BUT THE LORD”

Those words change:

Everything.

Darkness:

But the Lord.

Fear:

But the Lord.

Judgment:

But the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

God’s presence changes:

The meaning of darkness.

VI. NATIONS COME TO THE LIGHT

Isaiah 60:3 — Glory Becomes Witness

> **“Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.”**

The light draws:

Nations.

Kings.

Cross References

Matthew 2:2

Wise men from the nations come seeking the newborn King after seeing His star.

Revelation 21:24

The nations walk by the light of the final holy city, and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it.

Psalm 72:11

Kings and nations are pictured bowing before and serving the righteous royal figure.

Spiritual Principle

God’s glory is:

Missionary.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God lights His people, the purpose is not merely that they feel brighter, but that others can see where to come.

VII. KINGS COME TO THE BRIGHTNESS

Earthly authority recognizes:

Greater glory.

Spiritual Principle

God’s light reaches:

Every level of society.

VIII. LIFT UP YOUR EYES

Isaiah 60:4 — The Scattered Return

> **“Lift up your eyes and look around: they all gather and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried at your side.”**

The command:

Look.

Why?

Because gathering is:

Happening.

Cross References

Isaiah 49:18

Zion is told to look around and see her children gathering and returning.

Isaiah 43:6

God commands the north and south to release His sons and daughters and bring them home.

Isaiah 66:12

God pictures restored Zion receiving her children tenderly and abundantly.

Spiritual Principle

God specializes in:

Gathering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes restoration begins when God tells you to stop staring at what was lost and look at what He is bringing back.

IX. SONS AND DAUGHTERS RETURN

The restoration is:

Relational.

Generational.

Spiritual Principle

God’s work includes:

Families.

Communities.

Future generations.

X. RADIANT WITH JOY

Isaiah 60:5 — The Heart Enlarged

> **“Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will tremble and swell with joy, because the wealth of the seas will be brought to you, the riches of the nations will come to you.”**

The heart reacts with:

Awe.

Joy.

Wonder.

Cross References

Psalm 72:10

Kings from distant lands bring gifts and tribute.

Haggai 2:7

The nations are shaken and their treasures come, filling God’s house with glory.

Psalm 96:11

Heaven and earth are called to rejoice before the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration can overwhelm the heart with:

Joy.

XI. RICHES OF THE NATIONS

The resources of nations are redirected toward:

God’s purposes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can take what once served human pride and redirect it toward His glory.

XII. CARAVANS FROM MIDIAN, EPHAH, AND SHEBA

Isaiah 60:6 — Gold, Incense, and Praise

> **“A great caravan of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. All from Sheba will come, bringing gold and incense and proclaiming the praises of the Lord.”**

The nations arrive with:

Gold.

Incense.

Praise.

Cross References

Matthew 2:11

The wise men bring Jesus gifts including gold and incense.

1 Kings 10:2

The queen of Sheba comes to Solomon with spices, gold, and precious treasures.

Psalm 72:15

The royal figure is honored with gold from Sheba.

Spiritual Principle

Material gifts become meaningful when joined with:

Praise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest thing the nations bring is not gold or incense—it is praise to the Lord.

XIII. SHEBA AND MESSIANIC ECHOES

The imagery of:

Gold.

Incense.

Nations.

Kings.

Naturally resonates with:

Messianic fulfillment.

Spiritual Principle

Zion’s restoration points toward:

A King worthy of global worship.

XIV. FLOCKS AND OFFERINGS

Isaiah 60:7 — Worship from the Nations

> **“All the flocks of Kedar will be gathered to you, the rams of Nebaioth will serve you; they will be accepted as offerings on My altar, and I will glorify My glorious house.”**

The nations do not only bring:

Commerce.

They bring:

Worship.

Cross References

Psalm 68:29

Kings bring gifts because of God’s glorious temple.

Haggai 2:9

God promises that the latter glory of His house will surpass the former.

Malachi 1:11

God declares that His name will be great among the nations and pure worship will be offered widely.

Spiritual Principle

Mission ultimately leads to:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The goal is not merely that nations admire Zion, but that nations honor Zion’s God.

XV. “I WILL GLORIFY MY HOUSE”

The sanctuary’s glory comes from:

God.

Spiritual Principle

God’s house is glorious when:

God is honored there.

XVI. FLYING LIKE CLOUDS

Isaiah 60:8 — Rapid Return

> **“Who are these that fly along like clouds, like doves returning to their nests?”**

Isaiah sees movement:

Fast.

Numerous.

Homeward.

Cross References

Hosea 11:11

God’s people return trembling like birds from distant lands as He restores them.

Psalm 68:13

Bird imagery is used poetically to describe beauty and movement.

Isaiah 60:4

The sons and daughters are already pictured returning from afar.

Spiritual Principle

God can accelerate:

Restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What looked scattered beyond recovery can suddenly begin coming home.

XVII. DOVES RETURN TO NESTS

The imagery is:

Tender.

Homeward.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration means more than relocation.

It means:

Home.

XVIII. THE ISLANDS LOOK TO GOD

Isaiah 60:9 — Ships Bring the Children Home

> **“Surely the islands look to Me; the ships of Tarshish are first, bringing your children from afar, with their silver and gold, for the honor of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for He has made you beautiful.”**

The purpose is clear:

> **“For the honor of the Lord.”**

Cross References

Isaiah 42:4

The distant islands wait in hope for God’s teaching and justice.

Psalm 72:10

Distant kings bring tribute and gifts.

Psalm 47:9

Nobles of the nations assemble with the people of Abraham’s God because the rulers of the earth belong to Him.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration should produce:

God-centered honor.

XIX. “HE HAS MADE YOU BEAUTIFUL”

Zion’s beauty is:

Received.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace does not merely forgive ugliness; it creates beauty that points back to the One who made it.

XX. FOREIGNERS REBUILD THE WALLS

Isaiah 60:10 — Anger Gives Way to Compassion

> **“Foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their kings will serve you. Though I struck you in My anger, in My favor I will have compassion on you.”**

The same God who:

Disciplined.

Now:

Restores.

Cross References

Zechariah 6:15

People from far away participate in building the Lord’s temple.

Ezra 6:14

The restored community succeeds in rebuilding through God’s command and royal support.

Isaiah 61:5

Foreigners are pictured assisting with the work and resources of restored Zion.

Spiritual Principle

Divine discipline is not the same as:

Permanent rejection.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The hand that disciplined Zion is the hand that rebuilds her.

XXI. FAVOR AFTER ANGER

God’s anger is:

Real.

His compassion:

Greater in the restoration.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment is not:

His final covenant word.

XXII. GATES ALWAYS OPEN

Isaiah 60:11 — Security Without Fear

> **“Your gates will always stand open; they will never be shut, day or night, so that the wealth of the nations may be brought to you, with their kings led in procession.”**

Open gates usually indicate:

Vulnerability.

Here they indicate:

Security.

There is no need to close them.

Cross References

Revelation 21:25

The gates of the New Jerusalem are never shut because there is no night there.

Zechariah 14:7

A unique day belonging to the Lord culminates in continuing light.

Isaiah 26:2

The gates are opened so the righteous nation may enter.

Spiritual Principle

Perfect security removes:

Fear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God becomes the city’s true defense, open gates no longer mean weakness.

XXIII. NATIONS SERVE THE LORD’S PURPOSE

The wealth comes:

Into Zion.

Spiritual Principle

Human resources are ultimately under:

God’s ownership.

XXIV. NATIONS THAT RESIST GOD’S KINGDOM

Isaiah 60:12 — Rebellion Cannot Endure Forever

> **“For the nation or kingdom that will not serve you will perish; it will be utterly ruined.”**

This is strong kingdom language.

It reflects:

God’s sovereign rule.

Cross References

Psalm 2:9

The Messiah rules rebellious nations with irresistible authority.

Zechariah 14:17

Nations refusing to honor the Lord face consequences.

Daniel 7:27

The final kingdom belongs to the people of the Most High under God’s everlasting reign.

Spiritual Principle

God’s kingdom cannot be:

Overthrown.

XXV. THE GLORY OF LEBANON

Isaiah 60:13 — The Sanctuary Beautified

> **“The glory of Lebanon will come to you—the pine, the fir, and the cypress together—to adorn My sanctuary; and I will make the place of My feet glorious.”**

The finest materials are used for:

God’s sanctuary.

Cross References

Isaiah 35:2

Lebanon’s glory and beauty become images of restored creation.

1 Kings 5:6

Lebanon’s cedar was used in building Solomon’s temple.

Psalm 96:6

Splendor and majesty are before the Lord, and strength and beauty characterize His sanctuary.

Spiritual Principle

The best belongs:

To God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God restores worship, beauty becomes a servant of holiness rather than a substitute for it.

XXVI. THE PLACE OF GOD’S FEET

The sanctuary is described as:

His dwelling place.

Spiritual Principle

God’s presence makes:

A place glorious.

XXVII. OPPRESSORS BOW

Isaiah 60:14 — The City of the Lord

> **“The children of your oppressors will come bowing before you; all who despised you will bow at your feet. They will call you the City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.”**

Despised Zion becomes:

Honored Zion.

Cross References

Revelation 3:9

Christ promises vindication for His faithful people before those who falsely opposed them.

Psalm 87:3

Glorious things are spoken concerning the city of God.

Zechariah 8:23

People from the nations seek association with God’s people because they recognize God is with them.

Spiritual Principle

God can reverse:

Human verdicts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The people who once despised what God was doing may one day recognize where His presence truly rested.

XXVIII. “CITY OF THE LORD”

Zion’s greatest identity is not:

Wealth.

Beauty.

Population.

But:

Belonging to God.

Spiritual Principle

Identity comes from:

Ownership.

XXIX. FORSAKEN BECOMES EVERLASTING PRIDE

Isaiah 60:15 — Joy for Generations

> **“Although you were forsaken and hated, with no one passing through, I will make you an everlasting pride, a joy for all generations.”**

Before:

Forsaken.

Hated.

Empty.

After:

Honored.

Joyful.

Remembered.

Cross References

Isaiah 62:4

Zion will no longer be called forsaken or desolate because God delights in her.

Zephaniah 3:20

God promises to give His restored people honor and praise among the nations.

Isaiah 54:8

Momentary hiddenness gives way to everlasting covenant kindness.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration can completely reverse:

Reputation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never let a season called “forsaken” convince you that God cannot later write “joy for generations.”

XXX. THE LORD IDENTIFIED AS SAVIOR

Isaiah 60:16 — Savior, Redeemer, Mighty One

> **“You will drink the milk of nations, and be nursed at royal breasts. Then you will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior, your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”**

The point of provision is:

Knowledge of God.

Three titles:

Savior.

Redeemer.

Mighty One.

Cross References

Isaiah 49:23

Kings and queens assist God’s people and demonstrate that those who hope in Him will not be ashamed.

Psalm 132:2

The Lord is called the Mighty One of Jacob.

Genesis 49:24

Jacob speaks of the Mighty One of Jacob as the source of strength and shepherding.

Spiritual Principle

Provision should deepen:

Knowledge of the Provider.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The blessing has reached its purpose when the recipient knows the Blesser more clearly.

XXXI. “YOU WILL KNOW”

Restoration becomes:

Revelation.

Spiritual Principle

God saves so His people may know:

Who saved them.

XXXII. GOLD INSTEAD OF BRONZE

Isaiah 60:17 — Better Than Before

> **“Instead of bronze I will bring you gold, and silver in place of iron. Instead of wood I will bring you bronze, and iron in place of stones. I will make peace your governor and righteousness your ruler.”**

Repeated phrase:

Instead of.

God improves:

What was.

Cross References

Haggai 2:8

Silver and gold belong ultimately to the Lord.

Isaiah 32:17

The work of righteousness produces peace, quietness, and confidence.

Psalm 72:7

Under the righteous King, righteousness flourishes and peace abounds.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration is not always merely:

Replacement.

Sometimes it is:

Improvement.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace can bring back more than what was lost—it can replace the former condition with something better.

XXXIII. PEACE AS GOVERNOR

What rules the city?

Peace.

Spiritual Principle

Godly government produces:

Shalom.

XXXIV. RIGHTEOUSNESS AS RULER

Justice and righteousness govern:

Life.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A glorious city is not defined merely by precious materials, but by peace and righteousness in authority.

XXXV. VIOLENCE ENDS

Isaiah 60:18 — Walls Called Salvation, Gates Called Praise

> **“No longer will violence be heard in your land, nor ruin or destruction within your borders, but you will call your walls Salvation and your gates Praise.”**

Violence:

Gone.

Destruction:

Gone.

Names changed:

Walls = Salvation.

Gates = Praise.

Cross References

Revelation 21:4

In the final restoration, death, mourning, crying, and pain are removed.

Zechariah 9:8

God promises protective presence around His house so oppressors no longer overrun His people.

Isaiah 26:1

God’s salvation itself is pictured as walls and defenses.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation becomes:

Security.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God is the wall, salvation is stronger than stone.

XXXVI. PRAISE AT THE GATES

Entry becomes:

Worship.

Spiritual Principle

A redeemed community should be:

Marked by praise.

XXXVII. THE LORD AS EVERLASTING LIGHT

Isaiah 60:19 — God Replaces Created Light

> **“The sun will no longer be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.”**

The imagery reaches:

Ultimate restoration.

The created lights become unnecessary beside:

The Creator’s glory.

Cross References

Revelation 21:23

The city has no need of sun or moon because God’s glory illuminates it and the Lamb is its lamp.

Revelation 22:5

There is no night, and God gives His people light forever.

Psalm 27:1

The Lord is described as the believer’s light and salvation.

Spiritual Principle

God is not merely the giver of light.

He is:

Light for His people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest future blessing is not brighter circumstances; it is the Lord Himself becoming the everlasting light.

XXXVIII. GOD IS YOUR GLORY

Not merely:

God gives glory.

God:

Is glory.

Spiritual Principle

The redeemed person’s highest treasure is:

God Himself.

XXXIX. MOURNING ENDS

Isaiah 60:20 — Everlasting Light and Finished Sorrow

> **“Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more; the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning will end.”**

No sunset.

No waning.

No mourning.

Cross References

Revelation 21:25

There is no night in the final city, and its gates remain open.

Revelation 22:5

God’s servants live in perpetual divine light.

Zechariah 14:7

The Lord’s final day is pictured as uniquely characterized by continuing light.

Spiritual Principle

God’s final restoration is:

Permanent.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every earthly light eventually fades; God’s light has no sunset.

XL. “YOUR DAYS OF MOURNING WILL END”

Not:

Reduced.

Ended.

Spiritual Principle

Grief has:

An expiration date in God’s final kingdom.

XLI. ALL THE PEOPLE RIGHTEOUS

Isaiah 60:21 — The Work of God’s Hands

> **“Then all your people will be righteous; they will inherit the land forever. They are the shoot I have planted, the work of My hands, for the display of My splendor.”**

Three great truths:

Righteous people.

Divine planting.

Divine workmanship.

Cross References

Isaiah 4:3

Those remaining in Zion are called holy.

Matthew 5:5

Jesus says the meek will inherit the earth.

1 Peter 2:9

God’s people are chosen to declare the excellencies of the One who called them out of darkness into marvelous light.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people exist to display:

God’s splendor.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A redeemed life is God’s workmanship placed on display so others can see what grace can grow.

XLII. “THE SHOOT I HAVE PLANTED”

God is:

Gardener.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual fruitfulness begins with:

Divine planting.

XLIII. “THE WORK OF MY HANDS”

Zion cannot boast:

I rebuilt myself.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The masterpiece does not sign the Artist’s name; the Artist already has.

XLIV. THE LEAST BECOMES A THOUSAND

Isaiah 60:22 — God’s Timing and Multiplication

> **“The least of you will become a thousand, the smallest a mighty nation. I am the Lord; in its time I will do this swiftly.”**

Smallness becomes:

Multiplication.

Weakness becomes:

Strength.

Cross References

Exodus 1:7

Israel multiplies greatly despite oppression.

Ezekiel 36:37

God promises to increase His people like a flock.

Genesis 12:2

God promises Abraham that He will make of him a great nation.

Spiritual Principle

God is not limited by:

Small beginnings.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never measure God’s future by the size of the beginning.

XLV. “IN ITS TIME”

God has:

Timing.

Spiritual Principle

Promise does not eliminate:

Waiting.

XLVI. “I WILL DO THIS SWIFTLY”

At the appointed time:

Sudden fulfillment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may prepare slowly and fulfill suddenly.

XLVII. THE GREAT MOVEMENT FROM ISAIAH 59 TO ISAIAH 60

Isaiah 59

Darkness.

Sin.

Separation.

Truth fallen.

Isaiah 60

Light.

Glory.

Gathering.

Righteousness.

Key Truth

The Redeemer of Isaiah 59 creates the radiant restoration of Isaiah 60.

XLVIII. ISAIAH 60 AND THE LIGHT THEME

Isaiah 9:

Great light.

Isaiah 42:

Servant as light.

Isaiah 49:

Light to nations.

Isaiah 60:

Zion shines because God’s glory rises upon her.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s light moves from promise, to Servant, to nations, to a people who reflect His glory.

XLIX. ISAIAH 60 AND JESUS CHRIST

Jesus says:

> **“I am the Light of the world.”**

The New Testament repeatedly connects divine light with:

Christ.

Spiritual Principle

The fullest Christian reading of Isaiah’s light finds its center in:

Jesus.

L. ISAIAH 60 AND THE MAGI

Matthew 2 includes:

Nations.

A king.

A star.

Gold.

Incense.

These themes naturally echo:

Isaiah’s vision.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The visit of the wise men gives an early glimpse of nations bringing honor to the Messiah.

LI. ISAIAH 60 AND REVELATION 21

Shared imagery:

Nations.

Kings.

Open gates.

Glory.

Light.

No night.

Key Truth

Revelation takes Isaiah’s Zion imagery and carries it into the final vision of the New Jerusalem.

LII. ISAIAH 60 AND REVELATION 22

The Lord gives:

Everlasting light.

No night.

Spiritual Principle

The story ends where God Himself becomes:

All the light His people need.

LIII. ISAIAH 54 AND ISAIAH 60

Isaiah 54

Enlarge:

The tent.

Isaiah 60

Nations and children:

Fill the city.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The tent had to be enlarged because the gathering was always going to be bigger than Zion expected.

LIV. ISAIAH 56 AND ISAIAH 60

Isaiah 56

House of prayer for:

All nations.

Isaiah 60

Nations come to:

The light.

Spiritual Principle

Worldwide prayer becomes:

Worldwide gathering.

LV. ISAIAH 58 AND ISAIAH 60

Isaiah 58

Your light will rise.

Isaiah 60

> **“Arise, shine.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Righteous living and divine glory both make God’s people visible in a dark world.

LVI. ISAIAH 59 AND ISAIAH 60

Isaiah 59

Darkness through:

Sin.

Isaiah 60

Light through:

God’s glory.

Spiritual Principle

God’s answer to moral darkness is:

Redemptive light.

LVII. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT DARKNESS

Darkness covers:

Earth.

Spiritual Principle

The Bible is realistic about:

Human darkness.

LVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT LIGHT

The Lord:

Rises.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Darkness does not disappear because humanity becomes smarter; light comes because God acts.

LIX. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT GLORY

The glory belongs to:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Zion reflects:

Divine glory.

LX. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT MISSION

Nations come:

To the light.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A people truly marked by God should point beyond themselves toward God.

LXI. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT GATHERING

Children.

Nations.

Kings.

Ships.

Caravans.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration is:

Expansive.

LXII. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT WORSHIP

Gold.

Incense.

Offerings.

Praise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The nations’ resources ultimately become instruments of worship.

LXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT BEAUTY

> **“He has made you beautiful.”**

Spiritual Principle

Grace beautifies:

What judgment left broken.

LXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT DISCIPLINE

> **“Though I struck you in My anger…”**

Spiritual Principle

God’s discipline is:

Real.

LXV. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT COMPASSION

“In My favor I will have compassion on you.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who disciplines is also the God who restores.

LXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE

Peace becomes:

Governor.

Spiritual Principle

God’s final kingdom is not ruled by:

Violence.

LXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS

Righteousness becomes:

Ruler.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s ideal society is governed not merely efficiently, but righteously.

LXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT SECURITY

Gates remain:

Open.

Spiritual Principle

God’s security removes:

Fear.

LXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT SALVATION

Walls are called:

Salvation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely place salvation inside the city; salvation becomes the city’s defense.

LXX. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT PRAISE

Gates called:

Praise.

Spiritual Principle

Those entering restored Zion encounter:

Worship.

LXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT MOURNING

It will:

End.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Mourning may be a chapter, but God refuses to let it write the final sentence.

LXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT GOD AS LIGHT

The Lord Himself becomes:

Everlasting light.

Spiritual Principle

God is:

The final environment of joy.

LXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE

All the people become:

Righteous.

Spiritual Principle

Final restoration is:

Moral.

Not merely:

Material.

LXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT DIVINE WORKMANSHIP

God plants.

God builds.

God beautifies.

God multiplies.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Zion’s glory is the testimony of God’s workmanship, not human self-congratulation.

LXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT TIMING

“In its time.”

Spiritual Principle

God works according to:

Appointed times.

LXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 60 TEACHES ABOUT SUDDENNESS

“I will do this swiftly.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A promise can wait for years and then arrive with breathtaking speed.

LXXVII. ARISE

Do not stay:

Down.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration changes:

Posture.

LXXVIII. SHINE

Do not hide:

Light.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The glory God gives is meant to become visible.

LXXIX. LIGHT HAS COME

The source arrives:

First.

Spiritual Principle

We shine because:

He came.

LXXX. GLORY RISES

God’s presence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Real revival is more than activity; it is the visible effect of God’s presence.

LXXXI. DEEP DARKNESS

The condition is:

Severe.

Spiritual Principle

God’s glory does not require:

Favorable conditions.

LXXXII. NATIONS COME

Mission.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine light creates missionary gravity.

LXXXIII. KINGS COME

Authority attracted.

Spiritual Principle

God’s glory outranks:

Human glory.

LXXXIV. LIFT YOUR EYES

Perspective.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes God must change where you are looking before you recognize what He is gathering.

LXXXV. CHILDREN FROM AFAR

Restoration.

Spiritual Principle

Distance does not defeat:

God’s gathering.

LXXXVI. HEART SWELLS WITH JOY

Emotional restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can make the same heart that trembled in grief tremble again in joy.

LXXXVII. WEALTH OF SEAS

Abundance.

Spiritual Principle

God owns:

The resources.

LXXXVIII. GOLD AND INCENSE

Honor.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The nations bring treasure, but the treasure becomes meaningful only when it accompanies praise.

LXXXIX. PRAISES OF LORD

Mission’s goal.

Spiritual Principle

The nations become:

Worshipers.

XC. ACCEPTED OFFERINGS

God receives:

Their worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The nations are not merely spectators at Zion; they become participants in worship.

XCI. DOVES RETURNING

Homecoming.

Spiritual Principle

God gathers with:

Tenderness.

XCII. ISLANDS LOOK TO GOD

Distant peoples.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No coastline lies beyond the horizon of God’s mission.

XCIII. SHIPS BRING CHILDREN

Means become:

Servants of restoration.

Spiritual Principle

God can use ordinary resources to accomplish:

Covenant purposes.

XCIV. SILVER AND GOLD

Wealth redirected.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Resources become holy when they are surrendered to God’s honor.

XCV. FOREIGNERS REBUILD

Former outsiders become:

Helpers.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration can involve unexpected:

People.

XCVI. KINGS SERVE

Power redirected.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Earthly authority reaches its proper place when it serves God’s purposes.

XCVII. STRUCK IN ANGER

Discipline remembered.

Spiritual Principle

Grace does not rewrite history dishonestly.

XCVIII. COMPASSION IN FAVOR

Restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can tell the truth about judgment and still write mercy afterward.

XCIX. OPEN GATES

No fear.

Spiritual Principle

Security becomes:

Visible.

C. DAY AND NIGHT

Continuous access.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s final kingdom does not operate on fear-driven closing hours.

CI. REBELLIOUS KINGDOMS PERISH

Sovereignty.

Spiritual Principle

God’s reign:

Wins.

CII. LEBANON’S GLORY

Creation serves:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The beauty of creation reaches its highest purpose when it adorns the worship of the Creator.

CIII. PLACE OF HIS FEET

Presence.

Spiritual Principle

The sanctuary is glorious because:

He is there.

CIV. OPPRESSORS BOW

Vindication.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The humiliated may someday watch God correct the verdict of those who despised them.

CV. CITY OF THE LORD

Identity.

Spiritual Principle

Belonging to God is:

The highest civic title.

CVI. ZION OF HOLY ONE

Holiness defines:

The city.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A city belonging to the Holy One must ultimately reflect His holiness.

CVII. FORSAKEN TO HONORED

Reversal.

Spiritual Principle

God restores:

Reputation.

CVIII. HATED TO JOY

Transformation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can turn a place people avoided into a place generations celebrate.

CIX. SAVIOR

Rescue.

Spiritual Principle

God delivers.

CX. REDEEMER

Recovery.

Spiritual Principle

God buys back what was:

Lost.

CXI. MIGHTY ONE OF JACOB

Power.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Redeemer is gentle enough to gather and mighty enough to protect what He gathers.

CXII. GOLD FOR BRONZE

Upgrade.

Spiritual Principle

God’s future surpasses:

Former conditions.

CXIII. SILVER FOR IRON

Greater value.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace does not always restore the exact old thing; sometimes it gives something richer.

CXIV. PEACE GOVERNS

No tyranny.

Spiritual Principle

Shalom becomes:

Policy.

CXV. RIGHTEOUSNESS RULES

Moral government.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The best government is not merely strong—it is righteous.

CXVI. NO VIOLENCE

Safety.

Spiritual Principle

God’s final kingdom excludes:

Destructive violence.

CXVII. NO RUIN

Preservation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Where God’s salvation becomes the wall, destruction no longer defines the city.

CXVIII. WALLS CALLED SALVATION

Defense.

Spiritual Principle

God Himself saves.

CXIX. GATES CALLED PRAISE

Entrance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The gates of the restored city do not announce fear; they announce praise.

CXX. NO NEED FOR SUN

Ultimate glory.

Spiritual Principle

Created light yields to:

Creator light.

CXXI. EVERLASTING LIGHT

No sunset.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Everything created has an evening; God’s glory does not.

CXXII. GOD AS GLORY

Highest treasure.

Spiritual Principle

Heaven is glorious because:

God is there.

CXXIII. MOURNING ENDS

Final comfort.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely wipe tears—He creates a future where the causes of those tears are gone.

CXXIV. PEOPLE RIGHTEOUS

Transformation.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation creates:

Holy people.

CXXV. LAND INHERITED FOREVER

Stability.

Spiritual Principle

Final restoration is:

Secure.

CXXVI. PLANTED BY GOD

Life.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God plants has roots human opposition cannot finally remove.

CXXVII. WORK OF HIS HANDS

Grace.

Spiritual Principle

The redeemed are:

Divine workmanship.

CXXVIII. DISPLAY OF SPLENDOR

Purpose.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not restore us so we can display ourselves; He restores us so His splendor can be seen.

CXXIX. LEAST BECOMES THOUSAND

Multiplication.

Spiritual Principle

Smallness is not:

Final.

CXXX. SMALLEST BECOMES MIGHTY

Weakness transformed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can build a mighty future from a beginning everyone else overlooked.

CXXXI. “I AM THE LORD”

The guarantee.

Spiritual Principle

Promise rests on:

God’s identity.

CXXXII. “IN ITS TIME”

Patience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not call a promise late when God still calls it “in its time.”

CXXXIII. “I WILL DO THIS SWIFTLY”

Sudden fulfillment.

Spiritual Principle

God controls:

Pace.

CXXXIV. ISAIAH 60 AS A LIGHT CHAPTER

Light.

Brightness.

Glory.

No darkness.

Everlasting light.

Key Truth

The chapter begins with light arriving and ends with God Himself as everlasting light.

CXXXV. ISAIAH 60 AS A GATHERING CHAPTER

Sons.

Daughters.

Nations.

Kings.

Ships.

Caravans.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration is never:

Small-minded.

CXXXVI. ISAIAH 60 AS A MISSIONARY CHAPTER

Nations come:

To light.

Bring:

Praise.

Serve:

God’s purposes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A restored Zion becomes a missionary sign pointing the nations toward the Lord.

CXXXVII. ISAIAH 60 AS A WORSHIP CHAPTER

Gold.

Incense.

Offerings.

Sanctuary.

Praise.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration culminates in:

Worship.

CXXXVIII. ISAIAH 60 AS A RESTORATION CHAPTER

Walls rebuilt.

Gates open.

Forsaken city honored.

Violence ended.

Mourning ended.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoration is comprehensive: physical, relational, moral, spiritual, and generational.

CXXXIX. ISAIAH 60 AS A PEACE CHAPTER

Peace governs.

Violence ends.

Spiritual Principle

God’s glory produces:

Shalom.

CXL. ISAIAH 60 AS A RIGHTEOUSNESS CHAPTER

Righteousness rules.

All people righteous.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The glory of God is never separated from the holiness of His people.

CXLI. ISAIAH 60 AS A FUTURE-HOPE CHAPTER

Everlasting light.

No mourning.

Permanent inheritance.

Spiritual Principle

History is moving toward:

God’s glory.

CXLII. TWELVE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 60

1. Darkness → Light

2. Deep Darkness → Divine Glory

3. Scattering → Gathering

4. Fear → Radiance

5. Poverty → Abundance

6. Ruined Walls → Rebuilt Walls

7. Closed Fearful City → Open Gates

8. Forsaken → Honored

9. Violence → Peace

10. Destruction → Salvation

11. Mourning → Everlasting Light

12. Smallness → Mighty Multiplication

Key Truth

Isaiah 60 is one long testimony to God’s power to reverse what darkness, exile, violence, shame, and grief appeared to make permanent.

CXLIII. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 60

1. God’s Glory Outshines Darkness

Principle:

Darkness may cover the earth, but it cannot extinguish divine light.

2. God’s People Are Called to Shine

Principle:

Received light becomes reflected light.

3. God’s Glory Draws the Nations

Principle:

Mission begins with God making Himself visible through His people.

4. God Gathers the Scattered

Principle:

Distance cannot defeat His restoring purpose.

5. Restoration Produces Joy

Principle:

A grieving heart can become radiant again.

6. The Nations Ultimately Serve God’s Glory

Principle:

Earthly resources and authority belong under divine purpose.

7. God Turns Anger into Compassion

Principle:

Discipline is not permanent rejection.

8. God Reverses Shame

Principle:

The forsaken city becomes a joy for generations.

9. Peace and Righteousness Belong Together

Principle:

God’s ideal rule is both peaceful and righteous.

10. God Himself Is the Final Light

Principle:

The highest blessing is His presence.

11. Mourning Will End

Principle:

Sorrow does not receive the final word.

12. God Can Multiply the Small

Principle:

His timing determines when small beginnings become mighty outcomes.

CXLIV. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What commands open Isaiah 60?

Arise and shine.

Question 2

Why should Zion shine?

Because her light has come and the Lord’s glory rises upon her.

Question 3

What covers the earth?

Darkness and deep darkness.

Question 4

What rises upon Zion?

The Lord and His glory.

Question 5

Who comes to Zion’s light?

Nations and kings.

Question 6

What does Zion see when she lifts her eyes?

Her children gathering from afar.

Question 7

How does Zion react?

With radiance, awe, and joy.

Question 8

What do the nations bring?

Resources, gold, incense, flocks, and praise.

Question 9

What is more important than the material gifts?

The praise and honor given to the Lord.

Question 10

Who helps rebuild Zion’s walls?

Foreigners.

Question 11

What does God say about His former anger?

He struck Zion in anger but now shows compassion in favor.

Question 12

Why are the gates always open?

Because the city is secure and the nations continually come.

Question 13

What happens to nations persistently resisting God’s rule?

They do not endure.

Question 14

What adorns God’s sanctuary?

The glory and resources of Lebanon.

Question 15

What will Zion’s former oppressors acknowledge?

That she is the City of the Lord.

Question 16

What happens to the city once called forsaken?

It becomes an everlasting joy and honor.

Question 17

What titles does God give Himself in verse 16?

Savior, Redeemer, and Mighty One of Jacob.

Question 18

What rules the restored city?

Peace and righteousness.

Question 19

What disappears from the land?

Violence, ruin, and destruction.

Question 20

What are the walls called?

Salvation.

Question 21

What are the gates called?

Praise.

Question 22

Who becomes Zion’s everlasting light?

The Lord.

Question 23

What happens to mourning?

It ends.

Question 24

How are the people described?

Righteous and planted by God.

Question 25

Why does God plant them?

For the display of His splendor.

Question 26

What happens to the least and smallest?

They become multiplied and mighty.

Question 27

When will God fulfill the promise?

In its appointed time.

Question 28

How quickly can He fulfill it when the time arrives?

Swiftly.

CXLV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 60 asks several searching questions.

Am I Still Sitting When God Says:

Arise?

Am I Hiding When God Says:

Shine?

Do I Believe Darkness Is:

Stronger?

Or do I believe God’s glory is:

Greater?

Am I Trying to Produce my own:

Light?

Instead of reflecting:

God’s?

Does my life draw attention toward:

God?

Or toward:

Me?

Have I stopped looking for people God may still be:

Gathering?

Can I believe God can restore:

Relationships?

Families?

Communities?

Ministries?

Am I prepared for:

Unexpected restoration?

Does God’s blessing make me more:

Radiant?

Thankful?

Worshipful?

Do I view my resources as:

Mine alone?

Or as something that can honor:

God?

Do I believe God can use unexpected people to help:

Rebuild?

Have I mistaken divine discipline for:

Permanent rejection?

Do I believe God’s compassion can write a new chapter after:

Anger?

Am I living as though fear requires:

Closed gates?

What still makes me feel:

Forsaken?

Can I believe God can turn that place into:

Joy?

Is peace governing:

My heart?

Is righteousness ruling:

My choices?

Is there violence, bitterness, or destruction that God wants to:

Remove?

Is God Himself:

My light?

Or do I depend on:

People?

Circumstances?

Success?

Approval?

Do I believe my mourning has:

An ending?

Do I see myself as:

The work of God’s hands?

Is my life displaying:

His splendor?

Have I despised a:

Small beginning?

Can I wait for:

God’s time?

Can I believe He can act:

Swiftly?

CXLVI. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Measure God’s Light by the Darkness Around You”

Darkness covers:

Earth.

But glory rises:

Upon Zion.

Principle:

The condition of the world does not determine the strength of God’s light.

CXLVII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“You Shine Best When You Remember the Light Is Not Yours”

Zion’s glory comes from:

God.

Principle:

The safest kind of spiritual influence is reflected glory.

CXLVIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The God Who Scattered Can Gather”

Children come:

From afar.

Principle:

Distance is never greater than the reach of the One who gathers.

CXLIX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Can Turn a Forsaken Place into a Joy for Generations”

Forsaken.

Hated.

Empty.

Then:

Honored.

Principle:

Never allow a temporary description to become your permanent prophecy.

CL. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Peace and Righteousness Make Better Rulers Than Fear and Violence”

God says:

Peace governs.

Righteousness rules.

Principle:

God’s kingdom is not merely powerful; it is morally beautiful.

CLI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Every Earthly Light Has a Sunset—God Does Not”

Sun fades.

Moon wanes.

God remains:

Everlasting light.

Principle:

Build your deepest hope on the Light that cannot go down.

CLII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Despise the Smallest Beginning When God Has Said, ‘In Its Time’”

Least:

Thousand.

Smallest:

Nation.

Principle:

Smallness is not proof that God’s promise is small.

CLIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God May Prepare Slowly and Fulfill Suddenly”

> **“In its time I will do this swiftly.”**

Principle:

Waiting and sudden fulfillment are not opposites when both belong to God’s timing.

CLIV. THE CALL TO ARISE

Restoration begins with:

Movement.

Spiritual Principle

Grace calls:

Forward.

CLV. THE CALL TO SHINE

Light must become:

Visible.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not ask God for light and then hide what He gives.

CLVI. THE WORLD’S DARKNESS

Real.

Spiritual Principle

Christian hope is not:

Denial.

CLVII. THE LORD’S GLORY

Greater.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Biblical hope looks directly at darkness and still says, “But the Lord.”

CLVIII. THE NATIONS RESPOND

Mission.

Spiritual Principle

God’s glory creates:

Movement.

CLIX. KINGS RESPOND

Authority.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The highest earthly throne remains beneath God’s glory.

CLX. GATHERED CHILDREN

Restoration.

Spiritual Principle

God rebuilds through:

People.

CLXI. RADIANT FACE

Joy seen:

Externally.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some blessings are so deep they eventually show on the face.

CLXII. TREMBLING HEART

Awe.

Spiritual Principle

Joy can be:

Overwhelming.

CLXIII. CARAVANS

Abundance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s provision can arrive from directions you never expected.

CLXIV. GOLD

Value.

Spiritual Principle

Resources surrendered to God become:

Worship tools.

CLXV. INCENSE

Worship.

Spiritual Principle

Praise belongs:

With provision.

CLXVI. SHEBA PRAISES THE LORD

Nations worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Mission is complete when those once far away praise the Lord for themselves.

CLXVII. KEDAR AND NEBAIOTH

Former distant peoples participate.

Spiritual Principle

God’s mission reaches:

Beyond familiar borders.

CLXVIII. ALTAR ACCEPTANCE

Worship welcomed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The nations are not merely admitted into the courtyard; their worship is received.

CLXIX. CLOUDS AND DOVES

Multitudes and homecoming.

Spiritual Principle

God can gather:

Quickly.

CLXX. SHIPS OF TARSHISH

Distance overcome.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The same sea that once represented distance becomes the highway of return.

CLXXI. “HE MADE YOU BEAUTIFUL”

Grace.

Spiritual Principle

Beauty can be:

Restored.

CLXXII. WALLS REBUILT

Security.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Broken walls do not mean permanent exposure.

CLXXIII. ANGER AND FAVOR

Both true.

Spiritual Principle

God’s holiness and mercy:

Coexist.

CLXXIV. OPEN GATES

Confidence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The city that trusts God does not need fear to become its gatekeeper.

CLXXV. KINGDOMS BOW TO GOD’S RULE

Sovereignty.

Spiritual Principle

God’s kingdom is:

Final.

CLXXVI. SANCTUARY BEAUTIFIED

Worship restored.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can take the materials of creation and turn them into a testimony of holiness.

CLXXVII. FORMER DESPISERS RECOGNIZE ZION

Vindication.

Spiritual Principle

God corrects:

False judgments.

CLXXVIII. FORSAKEN NO MORE

Identity changed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God specializes in renaming places pain thought it owned.

CLXXIX. SAVIOR AND REDEEMER

Personal revelation.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration reveals:

Who God is.

CLXXX. GOLD FOR BRONZE

Increase in glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can replace survival-quality restoration with kingdom-quality abundance.

CLXXXI. PEACE AS GOVERNOR

Rule.

Spiritual Principle

Peace governs:

Relationships.

CLXXXII. RIGHTEOUSNESS AS RULER

Moral order.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Peace without righteousness is fragile; righteousness gives peace a foundation.

CLXXXIII. VIOLENCE SILENCED

Transformation.

Spiritual Principle

God’s kingdom heals:

Communities.

CLXXXIV. WALLS OF SALVATION

Defense.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Stone walls can fall; salvation does not.

CLXXXV. GATES OF PRAISE

Access.

Spiritual Principle

Praise marks:

Entrance.

CLXXXVI. NO SUN REQUIRED

Divine sufficiency.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God Himself is the light, nothing created has to carry the burden of being ultimate.

CLXXXVII. NO MOON REQUIRED

Created lights secondary.

Spiritual Principle

God surpasses:

Every created good.

CLXXXVIII. EVERLASTING LIGHT

Permanence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s people are moving toward a day with no spiritual sunset.

CLXXXIX. MOURNING FINISHED

Hope.

Spiritual Principle

Sorrow is:

Temporary.

CXC. RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE

Final transformation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely put righteous people in a better city; He creates a righteous people fit for that city.

CXCI. DIVINE PLANTING

God causes:

Life.

Spiritual Principle

Grace grows:

Fruit.

CXCII. DIVINE WORKMANSHIP

God receives:

Credit.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The restored community is an exhibit of what God’s hands can do.

CXCIII. DISPLAY OF SPLENDOR

Mission.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people become:

Testimony.

CXCIV. LEAST TO THOUSAND

Multiplication.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not count God out because the beginning looks numerically unimpressive.

CXCV. SMALL TO MIGHTY

Transformation.

Spiritual Principle

God multiplies:

Potential.

CXCVI. GOD’S TIME

Patience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A promise is not delayed merely because it has not arrived on our preferred schedule.

CXCVII. GOD’S SPEED

Suddenness.

Spiritual Principle

Fulfillment can be:

Rapid.

CXCVIII. ISAIAH 60 AS A WHOLE

The chapter moves:

From:

Darkness.

To:

Light.

From:

Scattering.

To:

Gathering.

From:

Poverty.

To:

Abundance.

From:

Forsaken.

To:

Honored.

From:

Violence.

To:

Peace.

From:

Mourning.

To:

Everlasting glory.

From:

Smallness.

To:

Multiplication.

Key Truth

Isaiah 60 is a prophetic portrait of restoration so complete that every major scar of exile—darkness, distance, shame, poverty, violence, abandonment, and grief—is answered by the glory of the Lord.

CXCIX. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 60

1. The Light Arrives

The glory of the Lord rises upon Zion.

2. Darkness Is Overcome

Deep darkness cannot prevent divine glory from appearing.

3. The Nations Are Drawn

Kings and peoples come toward the light.

4. The Scattered Are Gathered

Sons and daughters return from afar.

5. Worship and Resources Flow Toward Zion

Gold, incense, flocks, ships, and praise arrive.

6. The City Is Rebuilt

Foreigners and kings participate in restoration.

7. Shame Is Reversed

The forsaken city becomes honored and joyful.

8. Peace and Righteousness Govern

Violence and destruction disappear.

9. God Becomes Everlasting Light

Sun and moon become secondary beside His glory.

10. Smallness Becomes Greatness

God fulfills His promise in His appointed time.

Key Truth

Isaiah 60 moves from darkness to everlasting light because God Himself becomes the source, purpose, and glory of Zion's restoration.

CC. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 60 begins with:

> **"Arise."**

That means:

Do not stay down.

Then:

> **"Shine."**

That means:

Do not hide.

Why?

> **"Your light has come."**

Notice:

You do not create:

The light.

You receive:

The light.

That matters.

The Christian life is not:

Trying to generate glory.

It is:

Reflecting the glory of God.

Then Isaiah says:

Darkness covers:

The earth.

Deep darkness covers:

People.

Maybe that sounds like:

Our world.

Confusion.

Sin.

Fear.

Violence.

Division.

Unbelief.

But Isaiah does not stop with:

Darkness.

He says:

> **“But the Lord rises upon you.”**

Never end the sentence before:

“But the Lord.”

The darkness is real.

But:

God is greater.

Then nations begin:

Coming.

Why?

Because light:

Attracts.

A church full of:

Truth.

Love.

Holiness.

Prayer.

Grace.

Righteousness.

Compassion.

Should become visible in:

A dark world.

Not so people say:

What a wonderful people.

But:

What a wonderful God.

Then Zion lifts her eyes and sees:

People coming home.

Maybe some things have been:

Scattered.

Children.

Relationships.

Dreams.

Ministry.

Hope.

Do not assume:

Distance equals impossibility.

God knows how to:

Gather.

Then the nations bring:

Gold.

Incense.

Resources.

But the greatest thing they bring is:

Praise.

That is what God ultimately wants:

Worship.

Then Zion’s walls are:

Rebuilt.

The city becomes:

Beautiful.

Her gates remain:

Open.

Why?

Because fear no longer:

Rules.

Then those who once called Zion:

Forsaken.

Must call her:

The City of the Lord.

What a reversal.

Maybe someone has named your life:

Failure.

Forsaken.

Finished.

Empty.

Useless.

God can write:

Another name.

Then the Lord says:

You will know Me as:

Savior.

Redeemer.

Mighty One.

That is the goal of restoration.

Not merely that:

Circumstances improve.

But that:

You know God more deeply.

Then comes:

“Peace your governor.”

What governs:

You?

Fear?

Anger?

Anxiety?

Pride?

Bitterness?

Or:

Peace?

Then:

“Righteousness your ruler.”

What rules:

Your choices?

Convenience?

Desire?

Culture?

Or:

Righteousness?

Then violence disappears.

Walls become:

Salvation.

Gates become:

Praise.

Then something greater:

The Lord becomes:

Everlasting light.

That means every lesser light eventually becomes:

Unnecessary.

People can fail:

God remains.

Money can fail:

God remains.

Health can change:

God remains.

Governments change:

God remains.

Earthly success fades:

God remains.

The sun itself has a:

Sunset.

God does not.

Then:

> **“Your days of mourning will end.”**

Do not overlook that.

There is an end to:

Mourning.

Not necessarily today.

But finally:

Yes.

God is writing a story in which sorrow does not get:

The last chapter.

Then He says:

You are:

My planting.

My workmanship.

For:

My splendor.

You are not restored merely so people see:

You.

You are restored so people see:

Him.

Then the chapter ends:

> **“The least of you will become a thousand, the smallest a mighty nation.”**

Maybe you feel:

Small.

Insignificant.

Outnumbered.

Overlooked.

God says:

Do not measure the ending by:

The beginning.

Then:

> **“In its time I will do this swiftly.”**

That is where faith rests.

Not:

My time.

His time.

Not:

My speed.

His speed.

So Isaiah 60 tells us:

Arise.

Shine.

Lift your eyes.

Expect gathering.

Worship.

Receive restoration.

Let peace govern.

Let righteousness rule.

Trust God with mourning.

Do not despise small beginnings.

And above everything:

Make the Lord:

Your everlasting light.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You are:

Our Light.

Our Glory.

Our Savior.

Our Redeemer.

Our Mighty One.

Father, when darkness covers:

The earth—

Help us remember:

Your glory still rises.

When we are tempted to remain:

Down—

Speak:

“Arise.”

When we are tempted to hide:

Speak:

“Shine.”

Father, let us reflect:

Your light.

Not our own.

Let our lives point:

Nations.

Neighbors.

Families.

Friends.

Toward:

You.

Father, gather what has been:

Scattered.

Restore what has been:

Broken.

Bring home what has wandered:

Far.

Give us eyes to see what You are:

Doing.

Father, take every resource You place in our hands and use it for:

Your glory.

May our gold become:

Worship.

Our influence become:

Service.

Our abundance become:

Praise.

Father, rebuild:

Broken walls.

Restore:

Ruined places.

Replace shame with:

Honor.

Replace fear with:

Security.

Replace violence with:

Peace.

Replace crookedness with:

Righteousness.

Father, govern us with:

Peace.

Rule us with:

Righteousness.

Make our walls:

Salvation.

Our gates:

Praise.

Thank You that You are the:

Everlasting Light.

When earthly lights fade:

Remain.

When people fail:

Remain.

When circumstances change:

Remain.

When the night feels long:

Remain.

Father, comfort everyone walking through:

Mourning.

Remind us that the day is coming when:

Mourning ends.

Make us:

Your planting.

The work of:

Your hands.

A display of:

Your splendor.

Do not let us despise:

Small beginnings.

Teach us to trust:

Your timing.

And when the appointed time arrives:

Do what only You can do.

Swiftly.

Powerfully.

Gloriously.

May our lives declare:

The darkness is not final.

The exile is not final.

The shame is not final.

The mourning is not final.

Because:

The Lord is our everlasting light.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.” — Isaiah 60:1**

Central Truth

The Lord calls restored Zion to arise and shine because His glory has come upon her; though deep darkness covers the peoples, God gathers the scattered, draws nations and kings toward His light, transforms forsakenness into honor and violence into peace, establishes righteousness and salvation, becomes His people’s everlasting light, ends their mourning, and makes them the work of His hands for the display of His splendor.

Isaiah 60 in One Sentence

Isaiah calls Zion to arise and shine because the glory of the Lord has appeared over her, drawing nations and kings to her light, gathering her scattered sons and daughters, bringing worldwide worship and resources, rebuilding and beautifying the city, reversing shame and forsakenness, replacing violence with peace and righteousness, making the Lord Himself her everlasting light, ending mourning, and multiplying even the smallest until God’s restored people become a glorious display of His splendor in His appointed time.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 61 — The Anointed One and the Year of the Lord’s Favor

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 61 is one of the clearest messianic passages in the book of Isaiah.

It begins with:

> **“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me.”**

The speaker is:

Anointed.

Sent.

Empowered.

Commissioned.

His mission is directed toward:

The humble.

The brokenhearted.

The captives.

The bound.

The mourners.

The ashamed.

The ruined.

The devastated.

The chapter therefore begins not with:

Human strength.

But:

Divine anointing.

Not with:

Self-appointed ministry.

But:

God-sent ministry.

Not with:

Religious status.

But:

Good news for broken people.

Jesus directly read from Isaiah 61 in the synagogue at Nazareth.

After reading the words concerning:

The Spirit.

Good news.

Liberty.

Recovery.

Favor.

He declared:

> **“Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”**

That makes Isaiah 61 especially important for understanding:

The mission of Jesus Christ.

He identifies Himself with:

The Spirit-anointed Servant.

The One proclaiming:

Good news.

Freedom.

Healing.

Favor.

Jesus did not merely say Isaiah 61 contained:

A useful principle.

He said it was being:

Fulfilled.

The chapter also contains one of Isaiah’s strongest restoration patterns.

God gives:

Beauty instead of ashes.

Joy instead of mourning.

Praise instead of despair.

A double portion instead of shame.

Righteousness instead of disgrace.

Rebuilt cities instead of ruins.

An everlasting covenant instead of instability.

This repeated phrase:

“Instead of”

Is central to the chapter.

God does not merely:

Remove sorrow.

He gives:

Joy.

He does not merely:

Take ashes away.

He gives:

Beauty.

He does not merely:

Silence despair.

He gives:

Praise.

This is:

Redemptive replacement.

Then the people who are restored become:

Restorers.

Verse 4 says:

> **“They will rebuild the ancient ruins.”**

The same pattern appeared in Isaiah 58.

God restores:

People.

Then restored people repair:

Broken places.

The chapter also gives God’s people a new identity:

> **“Priests of the Lord.”**
>
> **“Ministers of our God.”**

This reaches back to Israel’s calling in:

Exodus 19.

And the New Testament later applies priestly language to the people of God in:

1 Peter.

Revelation.

The chapter ends with:

Salvation.

Righteousness.

Joy.

Praise.

Growth.

And worldwide witness.

God causes righteousness and praise to:

Spring up.

Like:

Seed.

Like:

A garden.

The movement of the chapter is therefore:

Anointing.

Mission.

Healing.

Liberty.

Comfort.

Transformation.

Rebuilding.

Priestly service.

Covenant.

Salvation.

Righteousness.

Praise.

The central truth of Isaiah 61 is:

The Spirit-anointed Servant, fulfilled decisively in Jesus Christ, comes with good news for the humble, healing for the brokenhearted, liberty for captives, comfort for mourners, and the announcement of God's favor; through His saving work God transforms shame into honor, mourning into joy, ruins into restoration, and His covenant people into righteous worshipers and servants whose lives display His praise before the nations.

I. THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD GOD IS UPON ME

Isaiah 61:1 — The Anointed Mission

> **"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the humble. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to open the prison for those who are bound."**

The mission begins with:

The Spirit.

The Servant does not operate merely through:

Natural ability.

Education.

Charisma.

Human authority.

He is:

Anointed by God.

Cross References

Luke 4:18

Jesus reads this passage in the synagogue and applies its Spirit-anointed mission to Himself, declaring good news for the poor, freedom for captives, and release for the oppressed.

Luke 4:21

After reading Isaiah, Jesus tells those listening that the Scripture has been fulfilled in their hearing.

Acts 10:38

Peter describes Jesus as anointed by God with the Holy Spirit and power, going about doing good and delivering those oppressed by the devil.

Spiritual Principle

True ministry begins with:

God’s Spirit.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A divine assignment requires more than human talent; it requires divine empowerment.

II. THE LORD HAS ANOINTED ME

Anointing signifies:

Appointment.

Consecration.

Empowerment.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant does not appoint:

Himself.

III. SENT BY THE LORD

The Servant is:

Commissioned.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The safest place in ministry is not where you chose to go, but where God sent you.

IV. GOOD NEWS TO THE HUMBLE

The message is:

Good news.

The audience:

The humble.

Spiritual Principle

Grace is welcomed by hearts that know:

Their need.

V. THE BROKENHEARTED

God does not merely deal with:

Behavior.

He heals:

Hearts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Messiah does not only break chains around the hands; He heals wounds inside the heart.

VI. LIBERTY TO CAPTIVES

The language points toward:

Release.

Freedom.

Deliverance.

Spiritual Principle

Messianic salvation is:

Liberating.

VII. OPENING THE PRISON

Those bound are:

Released.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus does not decorate prisons of bondage; He opens doors.

VIII. THE YEAR OF THE LORD’S FAVOR

Isaiah 61:2 — Favor, Judgment, and Comfort

> **“To proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn,”**

Two dimensions:

Favor.

Vengeance.

Comfort.

Cross References

Luke 4:19

Jesus reads the proclamation of the Lord’s favorable year in Nazareth.

2 Corinthians 6:2

Paul declares that now is the favorable time and now is the day of salvation.

Leviticus 25:10

The Jubilee year proclaimed liberty throughout the land, returning people and property and providing a powerful background for Isaiah's language of release and favor.

Spiritual Principle

God's salvation includes:

Grace for the repentant.

Judgment against persistent evil.

IX. THE JUBILEE BACKGROUND

The "year of favor" naturally recalls:

Jubilee.

Freedom.

Restoration.

Release.

Return.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Messiah announces a greater liberation than any earthly Jubilee could fully provide.

X. JESUS STOPS BEFORE "THE DAY OF VENGEANCE"

In Luke 4, Jesus reads the favorable-year portion and stops before completing Isaiah's phrase concerning:

The day of vengeance.

This does not mean judgment disappears.

It highlights the character of His first public proclamation:

Grace.

Good news.

Salvation.

The New Testament still teaches future:

Judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Christ’s saving invitation is real.

So is:

Final accountability.

XI. COMFORT FOR MOURNERS

The Anointed One comes to people who:

Grieve.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not tell mourners merely to stop crying; He comes near with comfort.

XII. BEAUTY INSTEAD OF ASHES

Isaiah 61:3 — Holy Replacement

> **“To provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and the garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.”**

Three exchanges:

Beauty for ashes.

Joy for mourning.

Praise for despair.

Cross References

Psalm 30:11

God turns mourning into dancing and replaces sorrow with joy.

Matthew 5:4

Jesus declares the mourners blessed because they will be comforted.

Isaiah 60:21

God’s restored people are described as His planting and the work of His hands for the display of His splendor.

Spiritual Principle

Grace creates:

Holy replacement.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely remove the ashes; He gives beauty in their place.

XIII. ASHES

Ashes symbolize:

Mourning.

Grief.

Loss.

Humiliation.

Spiritual Principle

God acknowledges:

The ashes.

XIV. BEAUTY

Restoration does not merely:

Stop grief.

It creates:

New dignity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What sorrow covered in ashes, grace can crown with beauty.

XV. OIL OF JOY

Oil often symbolized:

Gladness.

Celebration.

Honor.

Spiritual Principle

God can restore:

Emotional life.

XVI. GARMENT OF PRAISE

Despair is pictured like:

A heavy spirit.

Praise becomes:

A garment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can change what your soul wears.

XVII. OAKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

No longer:

Fragile.

Unstable.

Broken.

Now:

Oaks.

Strong.

Rooted.

Enduring.

Spiritual Principle

Grace creates:

Stability.

XVIII. A PLANTING OF THE LORD

God receives:

Credit.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The oak cannot boast that it planted itself.

XIX. THAT HE MAY BE GLORIFIED

The purpose of restoration:

God’s glory.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption points:

Upward.

XX. THE RESTORED BECOME RESTORERS

Isaiah 61:4 — Rebuilding Ancient Ruins

> **“They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.”**

Who rebuilds?

Those who were:

Comforted.

Healed.

Restored.

Cross References

Isaiah 58:12

God’s people rebuild ancient ruins and become repairers of broken walls and restorers of streets.

Amos 9:14

God promises restoration in which ruined cities are rebuilt and inhabited.

Jeremiah 33:7

God promises to restore Judah and Israel and rebuild them as before.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration produces:

Restorers.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can turn the person who lived among ruins into the person who rebuilds them.

XXI. ANCIENT RUINS

Some damage is:

Old.

Generational.

Deep.

Spiritual Principle

Age does not make brokenness:

Irreversible.

XXII. LONG-DEVASTATED PLACES

Some wounds last:

Years.

Generations.

Still:

Restoration remains possible.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse “broken for generations” with “broken forever.”

XXIII. STRANGERS SERVE

Isaiah 61:5 — Nations Participate in Restoration

> **“Strangers will shepherd your flocks, and foreigners will work your fields and vineyards.”**

Former outsiders become:

Participants.

Cross References

Isaiah 60:10

Foreigners rebuild Zion’s walls and kings participate in her restoration.

Isaiah 14:1

Foreigners join themselves to Jacob within God’s restoring work.

Ephesians 2:19

Gentile believers are no longer strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens and members of God’s household.

Spiritual Principle

God can turn:

Strangers.

Into:

Helpers.

XXIV. THE NATIONS AND ZION

This passage reflects:

Israel’s restoration.

But it also participates in Isaiah’s larger vision of:

The nations coming toward God’s light.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration has:

International dimensions.

XXV. PRIESTS OF THE LORD

Isaiah 61:6 — A Priestly People

> **“But you will be called priests of the Lord; they will name you ministers of our God.**
> **You will feed on the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast.”**

The people receive:

Priestly identity.

Cross References

Exodus 19:6

Israel is called to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

1 Peter 2:9

Believers are described as a chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation, and people belonging to God who proclaim His excellencies.

Revelation 1:6

Christ makes His redeemed people a kingdom and priests serving God.

Spiritual Principle

God restores people for:

Service.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption does not merely give you something to enjoy; it gives you someone to represent.

XXVI. MINISTERS OF OUR GOD

Priesthood means:

Service.

Worship.

Representation.

Spiritual Principle

Privilege creates:

Responsibility.

XXVII. PRIESTLY CALLING AND THE NATIONS

God’s people are not to:

Consume blessing privately.

They represent:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A priestly people exist to bring God near to people and people near to God.

XXVIII. DOUBLE PORTION INSTEAD OF SHAME

Isaiah 61:7 — Everlasting Joy

> **“Instead of your shame, you will receive a double portion, and instead of disgrace, you will rejoice in your inheritance. So in your land you will inherit a double portion, and everlasting joy will be yours.”**

Again:

Instead of.

Shame replaced by:

Inheritance.

Disgrace replaced by:

Joy.

Cross References

Isaiah 40:2

Jerusalem is comforted with the announcement that her warfare and punishment have reached their appointed completion.

Zechariah 9:12

God promises prisoners of hope that He will restore double.

Job 42:10

After Job’s suffering, God restores his fortunes abundantly.

Spiritual Principle

God can reverse:

Shame.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace does not merely erase disgrace; it can replace it with inheritance.

XXIX. DOUBLE PORTION

The point emphasizes:

Abundant restoration.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration is not:

Bare minimum.

XXX. EVERLASTING JOY

Not:

Temporary excitement.

Everlasting:

Joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God ultimately gives lasts longer than what shame took away.

XXXI. THE LORD LOVES JUSTICE

Isaiah 61:8 — Everlasting Covenant

> **“For I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing. In My faithfulness I will reward My people and make an everlasting covenant with them.”**

God declares:

What He loves.

What He hates.

Love:

Justice.

Hate:

Robbery.

Wrongdoing.

Cross References

Amos 5:21

God rejects religious ceremonies when worship is disconnected from righteousness and justice.

Psalm 11:7

The Lord is righteous and loves righteous deeds.

Micah 6:8

God requires justice, mercy, and humble walking with Him.

Spiritual Principle

God’s covenant never requires Him to compromise:

Justice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God of grace is never indifferent to wrongdoing.

XXXII. GOD HATES ROBBERY

Worship cannot justify:

Exploitation.

Spiritual Principle

God sees:

How people acquire what they possess.

XXXIII. IN FAITHFULNESS HE REWARDS

God’s restoration rests upon:

His character.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant blessing depends on:

Divine faithfulness.

XXXIV. EVERLASTING COVENANT

The promise is:

Durable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not restore His people on a temporary contract.

XXXV. DESCENDANTS KNOWN AMONG THE NATIONS

Isaiah 61:9 — A Visible Blessing

> **“Their descendants will be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples. All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people the Lord has blessed.”**

The blessing becomes:

Visible.

Generational.

Public.

Cross References

Genesis 12:3

God promises Abraham that through him blessing will extend to all families of the earth.

Galatians 3:29

Those belonging to Christ are identified as Abraham’s offspring and heirs according to promise.

Romans 4:16

Paul explains that the promise rests on faith and grace so that it may be guaranteed to Abraham’s broader family of faith.

Spiritual Principle

God’s blessing creates:

Witness.

XXXVI. BLESSING REACHES DESCENDANTS

Restoration has:

Generational reach.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can turn one generation’s disgrace into another generation’s testimony.

XXXVII. RECOGNIZED AS BLESSED BY GOD

The point is not:

Human boasting.

But:

Divine recognition.

Spiritual Principle

The blessing points back to:

The Blesser.

XXXVIII. I DELIGHT GREATLY IN THE LORD

Isaiah 61:10 — Garments of Salvation

> **“I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For He has clothed me with garments of salvation and covered me with the robe of righteousness. As a bridegroom adorns himself like a priest with a crown, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels,”**

The response to salvation is:

Delight.

Joy.

Cross References

Revelation 19:8

The bride is clothed in fine linen connected with the righteous deeds of God’s holy people.

Galatians 3:27

Those baptized into Christ are described as having put on Christ.

Isaiah 62:5

The relationship between God and His restored people is pictured with the joy of bridegroom and bride.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation changes:

What covers us.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely remove filthy garments; He clothes His people with salvation and righteousness.

XXXIX. “I DELIGHT GREATLY”

This is not:

Cold religion.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation produces:

Joy in God.

XL. “MY GOD”

The language is:

Personal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Theology becomes worship when “the God” becomes “my God.”

XLI. GARMENTS OF SALVATION

Salvation becomes:

Clothing.

Identity.

Covering.

Spiritual Principle

God covers what sin exposed.

XLII. ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The restored person is clothed in:

Righteousness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The believer’s greatest covering is not reputation but righteousness provided by God.

XLIII. BRIDEGROOM AND BRIDE

The imagery is:

Festive.

Beautiful.

Covenantal.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption leads toward:

Celebration.

XLIV. RIGHTEOUSNESS SPRINGS UP

Isaiah 61:11 — God Causes the Growth

> **“So the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all nations, just as the soil makes the sprout come up, and as a garden causes seeds to grow.”**

Righteousness:

Grows.

Praise:

Grows.

God:

Causes it.

Cross References

Isaiah 55:11

God’s Word accomplishes His purpose like rain that produces growth.

2 Corinthians 9:10

God supplies seed to the sower and multiplies the harvest of righteousness.

Psalm 85:11

Faithfulness springs from the earth while righteousness looks down from heaven.

Spiritual Principle

Righteousness is:

Cultivated by God’s grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The same God who makes seed rise from soil can make righteousness rise from ruined lives.

XLV. RIGHTEOUSNESS BEFORE THE NATIONS

Restoration becomes:

Public witness.

Spiritual Principle

Holiness has:

Missionary value.

XLVI. PRAISE BEFORE ALL NATIONS

The chapter ends where mission should end:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God grows righteousness so that praise can grow beside it.

XLVII. ISAIAH 60 AND ISAIAH 61

Isaiah 60

Zion:

Arises and shines.

Isaiah 61

The Spirit-anointed One:

Brings the mission that produces restoration.

Key Truth

Isaiah 60 shows the glory of restored Zion; Isaiah 61 reveals the Spirit-anointed ministry behind that restoration.

XLVIII. ISAIAH 59–61

Isaiah 59

The Redeemer comes.

Isaiah 60

The glory rises.

Isaiah 61

The Anointed One speaks.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redeemer, glory, and Spirit-anointed mission belong together in Isaiah’s vision.

XLIX. ISAIAH 53 AND ISAIAH 61

Isaiah 53

The Servant suffers:

For sin.

Isaiah 61

The Anointed One proclaims:

Freedom.

Healing.

Favor.

Spiritual Principle

The good news of Isaiah 61 rests naturally after the saving work of the Servant.

L. ISAIAH 58 AND ISAIAH 61

Isaiah 58

Repairers rebuild:

Ancient ruins.

Isaiah 61

Restored people rebuild:

Ancient ruins.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True revival does not leave ruins untouched.

LI. ISAIAH 56 AND ISAIAH 61

Isaiah 56

God’s people become:

A house of prayer for nations.

Isaiah 61

God’s people become:

Priests of the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer and priestly service belong:

Together.

LII. ISAIAH 55 AND ISAIAH 61

Isaiah 55

Good news is offered:

Freely.

Isaiah 61

Good news is proclaimed:

To the humble.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace not only prepares the feast; grace sends a herald to announce it.

LIII. JESUS AND ISAIAH 61

Luke 4 makes the connection:

Explicit.

Jesus reads:

This passage.

Then says:

Fulfilled.

Key Truth

The New Testament does not merely suggest that Jesus resembles Isaiah’s Anointed One; Jesus publicly identifies His mission with this passage.

LIV. THE SPIRIT AND THE MESSIAH

Spirit upon Him.

Anointed.

Sent.

Spiritual Principle

Messianic ministry is:

Spirit-empowered.

LV. GOOD NEWS AND THE POOR

The good news is not:

Reserved for elite.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The gospel sounds especially good to people who know they cannot purchase what they need.

LVI. HEALING AND THE BROKENHEARTED

Broken hearts are not:

Invisible.

Spiritual Principle

God cares about:

Inner wounds.

LVII. LIBERTY AND CAPTIVITY

The Messiah is:

Liberator.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every chain should be evaluated by whether Christ came to preserve it or break it.

LVIII. FAVOR AND JUBILEE

Freedom.

Restoration.

Return.

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah announces:

Release.

LIX. VENGEANCE AND JUSTICE

God’s salvation is not:

Indifference to evil.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Comfort for victims requires that evil not be treated as morally insignificant forever.

LX. MOURNING AND COMFORT

God enters:

Grief.

Spiritual Principle

Mourning is not:

Disqualifying.

LXI. ASHES AND BEAUTY

Exchange.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace is the great “instead of” of Isaiah 61.

LXII. MOURNING AND JOY

Exchange.

Spiritual Principle

Sorrow can be:

Transformed.

LXIII. DESPAIR AND PRAISE

Exchange.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can put a new song where despair had built a home.

LXIV. OAKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Strong.

Rooted.

Stable.

Spiritual Principle

Righteousness strengthens:

Character.

LXV. GOD’S PLANTING

Source.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If God plants the tree, God deserves the praise for the strength of the oak.

LXVI. REBUILDING RUINS

Mission after healing.

Spiritual Principle

Restored people receive:

Assignments.

LXVII. GENERATIONAL DEVASTATION

Long damage.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Generational ruin can be answered by generational faithfulness.

LXVIII. STRANGERS AS HELPERS

Unexpected partnership.

Spiritual Principle

God can use:

Others.

LXIX. PRIESTS

Representation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Priestly identity is not merely honor; it is responsibility to serve before God and represent Him faithfully.

LXX. MINISTERS

Service.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption produces:

Ministry.

LXXI. DOUBLE FOR SHAME

Restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not always restore by returning exactly what was lost; sometimes His grace answers shame with abundance.

LXXII. EVERLASTING JOY

Permanent future.

Spiritual Principle

God’s final word is:

Joy.

LXXIII. GOD LOVES JUSTICE

Moral character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Any spirituality that ignores justice has failed to reflect the God who says He loves it.

LXXIV. GOD HATES ROBBERY

Moral seriousness.

Spiritual Principle

God cares about:

Wrongdoing.

LXXV. FAITHFUL REWARD

Covenant consistency.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s faithfulness is not sentiment; it acts.

LXXVI. DESCENDANTS AMONG NATIONS

Generational witness.

Spiritual Principle

God’s blessing becomes:

Visible history.

LXXVII. PEOPLE LORD HAS BLESSED

Identity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The best reputation is not “self-made” but “the Lord has blessed them.”

LXXVIII. DELIGHT IN LORD

Response.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation should create:

Worship.

LXXIX. SOUL REJOICES

Inner joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The gospel reaches deeper than behavior; it teaches the soul to rejoice.

LXXX. CLOTHED WITH SALVATION

New identity.

Spiritual Principle

Grace covers:

Shame.

LXXXI. ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Standing before God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The robe matters because our own moral rags were never enough.

LXXXII. BRIDEGROOM BEAUTY

Celebration.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation is:

Festive.

LXXXIII. BRIDE ADORNED

Covenant joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoration does not leave His people dressed in the ashes of their former condition.

LXXXIV. GARDEN GROWTH

Organic.

Spiritual Principle

God brings:

Fruit.

LXXXV. RIGHTEOUSNESS SPRINGS

Visible.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True righteousness is not buried forever; eventually it breaks the surface.

LXXXVI. PRAISE SPRINGS

Worship grows.

Spiritual Principle

Grace produces:

Praise.

LXXXVII. BEFORE ALL NATIONS

Missionary visibility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s garden is meant to be seen.

LXXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 61 TEACHES ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Spirit empowers:

Mission.

Spiritual Principle

God’s work requires:

God’s power.

LXXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 61 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

Jesus explicitly applies this passage to:

His ministry.

Key Truth

Isaiah 61 is one of the strongest Old Testament passages for understanding Jesus as the Spirit-anointed Messiah.

XC. WHAT ISAIAH 61 TEACHES ABOUT THE GOSPEL

Good news.

Freedom.

Healing.

Favor.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The gospel is good news because it addresses people’s deepest bondage, guilt, grief, and brokenness.

XCI. WHAT ISAIAH 61 TEACHES ABOUT BROKENHEARTED PEOPLE

They are not:

Forgotten.

Spiritual Principle

Christ draws near to:

Broken hearts.

XCII. WHAT ISAIAH 61 TEACHES ABOUT CAPTIVES

Captivity is not:

Final.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A prison is never stronger than the One holding the key.

XCIII. WHAT ISAIAH 61 TEACHES ABOUT MOURNING

God gives:

Comfort.

Beauty.

Joy.

Praise.

Spiritual Principle

God does not despise:

Grief.

XCIV. WHAT ISAIAH 61 TEACHES ABOUT RESTORATION

Restored people rebuild:

Ruins.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Personal healing should eventually create public usefulness.

XCV. WHAT ISAIAH 61 TEACHES ABOUT PRIESTHOOD

God’s people are:

Servants.

Representatives.

Spiritual Principle

Calling includes:

Ministry.

XCVI. WHAT ISAIAH 61 TEACHES ABOUT SHAME

Shame can be:

Reversed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace has the authority to rename a life shame tried to define.

XCVII. WHAT ISAIAH 61 TEACHES ABOUT JOY

Joy becomes:

Everlasting.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation has:

Emotional fruit.

XCVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 61 TEACHES ABOUT JUSTICE

God:

Loves it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who announces favor also announces what He loves morally.

XCIX. WHAT ISAIAH 61 TEACHES ABOUT COVENANT

Everlasting.

Spiritual Principle

God’s commitment has:

Permanence.

C. WHAT ISAIAH 61 TEACHES ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS

It is:

A robe.

An oak.

A growing plant.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah pictures righteousness as something that covers, strengthens, and grows.

CI. WHAT ISAIAH 61 TEACHES ABOUT PRAISE

Praise replaces:

Despair.

Then grows before:

Nations.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration has:

A voice.

CII. THE GREAT “INSTEAD OF” OF ISAIAH 61

Instead of:

Ashes—

Beauty.

Instead of:

Mourning—

Joy.

Instead of:

Despair—

Praise.

Instead of:

Shame—

Double portion.

Instead of:

Disgrace—

Inheritance.

Key Truth

The grace of God does not merely subtract misery; it replaces it with the fruit of redemption.

CIII. THE ANOINTED ONE’S FIVEFOLD MISSION

1. Bring Good News

2. Heal the Brokenhearted

3. Proclaim Liberty

4. Announce God’s Favor

5. Comfort Mourners

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Messiah’s mission reaches mind, heart, bondage, guilt, grief, and future hope.

CIV. THE PEOPLE’S FIVEFOLD TRANSFORMATION

1. Mourners Become Joyful

2. Broken Become Oaks

3. Ruined Become Rebuilders

4. Shamed Become Priests

5. Disgraced Become Witnesses of Blessing

Spiritual Principle

Messianic ministry creates:

Transformed people.

CV. RESTORATION IS NOT PASSIVE

They rebuild.

Serve.

Minister.

Praise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace heals the wounded and then puts tools into their hands.

CVI. THE CHURCH AND ISAIAH 61

The New Testament applies priestly identity to:

Believers.

Yet we should preserve Isaiah’s original context concerning:

Zion.

Israel.

Restoration.

The church participates in the Messiah’s mission as:

His people.

But does not replace the Messiah as:

The Anointed One.

Key Truth

Christ uniquely fulfills the Anointed Servant role; His people participate in proclaiming and embodying the good news that belongs to Him.

CVII. SPIRIT EMPOWERMENT IS NOT SELF-EXALTATION

The Spirit comes so the Servant can:

Serve.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If our idea of anointing makes us more impressed with ourselves than more committed to the broken, we have misunderstood Isaiah 61.

CVIII. ANOINTING AND MISSION

Anointed:

To bring.

Heal.

Proclaim.

Open.

Comfort.

Spiritual Principle

Anointing has:

Purpose.

CIX. GOOD NEWS AND HUMILITY

The humble receive:

Good news.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride says, “I need nothing.”

Grace says, “Come because you know you need everything.”

CX. HEALING AND TRUTH

Broken hearts are healed without:

Pretending they were never broken.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical healing is:

Honest.

CXI. LIBERTY AND LORDSHIP

Freedom in Scripture is not:

Freedom from God.

It is freedom for:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Christ does not free captives so they can find a new master; He frees them to belong rightly to Him.

CXII. FAVOR AND RESPONSE

The favorable year is:

Proclaimed.

Spiritual Principle

Grace invites:

Response.

CXIII. COMFORT AND JUSTICE

Comfort appears beside:

Vengeance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s comfort is credible because evil will not be allowed to remain victorious forever.

CXIV. BEAUTY AND ASHES

The ashes were:

Real.

The beauty is:

Also real.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration does not deny:

History.

CXV. JOY AND MOURNING

Joy does not mean:

The mourning never mattered.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can honor the grief and still write joy afterward.

CXVI. PRAISE AND DESPAIR

Praise grows where despair once:

Pressed down.

Spiritual Principle

Worship can become evidence of:

Healing.

CXVII. OAKS AND ROOTS

Strength comes through:

Rootedness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s goal is not merely to make you feel better but to make you stand stronger.

CXVIII. PLANTED FOR GLORY

Purpose.

Spiritual Principle

Stability serves:

Witness.

CXIX. REBUILDERS OF GENERATIONAL RUINS

Restoration reaches:

History.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One generation under God can begin repairing what several generations damaged.

CXX. FOREIGNERS IN THE FIELDS

New relationships.

Spiritual Principle

God can reorder:

Social patterns.

CXXI. PRIESTS AND MINISTERS

Identity centered on:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The highest title in Isaiah 61 is not owner, ruler, or celebrity—it is servant of God.

CXXII. WEALTH OF NATIONS

Material provision.

Spiritual Principle

Resources serve:

Calling.

CXXIII. DOUBLE PORTION

Abundance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Shame calculates loss; grace speaks inheritance.

CXXIV. EVERLASTING JOY

Durable blessing.

Spiritual Principle

God’s future outlasts:

Past pain.

CXXV. JUSTICE LOVED

God’s affection has:

Moral content.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely do justice reluctantly; He says He loves it.

CXXVI. ROBBERY HATED

God opposes:

Exploitation.

Spiritual Principle

Worship and ethics cannot be:

Separated.

CXXVII. FAITHFULNESS

God acts according to:

Promise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The everlasting covenant rests on an everlasting God.

CXXVIII. DESCENDANTS BLESSED

Visible legacy.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration becomes:

Generational testimony.

CXXIX. DELIGHT IN LORD

Personal joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest evidence of salvation may be that the soul begins to enjoy God.

CXXX. CLOTHING OF SALVATION

Covered.

Spiritual Principle

God provides:

What sinners lack.

CXXXI. ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Dignity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace does not leave the forgiven sinner standing spiritually naked.

CXXXII. WEDDING IMAGERY

Joy.

Beauty.

Covenant.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation moves toward:

Celebration.

CXXXIII. SOIL AND SPROUT

Growth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s righteousness may begin like a sprout, but He knows how to grow a garden.

CXXXIV. GARDEN AND SEED

Fruitfulness.

Spiritual Principle

Grace produces:

Life.

CXXXV. RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PRAISE TOGETHER

Character.

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God wants both a righteous life and a praising mouth.

CXXXVI. ISAIAH 61 AS A CHRISTOLOGICAL CHAPTER

Spirit.

Anointing.

Good news.

Liberty.

Favor.

Jesus declares:

Fulfillment.

Key Truth

The center of Isaiah 61 is not merely a principle of ministry but the Spirit-anointed Messiah who embodies and fulfills the mission.

CXXXVII. ISAIAH 61 AS A RESTORATION CHAPTER

Heal.

Comfort.

Beauty.

Joy.

Praise.

Rebuild.

Restore.

Spiritual Principle

God specializes in:

Restoration.

CXXXVIII. ISAIAH 61 AS A PRIESTLY CHAPTER

Priests.

Ministers.

Service.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Those restored by grace are called to represent grace.

CXXXIX. ISAIAH 61 AS A COVENANT CHAPTER

Everlasting covenant.

Descendants.

Nations.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration has:

Continuity.

CXL. ISAIAH 61 AS A JOY CHAPTER

Oil of joy.

Everlasting joy.

Soul rejoices.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The chapter begins with broken hearts and ends with delighted souls.

CXLI. ISAIAH 61 AS A RIGHTEOUSNESS CHAPTER

Oaks of righteousness.

Robe of righteousness.

Righteousness springs up.

Key Truth

Righteousness in Isaiah 61 becomes identity, stability, clothing, growth, and public testimony.

CXLII. ISAIAH 61 AS A PRAISE CHAPTER

Garment of praise.

Praise springs up.

Spiritual Principle

Grace changes:

The vocabulary of the redeemed.

CXLIII. TWELVE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 61

1. Brokenhearted → Healed

2. Captive → Free

3. Bound → Released

4. Mourning → Comfort

5. Ashes → Beauty

6. Mourning → Joy

7. Despair → Praise

8. Fragility → Oaks of Righteousness

9. Ruins → Rebuilt Cities

10. Shame → Double Portion

11. Disgrace → Everlasting Joy

12. Spiritual Nakedness → Garments of Salvation and Righteousness

Key Truth

Isaiah 61 is a chapter of holy reversal in which the Spirit-anointed Messiah transforms what sin, grief, judgment, captivity, and shame appeared to make permanent.

CXLIV. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 61

1. True Ministry Requires the Spirit

Principle:

Human effort cannot replace divine anointing.

2. The Gospel Is Good News for the Needy

Principle:

Grace meets people who know their poverty.

3. Christ Heals Broken Hearts

Principle:

The Messiah cares about inward wounds.

4. Christ Proclaims Freedom

Principle:

Bondage is not the final word.

5. God Comforts Mourners

Principle:

Grief is seen and answered.

6. God Replaces Ashes with Beauty

Principle:

Grace creates holy replacement.

7. Restored People Become Restorers

Principle:

Those healed by God can help rebuild what is broken.

8. God Calls His People to Priestly Service

Principle:

Redemption leads to ministry.

9. God Replaces Shame with Inheritance

Principle:

His restoration is abundant.

10. God Loves Justice

Principle:

Spirituality and righteousness cannot be separated.

11. Salvation Clothes the Redeemed

Principle:

God provides righteous covering.

12. God Causes Righteousness and Praise to Grow

Principle:

The final fruit belongs to His grace.

CXLV. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who is upon the speaker in verse 1?

The Spirit of the Lord God.

Question 2

Why has the Lord anointed Him?

To bring good news, healing, liberty, release, favor, and comfort.

Question 3

Who explicitly applies this passage to Himself in the New Testament?

Jesus Christ.

Question 4

Where does Jesus read Isaiah 61?

In the synagogue at Nazareth.

Question 5

What does Jesus say after reading it?

That the Scripture is fulfilled in the hearing of those present.

Question 6

To whom is good news brought?

The humble.

Question 7

Who receives healing?

The brokenhearted.

Question 8

What is proclaimed to captives?

Liberty.

Question 9

What happens to those bound?

Their prison is opened.

Question 10

What year is proclaimed?

The year of the Lord’s favor.

Question 11

What else is announced?

The day of God’s vengeance.

Question 12

Who receives comfort?

Those who mourn.

Question 13

What replaces ashes?

Beauty.

Question 14

What replaces mourning?

The oil of joy.

Question 15

What replaces despair?

The garment of praise.

Question 16

What are the restored called?

Oaks of righteousness.

Question 17

Who planted them?

The Lord.

Question 18

Why did He plant them?

For His glory.

Question 19

What do restored people rebuild?

Ancient ruins and long-devastated cities.

Question 20

What title is given to God’s people?

Priests of the Lord and ministers of God.

Question 21

What replaces shame?

A double portion and inheritance.

Question 22

What kind of joy is promised?

Everlasting joy.

Question 23

What does God love?

Justice.

Question 24

What does He hate?

Robbery and wrongdoing.

Question 25

What covenant does He establish?

An everlasting covenant.

Question 26

Who sees the blessing upon God’s people?

The nations.

Question 27

What clothes the rejoicing person?

Garments of salvation and a robe of righteousness.

Question 28

What images describe that clothing?

A beautifully adorned bridegroom and bride.

Question 29

What does God cause to spring up?

Righteousness and praise.

Question 30

Before whom do righteousness and praise grow?

All nations.

CXLVI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 61 asks several searching questions.

Am I Trying to Do God’s Work in:

My own strength?

Or am I depending upon:

The Holy Spirit?

Do I Understand That Anointing Is for:

Mission?

Service?

People?

Am I Carrying Good News to:

The humble?

Is My Ministry Sensitive to:

Broken hearts?

Or only visible behavior?

What Captivity Do I Need Christ to:

Break?

What Prison Door Do I Need Him to:

Open?

Am I living in the freedom:

He gives?

Have I received the:

Lord’s favor?

Is there mourning in my life that I have assumed will:

Never change?

What ashes am I still:

Holding?

Can I believe God can give:

Beauty?

Am I wearing:

Despair?

When God offers:

Praise?

Am I becoming:

Rooted?

Stable?

An oak of righteousness?

Does my life exist for:

God’s glory?

What ancient ruin might God be calling me to:

Rebuild?

What broken place has lasted for:

Generations?

Could God use me in:

Restoration?

Do I see myself as:

A priest?

A servant?

A minister of God?

Has shame become my:

Identity?

Or am I receiving God’s:

Inheritance?

Do I love:

Justice?

Do I hate:

Wrongdoing?

Do my beliefs match:

God’s moral concerns?

Is God’s covenant faithfulness shaping:

My confidence?

Am I passing blessing to:

Future generations?

Do I delight:

Greatly in the Lord?

Am I clothed in:

His salvation?

His righteousness?

Is righteousness:

Growing?

Is praise:

Growing?

Can people see God’s grace through:

My life?

CXLVII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Spirit Anoints Us for Service, Not Self-Importance”

The Anointed One is sent to:

Broken people.

Captives.

Mourners.

Principle:

The clearest evidence of Spirit-empowered ministry is not self-exaltation but faithful service to people God loves.

CXLVIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Messiah Does Not Decorate Chains—He Proclaims Liberty”

Captives need:

Freedom.

Principle:

Christ’s mission confronts whatever enslaves people spiritually and calls them into true freedom under God.

CXLIX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Grace Is God’s Great ‘Instead Of’”

Ashes:

Beauty.

Mourning:

Joy.

Despair:

Praise.

Shame:

Inheritance.

Principle:

God’s restoration is not merely subtraction; it is redemptive replacement.

CL. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Healed Become Rebuilders”

Verse 3:

Healed and restored people.

Verse 4:

Rebuilders.

Principle:

God often turns yesterday’s wounded people into tomorrow’s restorers.

CLI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Never Confuse ‘Devastated for Generations’ with ‘Impossible to Restore’”

Ancient ruins.

Long devastation.

Still:

Rebuilt.

Principle:

Time may deepen damage, but it does not weaken God’s ability to restore.

CLII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Highest Calling of the Restored Is Not Celebrity but Priesthood”

Priests.

Ministers.

Principle:

God restores people so they can serve before Him and represent Him faithfully.

CLIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Robe God Gives Is Better Than the Reputation Shame Took Away”

Garments of salvation.

Robe of righteousness.

Principle:

God’s verdict is stronger than human disgrace.

CLIV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Can Grow Righteousness Where Ruins Once Stood”

Garden imagery.

Principle:

The Lord who rebuilds cities also cultivates character.

CLV. SPIRIT UPON THE SERVANT

Source:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Ministry is:

Dependent.

CLVI. ANOINTED BY THE LORD

Authority:

Divine.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Self-confidence cannot substitute for divine calling.

CLVII. GOOD NEWS

Message:

Hope.

Spiritual Principle

The gospel is:

Announcement.

CLVIII. HUMBLE RECIPIENTS

Posture:

Need.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace sounds sweetest to people who have stopped pretending they are self-sufficient.

CLIX. BROKENHEARTED

Pain:

Internal.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus ministers to:

Hidden wounds.

CLX. CAPTIVES

Bondage.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No chain gets the final word when the Redeemer declares liberty.

CLXI. PRISONERS

Confinement.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation opens:

Doors.

CLXII. FAVOR

Grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The favorable year announces that God is moving toward His people in mercy.

CLXIII. VENGEANCE

Justice.

Spiritual Principle

God does not leave:

Evil unanswered.

CLXIV. MOURNERS

Sorrow.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God never treats tears as theological inconvenience.

CLXV. BEAUTY

Restoration.

Spiritual Principle

Grace dignifies.

CLXVI. JOY

Renewal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can restore emotional strength without denying previous pain.

CLXVII. PRAISE

New response.

Spiritual Principle

Healing becomes:

Worship.

CLXVIII. OAKS

Strength.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely rescue His people from falling; He roots them so they can stand.

CLXIX. RIGHTEOUSNESS

Character.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration is:

Moral.

CLXX. PLANTING

God’s work.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace takes responsibility for both planting and growth.

CLXXI. GLORY

Purpose.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration points to:

God.

CLXXII. REBUILD

Action.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A healed heart should eventually produce useful hands.

CLXXIII. RESTORE

Mission.

Spiritual Principle

God creates:

Repairers.

CLXXIV. RENEW

New life in:

Old places.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The age of the ruin does not determine the limit of renewal.

CLXXV. FOREIGN HELP

Unexpected provision.

Spiritual Principle

God can send help from:

Outside familiar circles.

CLXXVI. PRIESTLY IDENTITY

Calling.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The restored community becomes a serving community.

CLXXVII. MINISTRY

Purpose.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation produces:

Service.

CLXXVIII. SHAME REVERSED

Honor.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Shame looks backward; inheritance looks forward.

CLXXIX. DOUBLE PORTION

Abundance.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration can exceed:

Human calculations.

CLXXX. EVERLASTING JOY

Endurance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Temporary shame cannot outlast everlasting joy.

CLXXXI. JUSTICE

God’s love.

Spiritual Principle

Justice reflects:

His character.

CLXXXII. WRONGDOING

God’s hatred.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s love never requires moral indifference.

CLXXXIII. COVENANT

Security.

Spiritual Principle

God binds Himself in:

Faithfulness.

CLXXXIV. DESCENDANTS

Legacy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Restoration becomes even more beautiful when children inherit testimony instead of shame.

CLXXXV. DELIGHT

Joy in:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation should produce:

Affection.

CLXXXVI. GARMENT OF SALVATION

Covering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What sin left exposed, salvation covers.

CLXXXVII. ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Standing.

Spiritual Principle

God supplies:

Righteousness.

CLXXXVIII. BRIDEGROOM

Celebration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s salvation is not dressed for a funeral; it is dressed for a wedding.

CLXXXIX. BRIDE

Beauty.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration includes:

Joyful identity.

CXC. SOIL

Potential.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God knows how to work with soil that looks empty.

CXCI. SPROUT

Beginning.

Spiritual Principle

Do not despise:

Early growth.

CXCII. GARDEN

Fruitfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s goal is not one isolated sprout but a garden of righteousness and praise.

CXCIII. NATIONS SEE

Witness.

Spiritual Principle

God’s work becomes:

Public.

CXCIV. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 61

1. The Spirit Rests Upon the Anointed One

His mission begins with divine empowerment.

2. Good News Reaches the Humble

The needy receive hope.

3. Broken Hearts and Captives Receive Restoration

Healing and liberty are proclaimed.

4. The Lord’s Favor Is Announced

Grace opens the way for restoration.

5. Mourning Is Replaced

Ashes become beauty, mourning becomes joy, and despair becomes praise.

6. The Restored Become Oaks and Rebuilders

God gives stability and purpose.

7. God’s People Receive Priestly Identity

They become ministers of the Lord.

8. Shame Is Reversed

Double inheritance and everlasting joy replace disgrace.

9. God Establishes an Everlasting Covenant

Justice and faithfulness govern His restoration.

10. Salvation Produces Righteousness and Praise

God’s redeemed people become a visible garden before the nations.

Key Truth

Isaiah 61 moves from Spirit-anointed proclamation to comprehensive restoration as the Messiah brings good news, liberty, healing, favor, comfort, righteousness, service, covenant blessing, and praise.

CXCV. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 61 begins with:

The Spirit.

That matters.

Before:

Good news.

Before:

Healing.

Before:

Liberty.

Before:

Rebuilding.

There is:

The Spirit of the Lord.

God’s work must be done:

God’s way.

Through:

God’s power.

Then the Anointed One says:

“He has sent me.”

Mission begins with:

Sending.

Not:

Self-promotion.

Then:

Good news to:

The humble.

Healing for:

Broken hearts.

Liberty for:

Captives.

Open doors for:

Prisoners.

This is Jesus’ mission.

Maybe you are:

Brokenhearted.

Maybe there is a place inside you that feels:

Crushed.

Maybe you have carried:

A wound.

Loss.

Betrayal.

Grief.

Jesus says:

Healing.

Maybe you feel:

Bound.

Habit.

Sin.

Fear.

Bitterness.

Shame.

Jesus says:

Liberty.

Maybe you feel:

Imprisoned.

Jesus says:

The prison can:

Open.

Then comes:

The year of favor.

God is not merely saying:

Endure.

He is announcing:

Grace.

Then He addresses:

Mourners.

And He gives:

Beauty instead of ashes.

What ashes are in your hands?

The remains of:

Something burned.

Something lost.

Something dead.

Something destroyed.

God says:

Beauty.

Then:

Joy instead of mourning.

Not because mourning was:

Fake.

But because mourning is not:

Permanent.

Then:

Praise instead of despair.

Maybe despair has become something you:

Wear.

God says:

I have another garment.

Praise.

Then:

Oaks of righteousness.

Notice the movement.

Brokenhearted.

Then:

Oak.

Mourner.

Then:

Rebuilder.

Captive.

Then:

Priest.

Ashes.

Then:

Beauty.

Shame.

Then:

Inheritance.

That is what grace does.

Then verse 4 says:

“They will rebuild.”

Who?

The same people who were:

Mourning.

God does not merely heal you so you can say:

I feel better.

He may heal you so you can:

Rebuild.

There may be:

Ancient ruins.

Family ruins.

Church ruins.

Community ruins.

Generational ruins.

And God may use:

You.

Do not say:

It has been broken too long.

Isaiah says:

“Devastated for generations.”

And still:

Rebuilt.

Then God says:

“You will be called priests of the Lord.”

Your greatest identity is not:

Victim.

Failure.

Rejected.

Forgotten.

Ash-covered.

Your calling is:

Servant of God.

Then:

“Instead of your shame…”

There it is again.

Instead of.

Shame does not get to decide:

Your inheritance.

God does.

Then He says:

“I love justice.”

That means true restoration is not:

Sentimental.

God cares about:

Right.

Wrong.

Fairness.

Truth.

He hates:

Robbery.

Wrongdoing.

Then comes:

Covenant.

Everlasting.

Then descendants.

Then nations.

Then testimony.

Then verse 10 becomes:

A song.

“I delight greatly in the Lord.”

That is where restored people should arrive.

Not merely:

I got my life back.

But:

I delight in God.

Why?

Because He clothed me.

Salvation.

Righteousness.

He took:

Ashes.

He gave:

Beauty.

He took:

Shame.

He gave:

Inheritance.

He took:

Despair.

He gave:

Praise.

Then the chapter ends with:

A garden.

God causes:

Righteousness.

Praise.

To:

Spring up.

Maybe right now you only see:

Soil.

Do not underestimate:

Soil.

There may be seed:

Underneath.

There may be life:

Beginning.

God knows how to:

Grow.

So Isaiah 61 says:

Depend on the Spirit.

Receive the good news.

Bring your broken heart to Christ.

Walk out of captivity.

Receive God’s favor.

Give Him your ashes.

Let Him replace mourning with joy.

Let Him replace despair with praise.

Become rooted.

Become righteous.

Become a rebuilder.

Serve as a priest.

Reject shame.

Receive inheritance.

Love justice.

Delight in God.

Wear salvation.

Walk in righteousness.

And trust God to make:

Righteousness and praise.

Spring up before:

The nations.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for:

The Anointed One.

Thank You for:

Jesus Christ.

Thank You that Your Spirit rested upon Him and that He came with:

Good news.

Healing.

Liberty.

Favor.

Comfort.

Father, bring good news into every:

Discouraged heart.

Heal:

The brokenhearted.

Set free:

The captive.

Open every prison that sin has:

Built.

Comfort those who:

Mourn.

Father, take our:

Ashes.

Give:

Beauty.

Take our:

Mourning.

Give:

Joy.

Take our:

Despair.

Give:

Praise.

Plant us as:

Oaks of righteousness.

Root us deeply in:

Truth.

Holiness.

Grace.

Faith.

Make our lives bring:

Glory to You.

Father, use us to:

Rebuild.

Restore.

Renew.

Show us the ancient ruins that need:

Repair.

Show us the generational damage that needs:

Healing.

Give us courage to believe:

Nothing is too old for restoration.

Father, make us faithful:

Priests.

Servants.

Ministers.

Help us represent:

You.

Not ourselves.

Replace shame with:

Inheritance.

Disgrace with:

Joy.

Give us confidence in Your:

Everlasting covenant.

Teach us to love:

Justice.

Hate:

Wrongdoing.

Walk:

Faithfully.

Father, let our children and descendants see:

Your blessing.

Let our lives become:

Testimony.

Clothe us with:

Salvation.

Cover us with:

Righteousness.

Teach our souls to:

Rejoice.

And just as a garden brings forth what has been planted:

Cause righteousness to:

Spring up.

Cause praise to:

Spring up.

Let the nations see:

Your glory.

Your grace.

Your salvation.

Your faithfulness.

And may everything You restore in us become:

A testimony to Jesus Christ,

The Spirit-anointed Savior.

In His name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the humble. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to open the prison for those who are bound.” — Isaiah 61:1**

Central Truth

The Spirit-anointed Servant, fulfilled in Jesus Christ, comes to bring good news to the humble, heal broken hearts, free captives, proclaim God’s favor, comfort mourners, and replace ashes, grief, despair, and shame with beauty, joy, praise, righteousness, inheritance, and everlasting covenant blessing; those restored by Him become strong, priestly, rebuilding people through whom righteousness and praise spring up before the nations for the glory of God.

Isaiah 61 in One Sentence

Isaiah reveals the Spirit-anointed Messiah, fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who brings good news to the humble, heals broken hearts, frees captives, proclaims the Lord’s favor, comforts mourners, exchanges ashes for beauty, mourning for joy, despair for praise, and shame for inheritance,

transforms the restored into righteous oaks, rebuilders and priests, establishes them in an everlasting covenant, clothes them with salvation and righteousness, and causes their righteousness and praise to flourish before all nations for the glory of God.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 62 — Jerusalem's Glory and New Name

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 62 continues the glorious restoration vision of:

Isaiah 60.

And the messianic proclamation of:

Isaiah 61.

Isaiah 60 declared:

> **"Arise, shine."**

Isaiah 61 announced:

> **"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me."**

Isaiah 62 now reveals the determination behind Zion's restoration:

> **"For Zion's sake I will not keep silent."**

The chapter is filled with:

Zeal.

Prayer.

New identity.

Covenant love.

Vindication.

Protection.

Salvation.

Holiness.

And restoration.

The central idea is that God refuses to let:

Forsaken.

Desolate.

Rejected.

Remain the final names of:

His people.

Names matter in Isaiah 62.

At first Zion has names connected with:

Loss.

Forsaken.

Desolate.

But God gives:

New names.

Hephzibah:

> **“My delight is in her.”**

Beulah:

> **“Married.”**

Then at the end of the chapter more names appear:

The Holy People.

The Redeemed of the Lord.

Sought After.

A City Not Forsaken.

The chapter therefore moves from:

Old identity.

To:

New identity.

From:

Abandonment.

To:

Delight.

From:

Desolation.

To:

Covenant relationship.

From:

Silence.

To:

Persistent intercession.

From:

Enemy plunder.

To:

Enjoying the fruit of labor.

From:

Blocked roads.

To:

A prepared highway.

From:

Waiting.

To:

Salvation coming.

This chapter also contains one of Scripture's most beautiful pictures of:

God's joy over His people.

Verse 5 says:

> **"As a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you."**

God is not pictured merely as:

Tolerating Zion.

Accepting Zion reluctantly.

Putting up with Zion.

He:

Rejoices.

This is covenant joy.

Then the chapter introduces:

Watchmen.

They are stationed on:

Jerusalem’s walls.

Their calling is:

Persistent.

Day.

Night.

Prayer.

Remembrance.

Intercession.

They are told:

“Give Him no rest.”

This does not mean God is:

Forgetful.

Weak.

Or unwilling.

It is vivid covenant language encouraging:

Persistent prayer based upon God’s own promises.

The watchmen pray because God has:

Spoken.

Their persistence does not overcome divine reluctance.

It participates in:

Divine purpose.

Then God swears by:

His right hand.

His mighty arm.

That His people will no longer labor only to have enemies consume:

Their harvest.

Instead:

The harvesters eat.

The gatherers drink.

And they praise:

The Lord.

Finally the command comes:

> **“Prepare the way.”**
>
> **“Build up the highway.”**
>
> **“Remove the stones.”**
>
> **“Lift up a banner for the nations.”**

Why?

Because:

> **“Your salvation comes!”**

The chapter ends with identity completely transformed.

They are not:

Forsaken.

They are:

Sought After.

They are not merely:

Former captives.

They are:

The Redeemed of the Lord.

They are not defined by:

Past shame.

They are:

The Holy People.

The central truth of Isaiah 62 is:

The Lord is relentlessly committed to Zion's restoration, giving His people a new identity of righteousness, glory, delight, covenant belonging, holiness, and redemption; He calls watchmen to persistent prayer, promises that enemies will no longer consume the fruit of His people's labor, prepares the way for salvation, and transforms the city once called Forsaken into one called Sought After and Not Forsaken.

I. FOR ZION'S SAKE I WILL NOT KEEP SILENT

Isaiah 62:1 — God's Relentless Purpose

> **"For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain quiet, until her righteousness shines like the dawn, and her salvation blazes like a burning torch."**

The speaker refuses:

Silence.

Rest.

Inaction.

Until:

Righteousness shines.

Salvation burns brightly.

Cross References

Isaiah 60:1

Zion is commanded to arise and shine because the glory of the Lord has risen upon her.

Zechariah 2:5

God promises to be a wall of fire around Jerusalem and glory within her.

Psalm 102:16

The Lord rebuilds Zion and reveals Himself in glory.

Spiritual Principle

God is committed to:

Finishing His restorative purpose.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not begin restoration only to lose interest before the light appears.

II. “I WILL NOT REMAIN QUIET”

Divine purpose is:

Persistent.

Spiritual Principle

God’s promises are not:

Casual intentions.

III. UNTIL RIGHTEOUSNESS SHINES

The goal is not merely:

Prosperity.

Safety.

Population.

But:

Righteousness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not satisfied merely to make Zion impressive; He intends to make Zion righteous.

IV. SALVATION LIKE A BURNING TORCH

Salvation becomes:

Visible.

Bright.

Public.

Spiritual Principle

God’s saving work produces:

Witness.

V. NATIONS SEE ZION’S RIGHTEOUSNESS

Isaiah 62:2 — The New Name

> **“The nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory. You will be called by a new name that the Lord Himself will give.”**

The nations:

See.

Kings:

See.

God:

Names.

Cross References

Revelation 2:17

Christ promises the faithful a new name associated with personal covenant identity.

Revelation 3:12

Christ promises to write upon the overcomer God’s name, the name of God’s city, and His own new name.

Isaiah 65:15

God speaks of His servants receiving another name while the old rebellious condition passes away.

Spiritual Principle

God has authority to:

Rename.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The people who knew you by your old name do not get the final vote when God gives you a new one.

VI. THE LORD HIMSELF GIVES THE NAME

Not:

Culture.

Enemies.

Past failures.

God.

Spiritual Principle

Identity ultimately belongs under:

Divine authority.

VII. NEW NAME

A new name represents:

New condition.

New reputation.

New relationship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God changes your condition, He can also change the name attached to it.

VIII. A CROWN OF GLORY

Isaiah 62:3 — Held in God’s Hand

> **“You will be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, a royal diadem in the hand of your God.”**

Zion is pictured as:

A crown.

A diadem.

Something:

Precious.

Royal.

Beautiful.

Cross References

Isaiah 28:5

The Lord Himself becomes a glorious crown for the faithful remnant of His people.

Zechariah 9:16

God’s people are compared to jewels in a crown sparkling in His land.

Revelation 2:10

Christ promises the faithful the crown of life.

Spiritual Principle

God turns:

Shame.

Into:

Glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What people treated like rubble, God can hold like a crown.

IX. “IN THE HAND OF THE LORD”

The crown is:

Held.

Secure.

Valued.

Spiritual Principle

Zion’s future rests in:

God’s hand.

X. FORSAKEN NO LONGER

Isaiah 62:4 — Hephzibah and Beulah

> **“You will no longer be called Forsaken, and your land will no longer be called Desolate. Instead, you will be called Hephzibah (‘My delight is in her’), and your land Beulah (‘Married’). For the Lord delights in you, and your land will be joined to Him.”**

This is one of the chapter’s greatest:

Reversals.

Old names:

Forsaken.

Desolate.

New names:

Hephzibah.

Beulah.

Cross References

Hosea 2:1

Hosea contains similar prophetic renaming imagery in which people once under judgment receive restored covenant identity.

Isaiah 54:6

The Lord calls back Zion like a grieving and deserted wife.

Zephaniah 3:17

The Lord rejoices over His people with gladness, quiets them in His love, and delights over them with singing.

Spiritual Principle

God can remove:

Names given by pain.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never let “Forsaken” become permanent when God says, “My delight is in her.”

XI. HEPhZIBAH — “MY DELIGHT IS IN HER”

God does not merely say:

I will tolerate her.

He says:

I delight.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant restoration includes:

Affection.

XII. BEULAH — “MARRIED”

Desolation gives way to:

Relationship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s answer to desolation is not only population; it is covenant belonging.

XIII. THE LORD DELIGHTS IN ZION

The statement is:

Personal.

Spiritual Principle

God’s relationship with His people is not:

Cold.

XIV. GOD REJOICES LIKE A BRIDEGROOM

Isaiah 62:5 — Divine Covenant Joy

> **“As a young man marries a virgin, so will your sons be joined to you; and as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.”**

The image becomes:

Wedding joy.

Cross References

Hosea 2:19

God promises to betroth His people to Himself in righteousness, justice, love, and compassion.

Revelation 21:2

The New Jerusalem appears prepared like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

Song of Solomon 3:11

Wedding celebration and the bridegroom’s joy provide imagery of covenant delight.

Spiritual Principle

God’s covenant includes:

Joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely save His people from judgment; He rejoices over restored relationship.

XV. BRIDEGROOM JOY

A bridegroom does not approach his wedding with:

Reluctance.

Spiritual Principle

Divine delight is:

Real.

XVI. GOD REJOICES OVER HIS PEOPLE

This should correct the false idea that God only:

Endures.

His redeemed people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who disciplines His people is also the God who delights in restoring them.

XVII. WATCHMEN ON THE WALLS

Isaiah 62:6 — Persistent Intercession

> **“I have posted watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the Lord, give Him no rest,”**

Watchmen traditionally:

Watch.

Warn.

Here they also:

Pray.

Remember.

Call.

Cross References

Ezekiel 3:17

The prophet is appointed as a watchman responsible to hear God’s word and warn the people.

Ezekiel 33:7

The watchman must faithfully communicate divine warning.

Habakkuk 2:1

Habakkuk takes his position like a watchman waiting attentively for God’s response.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer requires:

Watchfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The watchman who prays must keep his eyes open while keeping his voice raised.

XVIII. NEVER SILENT DAY OR NIGHT

Persistent prayer.

Spiritual Principle

Some promises call for:

Long intercession.

XIX. “YOU WHO CALL ON THE LORD”

Intercessors are:

Remembrancers.

People who keep the promise:

Before themselves.

And before God in prayer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Persistent prayer is not reminding a forgetful God; it is aligning a forgetful people with a faithful God.

XX. GIVE HIM NO REST

Isaiah 62:7 — Pray Until the Promise Is Established

> **“And do not let Him rest until He establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the whole earth.”**

This is bold:

Prayer.

Persistent:

Prayer.

Promise-shaped:

Prayer.

Cross References

Luke 18:7

Jesus teaches that God hears His chosen ones who cry out to Him continually.

Psalm 122:6

God’s people are commanded to pray for Jerusalem’s peace.

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Believers are commanded to pray continually.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical persistence is grounded in:

God’s promise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not stop praying merely because the promise has taken longer than you expected.

XXI. UNTIL JERUSALEM IS ESTABLISHED

The prayer has:

A goal.

Spiritual Principle

Intercession should be:

Specific.

XXII. PRAISE OF THE EARTH

The restored city becomes:

Testimony.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can turn a place once mocked by nations into a place that causes nations to acknowledge His work.

XXIII. THE LORD SWEARS BY HIS RIGHT HAND

Isaiah 62:8 — The Fruit of Labor Protected

> **“The Lord has sworn by His right hand and by His mighty arm: ‘Never again will I give your grain as food for your enemies, and never again will foreigners drink the wine for which you labored.’”**

God attaches:

Oath.

Power.

Promise.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:33

Covenant judgment included foreigners consuming the produce for which Israel had labored.

Joel 2:19

God promises restored grain, wine, and provision so His people are no longer objects of shame.

Nehemiah 5:11

Nehemiah calls for restoration of property, produce, and what had been wrongfully taken from God's people.

Spiritual Principle

God can restore:

The fruit of labor.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is a difference between laboring under curse and laboring under restored covenant blessing.

XXIV. RIGHT HAND AND MIGHTY ARM

God's promise is backed by:

God's power.

Spiritual Principle

He has strength to:

Keep His oath.

XXV. "NEVER AGAIN"

This is restoration language.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can end cycles that seemed permanent.

XXVI. HARVESTERS EAT THEIR HARVEST

Isaiah 62:9 — Labor and Worship Reunited

> **"Instead, those who harvest the grain will eat it and praise the Lord, and those who gather the grapes will drink the wine in the courts of My sanctuary."**

Labor.

Enjoyment.

Praise.

Worship.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 12:7

God’s people rejoice before Him in the fruit of their labor and the blessing He has given.

Psalm 22:26

The poor eat and are satisfied, and those who seek the Lord praise Him.

1 Corinthians 10:31

Whatever believers eat or drink should be done for the glory of God.

Spiritual Principle

God’s provision should lead to:

Praise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The harvest reaches its highest purpose when the one eating it remembers who gave it.

XXVII. ENJOYING THE FRUIT OF LABOR

God is not against:

Joy.

Provision.

Celebration.

Spiritual Principle

Blessing becomes worship when:

Gratitude is present.

XXVIII. IN THE COURTS OF THE SANCTUARY

Work and worship are:

Reunited.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can take ordinary provision and turn it into sanctuary praise.

XXIX. PASS THROUGH THE GATES

Isaiah 62:10 — Prepare the Highway

> **“Pass through, pass through the gates! Prepare the way for the people. Build up the highway, remove the stones, lift up a banner for the nations.”**

Four actions:

Pass through.

Prepare.

Build.

Remove.

Lift.

Cross References

Isaiah 40:3

A voice calls for preparing the Lord’s way and making a straight highway in the wilderness.

Malachi 3:1

God promises a messenger who will prepare the way before Him.

Matthew 3:3

John the Baptist fulfills the voice-in-the-wilderness role of preparing the Lord’s way.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation creates:

A prepared road.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God is bringing people home, His servants should remove stones rather than add them.

XXX. BUILD UP THE HIGHWAY

Restoration needs:

Access.

Spiritual Principle

Preparation is part of:

Mission.

XXXI. REMOVE THE STONES

Some obstacles must be:

Removed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not become the stone in the road while praying for people to come home.

XXXII. BANNER FOR THE NATIONS

The signal is:

Public.

International.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation is:

Announced widely.

XXXIII. SALVATION COMES

Isaiah 62:11 — Behold, Your Salvation Comes

> **“The Lord has proclaimed to the ends of the earth: ‘Say to the Daughter of Zion, “Behold, your salvation comes! Behold, His reward is with Him, and His recompense accompanies Him.”’”**

This is:

Worldwide proclamation.

Cross References

Matthew 21:5

Jesus’ triumphal entry fulfills the announcement to Zion that her King comes to her.

Revelation 22:12

Christ says He is coming and His reward is with Him to repay according to deeds.

Zechariah 9:9

Zion is called to rejoice because her righteous and saving King comes humbly.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation is not merely:

A concept.

It comes:

Personally.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Zion’s hope is not simply that circumstances will improve; it is that her salvation comes.

XXXIV. “BEHOLD”

Look.

Pay attention.

Expect.

Spiritual Principle

Hope watches:

For God.

XXXV. HIS REWARD IS WITH HIM

The coming One brings:

Justice.

Reward.

Completion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When the Lord comes, He does not arrive empty-handed.

XXXVI. THE HOLY PEOPLE

Isaiah 62:12 — Redeemed, Sought After, Not Forsaken

> **“They will be called The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord; and you will be called Sought After, A City Not Forsaken.”**

The chapter ends with:

Four identities.

Holy People.

Redeemed of the Lord.

Sought After.

City Not Forsaken.

Cross References

1 Peter 2:9

Believers are described as a chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation, and God’s special possession.

Titus 2:14

Christ redeems a people for Himself who are purified and eager for good works.

Revelation 21:2

The holy city appears prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption changes:

Identity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s final name for His people is not “Forsaken” but “Redeemed.”

XXXVII. “THE HOLY PEOPLE”

Restoration is:

Moral.

Spiritual Principle

God does not merely change:

Circumstances.

He forms:

A holy people.

XXXVIII. “THE REDEEMED OF THE LORD”

Identity rests on:

What God has done.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The redeemed are not self-rescued people; their name gives credit to the Redeemer.

XXXIX. “SOUGHT AFTER”

Once avoided.

Now:

Desired.

Spiritual Principle

God can reverse:

Rejection.

XL. “A CITY NOT FORSAKEN”

The chapter answers verse 4.

Not:

Forsaken.

Not:

Desolate.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoration is complete when the old name can no longer describe the new reality.

XLI. ISAIAH 60 AND ISAIAH 62

Isaiah 60

> **“Arise, shine.”**

Isaiah 62

Righteousness shines like:

Dawn.

Salvation burns like:

Torch.

Key Truth

The light of Isaiah 60 becomes the visible righteousness and salvation of Isaiah 62.

XLII. ISAIAH 61 AND ISAIAH 62

Isaiah 61

Beauty instead of:

Ashes.

Isaiah 62

Hephzibah instead of:

Forsaken.

Beulah instead of:

Desolate.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah 61 changes the garments; Isaiah 62 changes the names.

XLIII. ISAIAH 54 AND ISAIAH 62

Isaiah 54

Maker as:

Husband.

Isaiah 62

God rejoices like:

Bridegroom.

Spiritual Principle

The marriage imagery develops:

Covenant intimacy.

XLIV. ISAIAH 49 AND ISAIAH 62

Isaiah 49

Zion says:

> **“The Lord has forsaken me.”**

Isaiah 62

God says:

> **“A City Not Forsaken.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The fear voiced in Isaiah 49 receives a new name in Isaiah 62.

XLV. ISAIAH 58 AND ISAIAH 62

Isaiah 58

Repairers rebuild:

Walls.

Isaiah 62

Watchmen stand:

On walls.

Spiritual Principle

What is repaired must also be:

Guarded.

XLVI. ISAIAH 59 AND ISAIAH 62

Isaiah 59

The Redeemer:

Comes.

Isaiah 62

> **“Your salvation comes.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Redeemer promised earlier becomes the salvation announced publicly to Zion.

XLVII. ISAIAH 40 AND ISAIAH 62

Isaiah 40

Prepare the way:

For the Lord.

Isaiah 62

Prepare the way:

For the people.

Key Truth

God prepares both His coming and His people’s return.

XLVIII. JESUS AND ISAIAH 62

The language:

> **“Behold, your salvation comes”**

Resonates strongly with:

Messianic arrival.

Matthew connects Zion’s coming King with:

Jesus.

Spiritual Principle

Christian reading finds Zion’s ultimate salvation centered in:

Christ.

XLIX. REVELATION AND ISAIAH 62

New name.

Holy city.

Bride.

Open glory.

Coming reward.

These themes echo into:

Revelation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah’s restored Zion becomes part of the vocabulary the New Testament uses for final redemption.

L. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S ZEAL

He will not:

Keep silent.

Spiritual Principle

God is actively committed to:

Restoration.

LI. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS

It shines like:

Dawn.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Righteousness is meant to become visible enough that darkness cannot pretend it is absent.

LII. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT SALVATION

It blazes like:

Torch.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation becomes:

Public testimony.

LIII. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT IDENTITY

God gives:

New names.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption does not merely change your destination; it changes what defines you.

LIV. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT DELIGHT

God says:

“My delight is in her.”

Spiritual Principle

God’s restored relationship includes:

Affection.

LV. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT COVENANT

Beulah:

Married.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The opposite of desolation is not simply abundance; it is restored covenant relationship.

LVI. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT GOD’S JOY

He rejoices like:

Bridegroom.

Spiritual Principle

God takes joy in:

His restored people.

LVII. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT PRAYER

Watchmen pray:

Day and night.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Persistent prayer keeps God’s promises in front of the praying community.

LVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT INTERCESSION

Do not give:

Rest.

Spiritual Principle

Intercession can be:

Persistent.

Bold.

Promise-centered.

LIX. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT PROVISION

Workers enjoy:

The fruit.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can restore the connection between labor and blessing.

LX. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT WORSHIP

Harvest becomes:

Praise.

Spiritual Principle

Provision should produce:

Gratitude.

LXI. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT PREPARATION

Highway.

Stones.

Banner.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prepare for the people you are praying God will bring.

LXII. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT HOLINESS

The redeemed are called:

Holy People.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption produces:

Consecration.

LXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT REDEMPTION

Their identity:

Redeemed of the Lord.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The safest identity is one based on what God has done, not what people have said.

LXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 62 TEACHES ABOUT FORSAKENNESS

It is:

Temporary.

Spiritual Principle

God can overturn:

Abandonment.

LXV. THE OLD NAME

Forsaken.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not frame your future with a name God has already decided to remove.

LXVI. THE NEW NAME

Hephzibah.

Spiritual Principle

God delights.

LXVII. THE OLD LAND NAME

Desolate.

Spiritual Principle

Loss.

LXVIII. THE NEW LAND NAME

Beulah.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can turn desolation into belonging.

LXIX. THE CROWN

Glory.

Spiritual Principle

God values:

His people.

LXX. THE HAND

Security.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

It is difficult to fall out of the hand that holds the crown.

LXXI. THE WATCHMEN

Vigilance.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration requires:

Watchfulness.

LXXII. THE WALLS

Protection.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A restored wall without a watchman is still vulnerable.

LXXIII. DAY AND NIGHT

Continuity.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer should not be:

Occasional only.

LXXIV. GIVE HIM NO REST

Persistence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some prayers are answered not by intensity for one hour but faithfulness over many seasons.

LXXV. UNTIL

An important word.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer continues toward:

Fulfillment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never put a period where God writes: “Until.”

LXXVI. THE RIGHT HAND

Authority.

Spiritual Principle

God swears by:

His own strength.

LXXVII. MIGHTY ARM

Power.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The same arm that saves is strong enough to secure the promise.

LXXVIII. GRAIN PROTECTED

Provision preserved.

Spiritual Principle

God can end:

Cycles of loss.

LXXIX. WINE PROTECTED

Joy preserved.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Restoration includes the right enjoyment of what God has provided.

LXXX. THOSE WHO HARVEST EAT

Justice restored.

Spiritual Principle

The worker receives:

Fruit.

LXXXI. PRAISE THE LORD

Thanksgiving restored.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s best blessings travel from field to table to worship.

LXXXII. COURTS OF THE SANCTUARY

Provision becomes:

Sacred gratitude.

Spiritual Principle

All life can become:

Worship.

LXXXIII. PREPARE THE WAY

Readiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Expectation should change preparation.

LXXXIV. REMOVE THE STONES

Obstacles.

Spiritual Principle

Some barriers are:

Humanly removable.

LXXXV. LIFT THE BANNER

Public signal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not hide the road to the salvation you want others to find.

LXXXVI. ENDS OF THE EARTH

Universal proclamation.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation has:

Global reach.

LXXXVII. DAUGHTER OF ZION

Tender covenant address.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who announces salvation speaks personally to the city He loves.

LXXXVIII. “YOUR SALVATION COMES”

Hope moving:

Toward Zion.

Spiritual Principle

God’s rescue is:

Active.

LXXXIX. REWARD WITH HIM

Justice accompanies:

Coming.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Lord brings both salvation for His people and righteous recompense with Him.

XC. HOLY PEOPLE

Character.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people belong:

To Him.

XCI. REDEEMED

History.

Spiritual Principle

They were:

Bought back.

Rescued.

XCII. SOUGHT AFTER

Value.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can make the place people abandoned become the place people seek.

XCIII. NOT FORSAKEN

Final reassurance.

Spiritual Principle

God’s presence replaces:

Abandonment.

XCIV. ISAIAH 62 AS A RENAMING CHAPTER

Forsaken → Hephzibah.

Desolate → Beulah.

Rejected → Sought After.

Abandoned → Not Forsaken.

Key Truth

God’s restoration is so complete that old names no longer fit.

XCV. ISAIAH 62 AS A MARRIAGE CHAPTER

Delight.

Marriage.

Bridegroom.

Bride.

Rejoicing.

Spiritual Principle

God’s covenant is:

Relational.

XCVI. ISAIAH 62 AS AN INTERCESSION CHAPTER

Watchmen.

Day.

Night.

No rest.

Until.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Persistent prayer is one of the ways God’s people live inside God’s promised future before they see it fully arrive.

XCVII. ISAIAH 62 AS A RESTORATION CHAPTER

New name.

Crown.

Marriage.

Harvest.

Highway.

Salvation.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration reaches:

Identity.

Relationship.

Work.

Worship.

Community.

XCVIII. ISAIAH 62 AS A SALVATION CHAPTER

Righteousness shines.

Salvation burns.

Salvation comes.

Redeemed people emerge.

Key Truth

The entire chapter moves toward the visible arrival and effect of God’s saving work.

XCIX. ISAIAH 62 AS A HOLINESS CHAPTER

Holy People.

Spiritual Principle

The redeemed become:

Set apart.

C. ISAIAH 62 AS A JOY CHAPTER

God delights.

God rejoices.

Harvesters praise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Restoration is not merely serious; it is joyful.

CI. TWELVE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 62

1. Silence → Proclamation

2. Darkness → Righteousness Shining

3. Old Name → New Name

4. Forsaken → Delighted In

5. Desolate → Married

6. Shame → Crown of Glory

7. Abandonment → Bridegroom Joy

8. Silence in Prayer → Day-and-Night Intercession

9. Enemy Consumption → Enjoyed Harvest

10. Obstacles → Prepared Highway

11. Waiting → Salvation Coming

12. Forsaken City → Sought-After Holy People

Key Truth

Isaiah 62 replaces every image of abandonment with an image of covenant belonging, visible salvation, persistent prayer, and restored identity.

CII. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 62

1. God Is Zealous for Restoration

Principle:

He does not abandon His promise halfway.

2. Righteousness Must Become Visible

Principle:

God’s restoration shines publicly.

3. God Gives New Identity

Principle:

Old labels need not survive redemption.

4. God Delights in His People

Principle:

Restored covenant relationship is affectionate and joyful.

5. God Rejoices Over His People

Principle:

His relationship is not reluctant tolerance.

6. Watchmen Must Remain Faithful

Principle:

Prayer requires vigilance.

7. Persistent Prayer Matters

Principle:

Intercession should continue until God’s purpose is fulfilled.

8. God Protects the Fruit of Labor

Principle:

Restoration includes justice and provision.

9. Provision Should Produce Praise

Principle:

Blessings belong in worship.

10. Prepare the Way for Others

Principle:

Remove obstacles from the road of return.

11. Salvation Is Coming

Principle:

Hope is centered in the coming Savior.

12. God’s People Receive New Names

Principle:

Holy, Redeemed, Sought After, Not Forsaken.

CIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

For whose sake will the speaker not remain silent?

Zion and Jerusalem.

Question 2

How long will the speaker continue?

Until Zion’s righteousness and salvation shine visibly.

Question 3

Who will see Zion’s righteousness?

The nations.

Question 4

Who will see her glory?

Kings.

Question 5

Who gives Zion her new name?

The Lord Himself.

Question 6

What is Zion compared to in verse 3?

A crown of glory and royal diadem in God’s hand.

Question 7

What old name is removed?

Forsaken.

Question 8

What old description of the land is removed?

Desolate.

Question 9

What does Hephzibah mean?

> **“My delight is in her.”**

Question 10

What does Beulah mean?

> **“Married.”**

Question 11

Why does Zion receive these names?

Because the Lord delights in her and restores covenant relationship.

Question 12

How does God rejoice over His people?

Like a bridegroom rejoicing over his bride.

Question 13

Who stands on Jerusalem’s walls?

Watchmen.

Question 14

How long do they remain active?

Day and night.

Question 15

What are intercessors commanded to do?

Continue calling on the Lord and give Him no rest.

Question 16

How long should they pray?

Until Jerusalem is established and becomes a praise in the earth.

Question 17

What has God sworn?

Enemies will no longer consume the grain and wine of His people.

Question 18

Who will eat the grain?

Those who harvest it.

Question 19

What will they do while enjoying God’s provision?

Praise the Lord.

Question 20

What must be prepared in verse 10?

The way and highway for the people.

Question 21

What must be removed?

Stones and obstacles.

Question 22

What must be raised?

A banner for the nations.

Question 23

How far does God proclaim the message?

To the ends of the earth.

Question 24

What message is given to Zion?

> **“Behold, your salvation comes!”**

Question 25

What does the coming One bring?

Reward and recompense.

Question 26

What will God’s people be called?

The Holy People.

The Redeemed of the Lord.

Question 27

What will Jerusalem be called?

Sought After.

A City Not Forsaken.

Question 28

What is the main message of the chapter?

God’s restoration gives His people a new identity, renewed covenant joy, persistent intercession, protected blessing, and salvation.

CIV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 62 asks several searching questions.

What Name Have I Allowed My Past to Give Me?

Forsaken?

Rejected?

Failure?

Unwanted?

Forgotten?

Desolate?

Have I allowed a painful season to become:

My permanent identity?

Do I believe God has authority to:

Rename me?

Do I understand that God’s goal is not only to:

Help me feel better?

But to make:

Righteousness shine?

Is there visible evidence of:

God’s work?

Do I believe God can delight in:

Restored relationship?

Do I think God merely:

Tolerates me?

Or do I understand:

Covenant grace?

Am I standing faithfully as a:

Watchman?

Is my prayer life:

Persistent?

Have I stopped praying for something God has not told me to:

Stop praying for?

Am I willing to pray:

Day and night?

Do I pray based on:

God’s promises?

Or only:

My feelings?

Is there a harvest I have stopped believing God can:

Protect?

When God blesses me, does blessing become:

Praise?

What stones might I need to:

Remove?

Am I making it easier or harder for people to:

Come toward God?

Am I lifting a:

Banner?

Or hiding:

The message?

Do I believe:

Salvation comes?

Is holiness part of:

My identity?

Do I live like one who has been:

Redeemed?

Do I believe God sees me as:

Sought After?

Can I stop living as though I am:

Forsaken?

CV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Never Let an Old Name Outlive God’s New Work”

Forsaken.

Desolate.

Those names once described:

Reality.

But not:

Future reality.

Principle:

A name may accurately describe yesterday and still be completely wrong for tomorrow.

CVI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Does Not Merely Take ‘Forsaken’ Away—He Replaces It With ‘My Delight Is in Her’”

This is more than:

Removal.

It is:

Replacement.

Principle:

Grace does not simply erase rejection; it speaks delight.

CVII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Persistent Prayer Is Not Trying to Wear God Down; It Is Refusing to Let Go of What God Has Promised”

The watchmen pray:

Because God has spoken.

Principle:

Promise produces perseverance.

CVIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Never Put a Period Where God Writes ‘Until’”

Pray:

Until.

Watch:

Until.

Believe:

Until.

Principle:

Delay is not permission to abandon a promise.

CIX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Prepare the Road for the People You Are Asking God to Bring”

Build highway.

Remove stones.

Raise banner.

Principle:

Prayer for gathering should be accompanied by preparation for gathering.

CX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The City Once Called Forsaken Becomes the City Called Sought After”

Principle:

God can reverse the social and spiritual reputation of a place so completely that yesterday’s abandonment becomes tomorrow’s attraction.

CXI. SILENCE ENDS

God’s purpose moves:

Forward.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration has:

A voice.

CXII. RIGHTEOUSNESS SHINES

Morning imagery.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Dawn does not argue with darkness; it simply arrives and darkness retreats.

CXIII. SALVATION BURNS

Torch imagery.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation gives:

Light.

CXIV. NATIONS SEE

Visibility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s work should be recognizable enough that outsiders can see its fruit.

CXV. KINGS SEE GLORY

Authority witnesses:

Restoration.

Spiritual Principle

God’s glory reaches:

Public life.

CXVI. NEW NAME

Transformation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God gives a name, heaven’s verdict outranks earth’s vocabulary.

CXVII. CROWN OF GLORY

Honor.

Spiritual Principle

God can dignify:

The formerly shamed.

CXVIII. ROYAL DIADEM

Value.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption can turn the object of ridicule into an object of royal honor.

CXIX. HELD BY GOD

Security.

Spiritual Principle

God’s people are:

Kept.

CXX. FORSAKEN

Old pain.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some names describe what happened to you without describing who God intends you to remain.

CXXI. DESOLATE

Old condition.

Spiritual Principle

Emptiness can be:

Temporary.

CXXII. HEPhZIBAH

Delight.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One word from God can overturn years of rejection.

CXXIII. BEULAH

Belonging.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant ends:

Isolation.

CXXIV. BRIDEGROOM JOY

Celebration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s restoration is not paperwork; it is wedding joy.

CXXV. WATCHMEN

Guardians.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration requires:

Vigilance.

CXXVI. WALLS

Boundary.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer stands where:

Threats approach.

CXXVII. NEVER SILENT

Persistence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A silent watchman and a silent intercessor both leave important work undone.

CXXVIII. DAY AND NIGHT

Faithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

Some assignments require:

Endurance.

CXXIX. CALL ON LORD

Prayer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Watchmen do not only watch the horizon; they speak to God about what they see.

CXXX. NO REST UNTIL

Tenacity.

Spiritual Principle

Faith keeps:

Asking.

CXXXI. JERUSALEM ESTABLISHED

Goal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prayer becomes stronger when it knows what it is praying toward.

CXXXII. PRAISE OF EARTH

Witness.

Spiritual Principle

God’s restoration brings:

Honor to Him.

CXXXIII. LORD SWEARS

Certainty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not need to swear for His word to be trustworthy, but when He does, He emphasizes certainty for His people.

CXXXIV. MIGHTY ARM

Capacity.

Spiritual Principle

Promise and power belong:

Together.

CXXXV. ENEMIES NO LONGER EAT

Justice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Restoration includes the ending of exploitation.

CXXXVI. LABOR NO LONGER STOLEN

Dignity.

Spiritual Principle

God cares about:

Fruit.

CXXXVII. HARVESTERS EAT

Equity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The person who plants should not always be the person left empty.

CXXXVIII. PRAISE AFTER HARVEST

Thanksgiving.

Spiritual Principle

Abundance should deepen:

Worship.

CXXXIX. PASS THROUGH GATES

Movement.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The restored city is not meant to become stagnant.

CXL. PREPARE WAY

Mission.

Spiritual Principle

Make room.

CXLI. BUILD HIGHWAY

Access.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s people should help make the path to truth clear rather than unnecessarily difficult.

CXLII. REMOVE STONES

Obstacle removal.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance can involve:

Removing barriers.

CXLIII. BANNER FOR NATIONS

Visibility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A hidden banner cannot guide anyone.

CXLIV. PROCLAIM TO ENDS OF EARTH

Mission.

Spiritual Principle

God’s salvation is:

Public.

CXLV. SALVATION COMES

Hope embodied.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The deepest hope is not something coming but Someone coming.

CXLVI. REWARD

Justice.

Spiritual Principle

God remembers:

Faithfulness.

CXLVII. HOLY PEOPLE

Identity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s new names come with a new calling.

CXLVIII. REDEEMED OF LORD

Ownership.

Spiritual Principle

Redeemed people belong to:

Redeemer.

CXLIX. SOUGHT AFTER

Reversal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace can make yesterday’s neglected place tomorrow’s destination.

CL. NOT FORSAKEN

Security.

Spiritual Principle

God’s presence becomes:

Final identity.

CLI. ISAIAH 62 AS A WHOLE

The chapter moves:

From:

Silence.

To:

Proclamation.

From:

Forsaken.

To:

Delighted In.

From:

Desolate.

To:

Married.

From:

Prayer.

To:

Establishment.

From:

Stolen harvest.

To:

Enjoyed harvest.

From:

Blocked way.

To:

Prepared highway.

From:

Waiting.

To:

Coming salvation.

From:

Rejected city.

To:

Sought-After city.

Key Truth

Isaiah 62 is the story of God replacing every language of abandonment with the language of covenant delight, holiness, redemption, and salvation.

CLII. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 62

1. God Refuses Silence

His purpose for Zion continues until righteousness shines.

2. Zion Receives a New Name

God Himself defines her restored identity.

3. Zion Becomes a Crown

The shamed city becomes an object of glory in God’s hand.

4. Forsaken Becomes Hephzibah

God declares His delight in His people.

5. Desolate Becomes Beulah

Covenant relationship replaces abandonment.

6. Watchmen Pray Without Ceasing

Persistent intercession accompanies restoration.

7. God Swears to Protect the Harvest

Enemies no longer consume the fruit of His people’s labor.

8. The Highway Is Prepared

Obstacles are removed and a banner is raised.

9. Salvation Comes

The announcement reaches the ends of the earth.

10. Zion Receives Her Final Names

Holy.

Redeemed.

Sought After.

Not Forsaken.

Key Truth

Isaiah 62 moves from the memory of abandonment to the certainty of covenant restoration because the Lord Himself renames, rejoices over, protects, redeems, and glorifies His people.

CLIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 62 begins with:

Determination.

> **“For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent.”**

God has not:

Forgotten.

Abandoned.

Lost interest.

His goal is:

Righteousness shining.

Salvation blazing.

Then He says:

A new name is coming.

Maybe people have called you:

Failure.

Rejected.

Broken.

Unwanted.

Forgotten.

Finished.

Maybe life itself seemed to call you:

Forsaken.

God says:

That name is not:

Final.

Then comes:

> **“My delight is in her.”**

That is a radically different name.

Forsaken says:

Nobody wants me.

Hephzibah says:

God delights in me.

Desolate says:

Nothing remains.

Beulah says:

Covenant relationship has been restored.

Then comes one of the most beautiful statements in Isaiah:

> **“As a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.”**

Do not reduce God’s grace to:

Reluctant tolerance.

He restores:

Joyfully.

Then:

Watchmen.

They stand.

They watch.

They pray.

Day.

Night.

They refuse:

Silence.

That is a picture of persistent:

Intercession.

Maybe you have been praying for:

A child.

A family.

A church.

A ministry.

A city.

A restoration.

A promise.

And you are tired.

Isaiah says:

“Do not let Him rest until…”

There is that word:

Until.

Do not confuse:

Delay.

With:

Denial.

If God has given biblical grounds for the prayer:

Remain faithful.

Then God swears:

The enemy will not always eat:

Your harvest.

What you labor for will not always be:

Taken.

What was exploited can become:

Protected.

Then comes:

Preparation.

“Build up the highway.”

If you are praying for people to:

Come—

Make room.

If you are praying for:

Restoration—

Remove stones.

If you are praying for:

Revival—

Raise the banner.

If you are praying for:

Gathering—

Prepare the road.

Then comes:

“Behold, your salvation comes!”

Not:

Maybe.

Behold.

Look.

Your salvation:

Comes.

And finally God says:

Here is what you will be called.

Not:

Forsaken.

Not:

Desolate.

But:

Holy People.

Redeemed of the Lord.

Sought After.

Not Forsaken.

What a journey.

The chapter begins with God refusing:

Silence.

It ends with God giving:

Names.

So Isaiah 62 asks:

What name am I living under?

The name of:

My past?

My critics?

My pain?

My failure?

Or:

God’s grace?

Am I willing to believe:

God delights in covenant restoration?

Am I praying:

Persistently?

Am I standing like:

A watchman?

Am I willing to pray:

Until?

Have I stopped because the promise seemed:

Slow?

Am I preparing for what I am asking God to:

Do?

Am I removing:

Stones?

Am I raising:

The banner?

And do I believe:

The God who once allowed discipline can also declare:

Not Forsaken?

The message of Isaiah 62 is:

God is not finished.

The old name does not have to remain.

The desolation does not have to remain.

The silence does not have to remain.

The enemy does not get the harvest forever.

The road will be:

Prepared.

Salvation will:

Come.

And the God who restores Zion will make His people known as:

Holy.

Redeemed.

Sought After.

Not Forsaken.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You do not:

Forget Your people.

Thank You for Your zeal to:

Restore.

Redeem.

Establish.

Glorify.

Father, let righteousness shine in:

Our lives.

Let salvation burn brightly like:

A torch.

Give us new identity where:

Shame.

Failure.

Loss.

Rejection.

Have named us wrongly.

Remove every name that no longer belongs.

Where we have felt:

Forsaken—

Speak:

Hephzibah.

Where we have felt:

Desolate—

Speak:

Beulah.

Remind us:

You delight in restored covenant relationship.

Father, teach us to understand Your:

Joy.

Thank You that You do not merely tolerate Your redeemed people.

You rejoice over:

Restoration.

Father, make us faithful:

Watchmen.

Teach us to pray:

Day.

Night.

Persistently.

Biblically.

Faithfully.

Help us not to abandon prayer because:

Answers take time.

Teach us:

Never to put a period where You write “Until.”

Father, protect the fruit of:

Faithful labor.

End cycles of:

Loss.

Exploitation.

Waste.

Teach us to receive Your provision with:

Praise.

Father, show us what stones need to be:

Removed.

What highways need to be:

Built.

What gates need to be:

Opened.

What banners need to be:

Raised.

Make us people who prepare the way for:

Others.

Father, thank You that:

Salvation comes.

Thank You for:

Jesus Christ.

Our Savior.

Our Redeemer.

Our King.

Make us:

Holy people.

Redeemed people.

People who belong to:

You.

And when our past tries to call us:

Forsaken—

Remind us what You say:

Sought After.

Not Forsaken.

Let Your name over us become louder than:

Every old label.

Every accusation.

Every wound.

Every loss.

And may our restored lives shine so brightly that:

Nations see.

Kings recognize.

And all glory goes to:

You.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **"You will no longer be called Forsaken, and your land will no longer be called Desolate. Instead, you will be called Hephzibah ('My delight is in her'), and your land Beulah ('Married'). For the Lord delights in you, and your land will be joined to Him." — Isaiah 62:4**

Central Truth

The Lord is zealously committed to Zion's restoration and will not rest until her righteousness and salvation shine publicly; He replaces the names Forsaken and Desolate with Hephzibah and

Beulah, rejoices over His people like a bridegroom, appoints watchmen to persistent prayer, protects the fruit of their labor, prepares the highway for salvation, and transforms them into a holy and redeemed people known as Sought After and Not Forsaken.

Isaiah 62 in One Sentence

Isaiah declares that God will not remain silent until Zion's righteousness and salvation shine before the nations, gives Jerusalem a new identity as His delight and covenant bride, rejoices over her, calls watchmen to persistent prayer until restoration is complete, promises that enemies will no longer consume the fruit of her labor, commands the way to be prepared for coming salvation, and finally renames His restored people Holy, Redeemed, Sought After, and Not Forsaken.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 63 — The Day of Vengeance and the Mercy of God

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 63 presents one of the most dramatic contrasts in the book of Isaiah.

The chapter begins with:

Judgment.

Wrath.

Vengeance.

The winepress.

The Divine Warrior.

But then it moves toward:

Mercy.

Compassion.

Redemption.

The Holy Spirit.

Remembered deliverance.

Prayer.

And the fatherhood of God.

Isaiah 62 ended with the announcement:

“Behold, your salvation comes!”

Isaiah 63 immediately asks:

“Who is this coming from Edom?”

The answer is majestic:

“It is I, the One who speaks in righteousness, mighty to save.”

The One who comes is presented as both:

Judge.

And:

Savior.

He brings judgment against evil while bringing redemption to His people.

The first six verses contain the terrifying picture of:

A winepress.

The nations are portrayed as being crushed beneath divine judgment.

The garments of the Divine Warrior are stained because He has executed righteous vengeance.

Yet even in the midst of this judgment we hear:

“Mighty to save.”

Judgment and salvation therefore stand beside each other.

For those who oppose God:

Judgment.

For those whom He redeems:

Salvation.

Then Isaiah suddenly changes direction.

Instead of continuing to describe judgment, he begins remembering:

“The steadfast love of the Lord.”

He remembers:

God's goodness.

God's compassion.

God's covenant love.

God's redemption.

God carrying His people.

God rescuing Israel.

God placing His Holy Spirit among them.

But the memory is painful because Israel:

Rebelled.

And:

Grieved His Holy Spirit.

The God who loved them was resisted by the very people He had redeemed.

Then the people remember:

Moses.

The Red Sea.

The divided waters.

The glorious arm of God.

The Spirit who gave rest.

They look backward because their present circumstances cause them to ask:

“Where is the God who did these things?”

Finally the chapter becomes:

Prayer.

Israel cries:

“Look down from heaven and see.”

Then comes one of the great declarations of the chapter:

“You are our Father.”

Even if Abraham does not know them.

Even if Israel does not acknowledge them.

The Lord remains:

Their Father.

Their Redeemer.

Isaiah 63 therefore moves from:

The Warrior.

To:

The Father.

From:

Vengeance.

To:

Compassion.

From:

The winepress.

To:

The remembered exodus.

From:

Rebellion.

To:

Prayer.

From:

Judgment.

To:

A cry for mercy.

The central truth of Isaiah 63 is:

The Lord is the righteous Divine Warrior who judges evil and saves His redeemed; He is also the compassionate covenant God who remembers His people, shares their affliction, gives His Spirit, carries them through their wilderness, and remains their Father and Redeemer even when they cry to Him from the consequences of rebellion.

I. THE WARRIOR FROM EDOM

Isaiah 63:1 — Mighty to Save

“Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah, with crimson-stained garments—this One glorious in His apparel, marching in the greatness of His strength?”

“It is I, the One who speaks in righteousness, mighty to save.”

The chapter opens with:

A question.

Someone approaches from:

Edom.

More specifically:

Bozrah.

His clothing is:

Crimson-stained.

His appearance is:

Glorious.

His movement displays:

Strength.

The question is:

Who is He?

The answer:

The righteous One.

The powerful One.

The saving One.

Cross References

Revelation 19:11

John sees heaven opened and Christ riding upon a white horse. He is faithful and true, and He judges and makes war in righteousness.

Revelation 19:13

The victorious Christ is clothed in a garment marked with blood, and His name is identified with the Word of God.

Habakkuk 3:3

Habakkuk pictures God coming in majesty, with His glory covering the heavens and His praise filling the earth.

Spiritual Principle

God's judgment is never:

Unrighteous.

His power is joined with:

Righteousness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One powerful enough to judge the nations is also mighty enough to save the redeemed.

II. “WHO IS THIS?”

Isaiah begins with:

A question of identity.

The approaching figure cannot be ignored.

He is:

Glorious.

Powerful.

Victorious.

Spiritual Principle

God sometimes reveals Himself in ways that force people to ask:

Who is this?

III. COMING FROM EDOM

Edom frequently represents:

Hostility toward God's people.

Opposition.

Pride.

Judgment.

The Divine Warrior emerges victorious.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No territory of opposition is beyond the reach of God's righteous authority.

IV. BOZRAH

Bozrah was an important city of:

Edom.

Its mention makes the scene:

Concrete.

Historical.

Judicial.

Spiritual Principle

God's judgment is not merely:

Abstract theology.

He acts within:

History.

V. CRIMSON-STAINED GARMENTS

His garments reveal:

Conflict.

Judgment.

Victory.

This prepares us for:

The winepress imagery.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Savior is not weak because He is merciful, and the Judge is not unjust because He is powerful.

VI. GLORIOUS IN HIS APPAREL

Even after judgment:

He remains glorious.

His glory is not diminished by:

Justice.

Spiritual Principle

God's holiness includes:

Righteous judgment.

VII. MARCHING IN GREAT STRENGTH

The Warrior does not:

Stagger.

Retreat.

Struggle toward victory.

He marches in:

Greatness.

Strength.

Authority.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not barely survive His enemies; He advances in sovereign strength.

VIII. “I SPEAK IN RIGHTEOUSNESS”

His words are:

True.

Just.

Faithful.

His judgment proceeds from:

Righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

God never needs:

Falsehood.

Exaggeration.

Manipulation.

To accomplish His purpose.

IX. “MIGHTY TO SAVE”

This is the great hope within the terrifying scene.

He is mighty:

To judge.

But Isaiah emphasizes:

To save.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never become so occupied with the judgment imagery of Isaiah 63 that you miss the declaration at its center: He is mighty to save.

X. WHY ARE YOUR GARMENTS RED?

Isaiah 63:2 — The Winepress

“Why are Your garments red, and Your clothes like the one who treads the winepress?”

The observer notices:

The color.

The stains.

The resemblance to:

A worker in a winepress.

The question now changes from:

Who are You?

To:

Why are You covered this way?

Cross References

Revelation 19:15

From Christ comes the authority by which the nations are struck, and He is described as treading the winepress of the fierce wrath of Almighty God.

Lamentations 1:15

Jerusalem's judgment is portrayed with winepress imagery as the Lord crushes rebellion beneath righteous judgment.

Joel 3:13

The nations are summoned to judgment because wickedness has become great, pictured as a harvest ready for the sickle and a winepress overflowing.

Spiritual Principle

Sin eventually encounters:

Divine justice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The winepress reminds us that God may delay judgment, but delay should never be mistaken for indifference.

XI. THE WINEPRESS IMAGE

A winepress involves:

Pressure.

Crushing.

Juice flowing beneath the feet.

Isaiah transforms this familiar image into:

Judgment imagery.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical judgment is:

Serious.

XII. SIN HAS CONSEQUENCES

The redness of the garments tells us:

Something happened.

Judgment has been:

Executed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin may appear harmless while it is growing, but the day of divine accounting reveals its true seriousness.

XIII. “I HAVE TRODDEN THE WINEPRESS ALONE”

Isaiah 63:3 — Judgment Accomplished Alone

“I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the nations no one was with Me. I trampled them in My anger and crushed them in My fury; their blood spattered on My garments, and I stained all My clothing.”

The Warrior says:

Alone.

No nation helped Him.

No army strengthened Him.

No human coalition accomplished the victory.

His own power was:

Enough.

Cross References

Revelation 14:19

An angel gathers the earth's wicked harvest and casts it into the great winepress of God's wrath.

Revelation 14:20

The winepress is trodden in judgment, presenting a severe picture of the consequences of rebellion against God.

Lamentations 1:15

The Lord's judgment upon rebellion is again compared to grapes being crushed in a winepress.

Spiritual Principle

God does not require:

Human assistance.

To accomplish:

Divine judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God says, “I have trodden the winepress alone,” He reminds us that His sovereignty never depends upon human reinforcement.

XIV. NO ONE WAS WITH ME

The victory belongs:

Entirely.

To God.

Spiritual Principle

Divine power is:

Self-sufficient.

XV. ANGER AND FURY

God's anger is not:

Petty irritation.

Uncontrolled temper.

Personal insecurity.

It is His holy response to:

Evil.

Rebellion.

Injustice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's wrath is not holiness temporarily lost; it is holiness responding to evil.

XVI. THE STAINED GARMENTS

The clothing communicates:

Judgment has actually occurred.

This is not merely:

A warning.

It is:

Execution of judgment.

Spiritual Principle

There comes a point when warning gives way to:

Accountability.

XVII. THE DAY OF VENGEANCE

Isaiah 63:4 — Judgment and Redemption

“For the day of vengeance was in My heart, and the year of My redeemed had come.”

Two ideas stand together:

Vengeance.

Redemption.

A day:

Of judgment.

A year:

Of redemption.

God's judgment upon oppressors becomes connected with:

Deliverance for His people.

Cross References

Isaiah 61:2

The Servant proclaims both the acceptable year of the Lord and the day when God brings righteous vengeance.

Luke 21:22

Jesus speaks of days of judgment in which what Scripture has warned will be fulfilled.

2 Thessalonians 1:8

The returning Lord brings righteous judgment against those who persist in rejecting God and the gospel.

Spiritual Principle

The same divine intervention may mean:

Judgment for rebellion.

And:

Deliverance for the redeemed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's day of judgment is also the day His oppressed people discover that evil did not have the final word.

XVIII. “IN MY HEART”

The judgment is:

Purposeful.

Deliberate.

Not:

Accidental.

Spiritual Principle

God's actions arise from:

His holy character.

XIX. THE YEAR OF MY REDEEMED

God has:

A people.

He calls them:

My redeemed.

Their redemption belongs to:

His purpose.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Judge speaks of vengeance, but He speaks of His people with the language of possession: “My redeemed.”

XX. NO ONE TO HELP

Isaiah 63:5 — His Own Arm Brought Salvation

“I looked, but there was no one to help; I was amazed that no one upheld Me. So My own arm brought salvation, and My wrath sustained Me.”

Again we find:

No helper.

No supporter.

No human rescuer.

Therefore:

His own arm saves.

Cross References

Isaiah 59:16

The Lord sees that there is no human intercessor capable of solving the crisis, so His own arm brings salvation.

Psalm 98:1

The Lord accomplishes marvelous victory through His own right hand and holy arm.

Isaiah 51:9

God's people call upon the mighty arm of the Lord, remembering His ancient acts of deliverance.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation ultimately depends upon:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When no human arm is strong enough, God's arm remains sufficient.

XXI. “I LOOKED”

God sees:

The absence of help.

Nothing is hidden.

Spiritual Principle

Human inadequacy never catches God:

Unprepared.

XXII. HIS OWN ARM

The arm symbolizes:

Power.

Action.

Strength.

Intervention.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The arm that divided the sea is the arm that brings salvation when human strength fails.

XXIII. SALVATION DID NOT COME FROM MAN

No nation.

No coalition.

No earthly champion.

Could claim:

Credit.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation gives glory to:

God alone.

XXIV. THE NATIONS TRAMPLED

Isaiah 63:6 — Judgment Poured Out

“I trampled the nations in My anger; I made them stagger in My fury and poured out their lifeblood on the earth.”

The judgment reaches:

Nations.

Human greatness cannot:

Shield rebellion.

Cross References

Psalm 60:12

Through God His people gain victory, because He alone can overcome their enemies.

Jeremiah 25:30

The Lord's judgment is pictured as a mighty roar against the nations and the inhabitants of the earth.

Joel 3:13

The nations are pictured like a ripe harvest and an overflowing winepress ready for judgment.

Spiritual Principle

National power does not make people:

Accountable to no one.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No throne is high enough, no army large enough, and no nation powerful enough to place rebellion beyond God's judgment.

XXV. THE WARRIOR SECTION AS A WHOLE

Verses 1–6 reveal:

Righteousness.

Strength.

Judgment.

Vengeance.

Redemption.

Salvation.

Key Truth

The Divine Warrior is not merely:

Against something.

He is acting:

For His redeemed.

XXVI. THE LORD'S COMPASSION REMEMBERED

Isaiah 63:7 — Remembering Steadfast Love

“I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord, the praises of the Lord, according to all the Lord has granted us—the great goodness He has shown to the house of Israel according to His compassion and the abundance of His love.”

The tone changes dramatically.

From:

Wrath.

To:

Love.

From:

Judgment.

To:

Remembrance.

Isaiah says:

I will recount.

He intentionally remembers:

The Lord's steadfast love.

Cross References

Psalm 89:1

The psalmist determines to sing continually about the Lord's steadfast love and proclaim His faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:22

God's steadfast love does not cease, and His compassion does not come to an end.

Psalm 103:2

The believer is commanded to bless the Lord and not forget all the good things He has done.

Spiritual Principle

Faith strengthens itself by:

Remembering God's goodness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When present circumstances make God seem distant, begin recounting what His mercy has already done.

XXVII. “I WILL RECOUNT”

Remembering must sometimes be:

Intentional.

The prophet chooses to:

Speak.

Recall.

Rehearse.

Spiritual Principle

Memory can become:

Worship.

XXVIII. STEADFAST LOVE

God's love is not:

Temporary emotion.

It is connected with:

Covenant faithfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's steadfast love is not measured by how easy the present moment feels.

XXIX. THE PRAISES OF THE LORD

Remembering produces:

Praise.

Spiritual Principle

The memory of grace should become:

The language of worship.

XXX. GREAT GOODNESS

Isaiah does not describe God's goodness as:

Small.

He calls it:

Great.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Count God's mercies long enough and complaint will eventually have to share the room with gratitude.

XXXI. COMPASSION AND ABUNDANT LOVE

God's treatment of Israel flowed from:

Compassion.

Abundant love.

Spiritual Principle

God's covenant dealings reveal:

His heart.

XXXII. “SURELY THEY ARE MY PEOPLE”

Isaiah 63:8 — He Became Their Savior

“For He said, ‘Surely they are My people, children who will not be false to Me.’ And so He became their Savior.”

God identifies Israel as:

My people.

He expects:

Faithfulness.

He acts as:

Savior.

Cross References

Exodus 4:22

God identifies Israel as His son and commands Pharaoh to release the people who belong to Him.

Hosea 11:1

God recalls His love for Israel and how He called His son out of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 32:6

Israel is reminded that the Lord is their Father, Maker, and the One who established them as a people.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant privilege carries:

Covenant responsibility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who says, “My people,” rightfully expects His people to live as though they belong to Him.

XXXIII. “MY PEOPLE”

These words express:

Belonging.

Relationship.

Covenant.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption creates:

A people belonging to God.

XXXIV. CHILDREN WHO WILL NOT BE FALSE

God desired:

Faithfulness.

Truth.

Loyalty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace does not lower the value of faithfulness; grace gives us greater reason to be faithful.

XXXV. HE BECAME THEIR SAVIOR

Israel could not:

Save itself.

God acted.

Spiritual Principle

The story of redemption begins with:

God's initiative.

XXXVI. IN ALL THEIR SUFFERING

Isaiah 63:9 — The Compassionate Redeemer

“In all their suffering He suffered, and the Angel of His Presence saved them. In His love and compassion He redeemed them; He lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.”

This is one of Isaiah's deepest descriptions of:

Divine compassion.

Their suffering mattered to:

God.

He did not remain:

Detached.

He:

Saved.

Redeemed.

Lifted.

Carried.

Cross References

Exodus 14:19

The Angel of God moved in connection with Israel's deliverance, standing between God's people and the pursuing Egyptian army.

Exodus 23:20

God promised to send His Angel before Israel to guard them and lead them toward the place He had prepared.

Zechariah 2:8

God identifies so closely with His people that harming them is compared to touching what is precious to Him.

Spiritual Principle

God is not indifferent to:

The suffering of His people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who carries His people does not watch their pain from a safe distance.

XXXVII. HE SUFFERED WITH THEM

Their affliction touched:

His compassion.

Spiritual Principle

God's compassion is:

Personal.

XXXVIII. THE ANGEL OF HIS PRESENCE

God's saving presence accompanied:

Israel.

He was not merely:

Sending instructions.

He was:

Present.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest gift in deliverance is not merely escape from trouble but the presence of God within it.

XXXIX. IN HIS LOVE AND COMPASSION

Redemption flows from:

Love.

Compassion.

Not:

Israel's worthiness.

Spiritual Principle

Grace originates in:

God's character.

XL. HE REDEEMED THEM

To redeem is to:

Rescue.

Deliver.

Claim.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption means the people who could not free themselves were claimed by the One strong enough to rescue them.

XLI. HE LIFTED THEM UP

God did not merely:

Point toward safety.

He:

Lifted.

Spiritual Principle

Divine compassion acts.

XLII. HE CARRIED THEM

The image is:

Tender.

Protective.

Personal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes God's greatest miracle is not removing the wilderness but carrying us through it.

XLIII. ALL THE DAYS OF OLD

God's faithfulness had:

History.

Israel possessed:

A testimony.

Spiritual Principle

Yesterday's faithfulness provides grounds for:

Today's trust.

XLIV. THEY REBELLED

Isaiah 63:10 — Grieving the Holy Spirit

“But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit. So He turned and became their enemy; He Himself fought against them.”

One word changes everything:

But.

God had:

Loved.

Redeemed.

Carried.

Protected.

Yet:

They rebelled.

Their rebellion:

Grieved His Holy Spirit.

Cross References

Ephesians 4:30

Believers are warned not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom they are sealed for the day of redemption.

Numbers 14:11

God confronts Israel for continuing to despise Him and refusing to believe despite the signs He performed among them.

Psalm 78:40

Israel repeatedly rebelled against God in the wilderness and caused grief through persistent disobedience.

Spiritual Principle

Those who have experienced grace can still:

Resist God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Past deliverance does not give us permission for present rebellion.

XLV. REBELLION AFTER REDEMPTION

This makes Israel's sin especially tragic.

They rebelled against the One who:

Saved them.

Carried them.

Loved them.

Spiritual Principle

The greater the grace remembered, the more serious rebellion appears.

XLVI. THEY GRIEVED HIS HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is not presented as:

Impersonal force.

He can be:

Grieved.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin is not merely breaking a rule; it grieves the Holy Spirit whose presence is among God's people.

XLVII. GOD FOUGHT AGAINST THEM

The One who fought:

For Israel.

Could discipline:

Israel.

Spiritual Principle

Covenant relationship does not eliminate:

Divine discipline.

XLVIII. THE DANGER OF PRESUMPTION

Israel could not say:

God once delivered us, therefore our present behavior does not matter.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never turn yesterday's mercy into today's excuse for disobedience.

XLIX. REMEMBERING GOD'S DELIVERANCE

Isaiah 63:11 — Where Is the God of Moses?

“Then His people remembered the days of old, of Moses: Where is the One who brought them through the sea with the shepherd of His flock? Where is the One who set His Holy Spirit among them?”

Now memory returns again.

They remember:

Moses.

The sea.

The flock.

The Holy Spirit.

Their question is:

Where is He?

Cross References

Exodus 14:22

Israel passed through the sea on dry ground while the waters stood on either side of them.

Psalm 77:20

God led His people like a flock through the leadership of Moses and Aaron.

Micah 6:4

God reminds Israel that He brought them out of Egypt, redeemed them from slavery, and gave them leaders.

Spiritual Principle

In times of crisis, God's people often survive by remembering:

What He has done before.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A generation asking, “Where is God?” should begin by remembering where God has already proven faithful.

L. THE DAYS OF OLD

Memory reaches backward.

Not merely toward:

Nostalgia.

But toward:

Evidence.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical remembrance strengthens:

Faith.

LI. MOSES

Moses represents:

Deliverance.

Leadership.

Exodus.

Covenant history.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's servants change from generation to generation, but the God who leads His flock remains the same.

LII. THROUGH THE SEA

The sea represented:

An impossible barrier.

God made:

A pathway.

Spiritual Principle

God can make a road where human eyes see:

Only water.

LIII. THE SHEPHERD OF HIS FLOCK

The people are pictured as:

A flock.

God provides:

Leadership.

Direction.

Protection.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The flock belongs to God even when He chooses human shepherds to guide it.

LIV. HIS HOLY SPIRIT AMONG THEM

The Holy Spirit was not an afterthought.

His presence belonged to:

Israel's redemptive history.

Spiritual Principle

God's people need more than:

External direction.

They need:

Divine presence.

LV. HIS GLORIOUS ARM

Isaiah 63:12 — An Everlasting Name

“Who sent His glorious arm of power to be at Moses' right hand, who divided the waters before them to make for Himself an everlasting name,”

God's power stood:

With Moses.

The waters divided.

But the ultimate purpose was:

God's name.

God's glory.

Cross References

Exodus 14:21

At God's command, Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord drove the waters back so Israel could cross.

Psalm 78:13

God divided the sea and led His people through while the waters stood like walls.

Joshua 3:16

When Israel later crossed the Jordan, God again stopped the waters so His people could pass.

Spiritual Principle

Miracles ultimately point beyond:

The servant.

To:

The God who acts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may place His power beside a Moses, but the everlasting name belongs to God.

LVI. AT MOSES' RIGHT HAND

Moses was the visible leader.

God was:

The power behind him.

Spiritual Principle

Effective ministry depends upon:

Divine enablement.

LVII. HE DIVIDED THE WATERS

What looked:

Impossible.

Was divided by:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not confuse the staff in Moses' hand with the power in God's arm.

LVIII. AN EVERLASTING NAME

The Exodus was not merely:

Israel's escape.

It revealed:

God's character.

Spiritual Principle

God's works make known:

His name.

LIX. THROUGH THE DEPTHS

Isaiah 63:13 — They Did Not Stumble

“Who led them through the depths? Like a horse running in the wilderness, they did not stumble.”

God did more than:

Open the way.

He:

Led them through it.

Cross References

Exodus 15:19

Israel crossed safely through the sea while the Egyptian forces were overwhelmed when the waters returned.

Psalm 106:9

God rebuked the Red Sea, dried it up, and led His people through the depths as though they were crossing a wilderness.

Jeremiah 2:6

Israel later remembered the Lord who brought them through a dangerous wilderness filled with difficulty and darkness.

Spiritual Principle

God does not merely create:

An opening.

He guides His people:

Through.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who opens the path also knows how to keep His people from stumbling while they walk through it.

LX. THROUGH THE DEPTHS

The route itself seemed:

Dangerous.

Yet God made it:

Passable.

Spiritual Principle

God can lead through places we would never choose:

For ourselves.

LXI. THEY DID NOT STUMBLE

The pathway was unusual.

But God's guidance was:

Reliable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

An unfamiliar road is safe when the familiar Shepherd is leading.

LXII. THE SPIRIT GAVE REST

Isaiah 63:14 — Led for His Glorious Name

“As cattle go down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord gave them rest. So You led Your people, to make a glorious name for Yourself.”

The image changes from:

Horse.

To:

Cattle descending into a peaceful valley.

The Spirit provides:

Rest.

God provides:

Leadership.

The result:

His name receives glory.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 12:9

Israel looked forward to entering the rest and inheritance God would give them.

Hebrews 4:9

Scripture speaks of a continuing rest that belongs to the people of God.

Psalm 78:53

God guided Israel safely so that they did not need to fear while judgment overtook their enemies.

Spiritual Principle

The Spirit who leads can also give:

Rest.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not lead His people endlessly from crisis to crisis without purpose; He also knows the valley where His Spirit gives rest.

LXIII. THE VALLEY

The valley here pictures:

Rest.

Security.

Refreshment.

Spiritual Principle

God's leading includes seasons of:

Peace.

LXIV. THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD

The same Spirit who was:

Grieved.

Is remembered as the Spirit who:

Gave rest.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not grieve the Spirit whose presence is the very source of the rest you need.

LXV. “YOU LED YOUR PEOPLE”

God's leadership is:

Personal.

Persistent.

Purposeful.

Spiritual Principle

God's people are not:

Self-led.

LXVI. TO MAKE A GLORIOUS NAME

Again God's actions point toward:

His reputation.

His glory.

His revealed character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's greatest works leave His people grateful and His name glorious.

LXVII. PRAYER FOR GOD'S MERCY

Isaiah 63:15 — Look Down from Heaven

“Look down from heaven and see, from Your lofty throne of holiness and glory. Where are Your zeal and Your might? Your tenderness and compassion are withheld from us.”

Memory now becomes:

Prayer.

They have remembered:

What God did.

Now they ask:

God to act again.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 26:15

Israel prays for God to look down from His holy dwelling in heaven and bless His people.

Psalm 80:14

The psalmist pleads with God to return, look down from heaven, and care for His people.

2 Chronicles 6:21

Solomon asks God to hear the prayers of His people from His heavenly dwelling and respond with forgiveness.

Spiritual Principle

Remembered mercy should lead to:

Present prayer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The best use of yesterday's testimony is to turn it into today's prayer.

LXVIII. “LOOK DOWN”

The prayer is:

Bold.

Direct.

Urgent.

Spiritual Principle

Faith speaks honestly to:

God.

LXIX. THE THRONE OF HOLINESS AND GLORY

God is:

Exalted.

Holy.

Glorious.

Yet Israel still calls upon:

Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The throne is high, but prayer is not too low to reach it.

LXX. WHERE IS YOUR ZEAL?

They remember:

The God who once acted powerfully.

Now they long for:

Renewed intervention.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual longing often begins by recognizing:

How much we need God to act.

LXXI. WHERE IS YOUR MIGHT?

They know:

God has power.

The question is not:

Can You?

But:

Will You act again?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith does not deny the silence of the present; it appeals to the power revealed in the past.

LXXII. TENDERNESS AND COMPASSION

Israel longs for what Isaiah has already remembered:

Divine compassion.

Spiritual Principle

God's people need more than:

Power.

They need:

Mercy.

LXXIII. “YOU ARE OUR FATHER”

Isaiah 63:16 — Our Redeemer from Everlasting

“Yet You are our Father, though Abraham does not know us and Israel does not acknowledge us. You, O Lord, are our Father; our Redeemer from everlasting is Your name.”

This is one of the chapter's strongest declarations.

Whatever else is uncertain:

You are our Father.

Human ancestry cannot be:

Their final refuge.

Their appeal rests upon:

God.

Cross References

Malachi 2:10

God's people are reminded that they share one Father and were created by one God.

Matthew 6:9

Jesus teaches His disciples to approach God in prayer as their Father in heaven.

John 8:39

Jesus challenges people who relied upon physical descent from Abraham while failing to live with the faithfulness Abraham demonstrated.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual security ultimately rests in:

God.

Not merely:

Ancestry.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When human connections fail, God's people can still cry, “You, O Lord, are our Father.”

LXXIV. ABRAHAM DOES NOT KNOW US

The patriarch cannot:

Rescue them.

Ancestry alone cannot:

Save.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual heritage must never replace:

Present relationship with God.

LXXV. ISRAEL DOES NOT ACKNOWLEDGE US

Even the greatest human forefathers are:

Insufficient.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith may respect its heritage without worshiping its family tree.

LXXVI. OUR FATHER

God is not merely:

The God of ancestors.

He is:

Our Father.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer becomes personal when theology says:

Our.

LXXVII. OUR REDEEMER

Father.

Redeemer.

The two titles stand together.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Father who claims His people is also the Redeemer who pays the price to rescue them.

LXXVIII. FROM EVERLASTING

God's redemptive character is not:

Temporary.

He has always been:

Faithful.

Spiritual Principle

Our crisis is temporary.

God's character is:

Everlasting.

LXXIX. WHY DO YOU MAKE US STRAY?

Isaiah 63:17 — A Cry for Restoration

“Why, O Lord, do You make us stray from Your ways and harden our hearts so we do not fear You? Return, for the sake of Your servants, the tribes that are Your inheritance.”

This is difficult language.

The prayer recognizes:

Divine judgment.

Human hardening.

Spiritual wandering.

Yet it ends by pleading:

Return.

Cross References

Psalm 90:13

Moses pleads with the Lord to return and show compassion toward His servants.

Exodus 32:12

Moses intercedes for Israel and asks God to turn from severe judgment for the sake of His covenant reputation and promises.

Romans 9:18

Paul teaches that God shows mercy according to His sovereign purpose and may judicially harden those who persist in unbelief.

Spiritual Principle

Persistent rebellion can result in:

Judicial hardening.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One of the most dangerous judgments upon rebellion is being allowed to continue down the road rebellion has chosen.

LXXX. STRAYING FROM HIS WAYS

God's ways represent:

Truth.

Holiness.

Obedience.

To stray is to:

Leave the path.

Spiritual Principle

A wrong path eventually produces:

Distance.

LXXXI. HARDENED HEARTS

Hardness produces:

Lack of fear.

Resistance.

Insensitivity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A hardened heart can stand close to sacred things while becoming increasingly unable to feel their weight.

LXXXII. “RETURN”

This is the heart of the prayer.

Return.

Act again.

Show mercy again.

Restore again.

Spiritual Principle

Revival begins with:

Longing for God's renewed presence.

LXXXIII. FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR SERVANTS

The appeal is grounded in:

Relationship.

Covenant.

God's own purposes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Biblical prayer appeals not merely to our need but to God's name, covenant, promises, and people.

LXXXIV. THE TRIBES OF YOUR INHERITANCE

Israel belongs to:

God.

They appeal to:

His ownership.

Spiritual Principle

God's inheritance should desire:

God's presence.

LXXXV. THE SANCTUARY TRAMPLED

Isaiah 63:18 — Holy Ground Profaned

“For a little while Your holy people possessed it, but now our enemies have trampled down Your sanctuary.”

The loss is not merely:

Political.

It is:

Spiritual.

The sanctuary has been:

Trampled.

Cross References

Psalm 74:7

Enemies burn and profane the sanctuary, treating the place associated with God's name with contempt.

Lamentations 1:10

Foreign enemies enter Jerusalem's sacred places, bringing humiliation and devastation.

Daniel 8:13

Daniel hears of a period in which the sanctuary and God's people are subjected to trampling.

Spiritual Principle

Sin and judgment can bring devastating consequences upon:

What once appeared secure.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sacred history does not guarantee sacred faithfulness in the present.

LXXXVI. YOUR HOLY PEOPLE

The people were called:

Holy.

Set apart.

Yet holiness of calling did not make rebellion:

Harmless.

Spiritual Principle

Privilege increases:

Responsibility.

LXXXVII. THEY POSSESSED IT FOR A LITTLE WHILE

Earthly possession can be:

Temporary.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God gives should never be treated casually simply because we have possessed it for a long time.

LXXXVIII. ENEMIES HAVE TRAMPLED IT

The sanctuary's condition reveals:

The seriousness of judgment.

Spiritual Principle

When God's people abandon covenant faithfulness, consequences can become:

Public.

LXXXIX. WE ARE YOURS

Isaiah 63:19 — A People Crying for Their God

“We are Yours from of old, but You have not ruled over them; they have not been called by Your name.”

Israel distinguishes between:

God's covenant people.

And:

The nations who do not bear His name.

The plea is essentially:

We belong to You.

Act for Your people.

Act for Your name.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:10

The nations would recognize that Israel was called by the name of the Lord.

Amos 9:12

God speaks of peoples and nations being connected with His name and sovereign purposes.

2 Chronicles 7:14

God identifies a people called by His name and calls them to humility, prayer, repentance, and renewed seeking of Him.

Spiritual Principle

Belonging to God's name should produce:

Humility.

Repentance.

Prayer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

To say, “We are Yours,” is not merely to claim privilege; it is to confess ownership.

XC. CALLED BY HIS NAME

God's name represents:

Ownership.

Identity.

Witness.

Spiritual Principle

Those who bear God's name should:

Reflect His character.

XCI. ISAIAH 63 AS A JUDGMENT CHAPTER

Winepress.

Anger.

Fury.

Vengeance.

Nations.

Justice.

Key Truth

God's patience should never be interpreted as:

Approval of evil.

XCII. ISAIAH 63 AS A SALVATION CHAPTER

“Mighty to save.”

“My redeemed.”

“My own arm brought salvation.”

“The Angel of His Presence saved them.”

“He redeemed them.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The chapter covered in the language of judgment is also filled with the vocabulary of salvation.

XCIII. ISAIAH 63 AS A COMPASSION CHAPTER

Steadfast love.

Goodness.

Compassion.

Love.

Suffering with His people.

Carrying them.

Spiritual Principle

Divine strength and divine tenderness are not:

Opposites.

XCIV. ISAIAH 63 AS A HOLY SPIRIT CHAPTER

The Holy Spirit:

Was among them.

Was grieved by them.

Gave them rest.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah 63 shows the Holy Spirit in relationship with God's people: present among them, grieved by their rebellion, and giving rest through divine guidance.

XCV. ISAIAH 63 AS AN EXODUS CHAPTER

Moses.

Sea.

Waters.

Depths.

Flock.

Divine arm.

Leadership.

Rest.

Spiritual Principle

The Exodus remains a testimony of:

God's saving power.

XCVI. ISAIAH 63 AS A MEMORY CHAPTER

“I will recount.”

“They remembered.”

Memory becomes:

Praise.

Faith.

Prayer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Healthy spiritual memory does not imprison us in yesterday; it strengthens us to seek God today.

XCVII. ISAIAH 63 AS A PRAYER CHAPTER

“Look down.”

“See.”

“Where are Your zeal and might?”

“You are our Father.”

“Return.”

Spiritual Principle

Prayer can include:

Questions.

Confession.

Memory.

Appeal.

Longing.

XCVIII. ISAIAH 63 AS A FATHERHOOD CHAPTER

“You are our Father.”

“Our Redeemer.”

This is covenant language of:

Belonging.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When circumstances make God's activity difficult to understand, His people may still anchor prayer in who He is.

XCIX. WHAT ISAIAH 63 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

The opening warrior imagery strongly anticipates the New Testament picture of:

Christ returning in righteousness.

Christ judging evil.

Christ conquering opposition.

Christ bringing final justice.

Revelation 19 draws upon similar imagery.

Spiritual Principle

The Christ who first came in humility will also be revealed in:

Righteous authority.

C. WHAT ISAIAH 63 TEACHES ABOUT JUDGMENT

Judgment is:

Righteous.

Deliberate.

Certain.

Sovereign.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The holiness that makes God worthy of worship is the same holiness that makes evil accountable.

CI. WHAT ISAIAH 63 TEACHES ABOUT SALVATION

God is:

Mighty to save.

His own arm saves.

His Presence saves.

His love redeems.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation originates in:

God.

CII. WHAT ISAIAH 63 TEACHES ABOUT MERCY

Mercy is remembered through:

History.

Deliverance.

Compassion.

Carrying.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When you cannot immediately understand what God is doing, remember what His mercy has already revealed about who He is.

CIII. WHAT ISAIAH 63 TEACHES ABOUT REBELLION

Rebellion:

Grieves the Spirit.

Breaks fellowship.

Invites discipline.

Hardens the heart.

Spiritual Principle

Sin affects:

Relationship.

CIV. WHAT ISAIAH 63 TEACHES ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Spirit is:

Holy.

Personal.

Present.

Grieved.

Rest-giving.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Spirit we ask to guide us is the Spirit we must refuse to grieve.

CV. WHAT ISAIAH 63 TEACHES ABOUT MEMORY

Remember:

Deliverance.

Mercy.

The sea.

The Shepherd.

The Spirit.

The mighty arm.

Spiritual Principle

Faith looks backward in order to:

Look forward.

CVI. WHAT ISAIAH 63 TEACHES ABOUT PRAYER

Prayer appeals to:

God's throne.

God's compassion.

God's fatherhood.

God's covenant.

God's inheritance.

God's name.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Strong prayer knows both what it needs and who God has revealed Himself to be.

CVII. WHAT ISAIAH 63 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S FATHERHOOD

The people say:

“You are our Father.”

Not because circumstances are:

Easy.

But in the midst of:

Desolation.

Spiritual Principle

God's fatherhood becomes especially precious when:

Earthly security fails.

CVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 63 TEACHES ABOUT REDEMPTION

God:

Saves.

Redeems.

Carries.

Claims.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption is more than rescue from danger; it is being brought into belonging.

CIX. WHAT ISAIAH 63 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S ARM

His arm:

Saves.

Divides waters.

Supports His servant.

Demonstrates strength.

Spiritual Principle

God possesses:

Sufficient power.

CX. WHAT ISAIAH 63 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S NAME

He acts to make:

An everlasting name.

A glorious name.

His people are:

Called by His name.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The deepest purpose of divine deliverance is not that people admire the delivered but that they glorify the Deliverer.

CXI. THE DIVINE WARRIOR

Strength.

Justice.

Authority.

Victory.

Spiritual Principle

God is not powerless before:

Evil.

CXII. THE COMPASSIONATE REDEEMER

Love.

Compassion.

Carrying.

Saving.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The hands strong enough for judgment are also strong enough to carry the redeemed.

CXIII. THE GRIEVED SPIRIT

Israel's rebellion affected:

Relationship with God.

Spiritual Principle

Obedience matters.

CXIV. THE REMEMBERED EXODUS

The people ask:

Where is the God who brought us through the sea?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A remembered Red Sea can strengthen faith when today's road appears closed.

CXV. THE FATHER WHO REMAINS

Abraham may not know.

Israel may not acknowledge.

But:

“You are our Father.”

Spiritual Principle

God's identity is more secure than:

Human recognition.

CXVI. THE PRAYER “RETURN”

The cry is not primarily:

Give us comfort.

Give us prosperity.

Give us power.

It is:

Return.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The deepest revival prayer is not, “Give us something,” but, “Return to us in manifest mercy and power.”

CXVII. TEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 63

1. **Judgment → Redemption**
2. **Winepress → Salvation**
3. **Wrath → Compassion**
4. **Nations Trampled → God's People Carried**

5. **Rebellion → Remembered Mercy**
6. **Grieving the Spirit → Rest from the Spirit**
7. **Present Distress → Past Deliverance**
8. **Human Helplessness → God's Mighty Arm**
9. **Abandoned Sanctuary → Everlasting Redeemer**
10. **Questioning God's Activity → Confessing God as Father**

Key Truth

Isaiah 63 places judgment and mercy beside each other so that we understand:

The God who hates evil is the same God who loves, redeems, carries, guides, and hears His people.

CXVIII. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 63

1. Christ Is Mighty to Save

Principle:

No sinner is beyond the saving power of the Lord.

2. God Will Judge Evil

Principle:

Divine patience does not cancel divine justice.

3. Salvation Belongs to God

Principle:

His own arm brings salvation.

4. Remember God's Steadfast Love

Principle:

Memory strengthens faith.

5. God Is Compassionate Toward His People

Principle:

Their suffering matters to Him.

6. God Carries His People

Principle:

Some journeys are survived because God bears us through them.

7. The Holy Spirit Can Be Grieved

Principle:

Our conduct affects our fellowship with God.

8. Remember Past Deliverance

Principle:

Yesterday's Red Sea can strengthen today's faith.

9. The Spirit Gives Rest

Principle:

God's leading does not end in endless wandering.

10. God Is Our Father

Principle:

Our relationship with Him is deeper than human ancestry.

11. Pray for God's Return

Principle:

The greatest need of God's people is God's presence.

12. We Bear God's Name

Principle:

Those who belong to Him should live for His glory.

CXIX. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

From where does the Warrior come?

Edom, specifically Bozrah.

Question 2

What is unusual about His garments?

They are crimson-stained.

Question 3

How is the Warrior described?

Glorious in His apparel and marching in the greatness of His strength.

Question 4

How does He identify Himself?

As the One who speaks in righteousness and is mighty to save.

Question 5

Why are His garments red?

Because He has trodden the winepress of judgment.

Question 6

Who helped Him tread the winepress?

No one. He accomplished the judgment alone.

Question 7

What was in His heart?

The day of vengeance.

Question 8

What time had also arrived?

The year of His redeemed.

Question 9

Who brought salvation when no one else could help?

God's own arm.

Question 10

What does Isaiah begin recounting in verse 7?

The steadfast love and goodness of the Lord.

Question 11

Toward whom had God shown great goodness?

The house of Israel.

Question 12

What did God call Israel?

His people and His children.

Question 13

What did God become to them?

Their Savior.

Question 14

How did God respond to their suffering?

He identified with their affliction and acted to save them.

Question 15

What saved them?

The Angel of His Presence.

Question 16

Why did God redeem them?

Because of His love and compassion.

Question 17

What did God do after redeeming them?

He lifted them up and carried them.

Question 18

How did Israel respond to God's goodness?

They rebelled.

Question 19

Whom did their rebellion grieve?

The Holy Spirit.

Question 20

What happened as a result?

God disciplined them and fought against their rebellion.

Question 21

Whose days did the people remember?

The days of Moses.

Question 22

What great event did they remember?

God bringing Israel through the sea.

Question 23

What did God place among His people?

His Holy Spirit.

Question 24

What divided the waters?

God's glorious arm working in His power.

Question 25

Why did God perform these acts?

To make for Himself an everlasting and glorious name.

Question 26

How did Israel travel through the depths?

Without stumbling under God's guidance.

Question 27

Who gave the people rest?

The Spirit of the Lord.

Question 28

What prayer begins in verse 15?

“Look down from heaven and see.”

Question 29

What attributes do the people ask God to display again?

His zeal, might, tenderness, and compassion.

Question 30

What great confession appears in verse 16?

“You are our Father.”

Question 31

What other title is given to God?

Our Redeemer from everlasting.

Question 32

What spiritual condition troubles the people in verse 17?

Straying from God's ways and hardness of heart.

Question 33

What do they ask God to do?

Return for the sake of His servants and inheritance.

Question 34

What happened to the sanctuary?

Enemies trampled it.

Question 35

What relationship do the people claim with God?

“We are Yours.”

Question 36

What is the central message of Isaiah 63?

God is the righteous Warrior who judges evil, the mighty Savior who redeems, the compassionate Lord who carries His people, the Holy One whose Spirit can be grieved, and the everlasting Father to whom His people may return in prayer.

CXX. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 63 asks several searching questions.

Do I understand that God is:

Mighty to save?

Have I reduced Jesus only to:

Gentleness?

While forgetting His:

Righteous authority?

Do I take:

Sin seriously?

Do I remember that God's patience does not mean:

Judgment will never come?

Am I trusting:

Human strength?

Or:

God's arm?

When circumstances become difficult, do I:

Recount the steadfast love of the Lord?

Can I name specific times when God has:

Helped me?

Protected me?

Carried me?

Answered me?

Provided for me?

Do I remember His goodness?

Or do I remember only:

My problems?

Do I understand that God:

Cares about suffering?

Do I believe He is:

Present in affliction?

Have I forgotten the seasons when He:

Carried me?

Am I grieving:

The Holy Spirit?

Is there an area of:

Rebellion?

Resistance?

Disobedience?

Bitterness?

Pride?

Unforgiveness?

That I need to surrender?

Am I asking:

“Where is God?”

Without remembering:

What God has already done?

What is my:

Red Sea testimony?

Where did God make a way when there seemed to be:

No way?

Where did His arm demonstrate:

Power?

Where did His Spirit give:

Rest?

Do I understand that God's blessings should make:

His name glorious?

Or am I trying to make:

My own name great?

Can I pray:

“Look down from heaven and see”?

Am I longing for:

God's presence?

Do I truly know Him as:

Father?

Am I relying upon:

Family heritage?

Church heritage?

Religious background?

Someone else's faith?

Or can I personally say:

“You are our Father.”

Do I know God as:

Redeemer?

Has my heart become:

Hard?

Have I wandered from:

His ways?

Do I need to pray:

“Return”?

Is there an area of my life where something sacred has been:

Trampled?

Do I need:

Restoration?

Do I remember that I am:

His?

If I say:

“We are Yours,”

does my life show:

His ownership?

Do I bear:

His name?

And does my conduct bring:

Honor to that name?

CXXI. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The One Who Treads the Winepress Is Also Mighty to Save”

Judgment.

Salvation.

Justice.

Redemption.

All appear in:

The same passage.

Principle:

Never divide God's character into a loving God who never judges or a judging God who never saves. The God of Scripture is perfectly righteous in both justice and mercy.

CXXII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“When No One Else Can Help, God's Arm Is Still Strong”

No helper.

No supporter.

No human solution.

Yet:

“My own arm brought salvation.”

Principle:

Human helplessness is not divine helplessness.

CXXIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Recount the Mercies Before You Count the Troubles”

Isaiah says:

“I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord.”

He deliberately remembers:

Goodness.

Compassion.

Love.

Redemption.

Principle:

Faith remembers mercy without pretending trouble does not exist.

CXXIV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The God Who Redeems Also Carries”

He saved them.

He redeemed them.

Then:

He carried them.

Principle:

God does not rescue His people at the beginning of the journey and abandon them halfway through it.

CXXV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Grieve the Spirit Whose Rest You Need”

Verse 10:

They grieved:

His Holy Spirit.

Verse 14:

The Spirit gave:

Rest.

Principle:

We should never knowingly resist the very Spirit whose guidance and rest we desperately need.

CXXVI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Remember Your Red Sea”

Israel remembered:

Moses.

The sea.

The divided waters.

The mighty arm.

Principle:

When the present looks impossible, remember a place where God has already demonstrated that impossible barriers obey Him.

CXXVII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“An Unfamiliar Road Is Safe When God Leads It”

Through:

The depths.

Without:

Stumbling.

Principle:

Safety is not found merely in familiar territory; it is found in following the Lord.

CXXVIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Miracle Should Make God's Name Glorious”

God divided:

The sea.

Why?

To make:

An everlasting name.

He led:

His people.

Why?

To make:

A glorious name.

Principle:

The proper destination of every testimony is the glory of God.

CXXIX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“When You Cannot Understand His Hand, Appeal to His Fatherhood”

They could not understand:

Their condition.

They questioned:

His apparent distance.

Yet they said:

“You are our Father.”

Principle:

Confusion about circumstances does not require confusion about God's revealed character.

CXXX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Greatest Revival Prayer May Be One Word: Return”

Return.

Not merely:

Bless.

Prosper.

Increase.

Protect.

But:

Return.

Principle:

The greatest need of God's people is not more things from God but a renewed experience of the presence and rule of God.

CXXXI. THE WINEPRESS

Judgment.

Spiritual Principle

God takes:

Evil seriously.

CXXXII. THE CRIMSON GARMENTS

Evidence of:

Judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine justice is not empty language; Scripture presents a day when righteousness is publicly executed.

CXXXIII. THE DAY OF VENGEANCE

Accountability.

Spiritual Principle

History moves toward:

Divine judgment.

CXXXIV. THE YEAR OF THE REDEEMED

Deliverance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God knows not only the day of judgment but also the appointed season of redemption.

CXXXV. HIS OWN ARM

Power.

Spiritual Principle

God is:

Sufficient.

CXXXVI. STEADFAST LOVE

Faithfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Circumstances change; covenant love remains rooted in God's character.

CXXXVII. GREAT GOODNESS

Generosity.

Spiritual Principle

God's goodness deserves:

Remembrance.

CXXXVIII. HE BECAME THEIR SAVIOR

Deliverance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Israel's testimony begins not with what Israel achieved but with what God became for them: Savior.

CXXXIX. HE SUFFERED WITH THEM

Compassion.

Spiritual Principle

God sees:

Affliction.

CXL. HE REDEEMED THEM

Rescue.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace does not merely sympathize with captivity; grace acts to redeem.

CXLI. HE LIFTED THEM

Support.

Spiritual Principle

God helps:

The weak.

CXLII. HE CARRIED THEM

Sustaining grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There are seasons when faith looks less like running strongly and more like admitting that God is carrying us.

CXLIII. THEY REBELLED

Human failure.

Spiritual Principle

Grace can be:

Resisted.

CXLIV. THEY GRIEVED THE HOLY SPIRIT

Relationship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The sensitivity of the Holy Spirit should make believers sensitive to sin.

CXLV. THEY REMEMBERED

Hope through memory.

Spiritual Principle

Remembering God's work can awaken:

Prayer.

CXLVI. THE SEA

Impossible obstacle.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What traps God's people can become the very place where His power is displayed.

CXLVII. THE GLORIOUS ARM

Divine strength.

Spiritual Principle

God acts:

Powerfully.

CXLVIII. THE WATERS DIVIDED

A path appears.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not need an existing road in order to lead His people forward.

CXLIX. THEY DID NOT STUMBLE

Preservation.

Spiritual Principle

God is able to:

Keep.

CL. THE SPIRIT GAVE REST

Peace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Holy Spirit is not only the Spirit of power; He is also the giver of holy rest.

CLI. “LOOK DOWN”

Prayer.

Spiritual Principle

Need should move us:

Toward God.

CLII. “YOU ARE OUR FATHER”

Identity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When everything else feels uncertain, begin with the relationship God has revealed.

CLIII. “OUR REDEEMER”

Hope.

Spiritual Principle

God's people belong to:

The Redeemer.

CLIV. “RETURN”

Revival.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A people who recognize spiritual distance should not become comfortable with it; they should cry for God to return in mercy.

CLV. “WE ARE YOURS”

Ownership.

Spiritual Principle

Belonging requires:

Surrender.

CLVI. ISAIAH 63 AS A WHOLE

The chapter moves:

From:

A Warrior coming from Edom.

To:

A people crying to their Father.

From:

Crimson garments.

To:

Steadfast love.

From:

The winepress.

To:

The Red Sea.

From:

Judgment.

To:

Compassion.

From:

Vengeance.

To:

Redemption.

From:

God acting alone.

To:

God carrying His people.

From:

Rebellion.

To:

Remembrance.

From:

Grieving the Spirit.

To:

The Spirit giving rest.

From:

Remembering Moses.

To:

Praying for God to return.

From:

A trampled sanctuary.

To:

Confessing:

“We are Yours.”

Key Truth

Isaiah 63 reveals that the Lord is perfectly righteous in judgment, mighty in salvation, abundant in compassion, present with His suffering people, grieved by rebellion, powerful in deliverance, faithful through history, and worthy to be trusted as Father and Redeemer.

CLVII. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 63

1. The Divine Warrior Appears

He comes from Edom in glory and strength.

2. He Declares Himself Mighty to Save

His justice does not erase His saving power.

3. The Winepress Is Treaded

God executes righteous judgment upon rebellion.

4. His Own Arm Brings Salvation

No human helper is required.

5. God's Steadfast Love Is Remembered

The focus shifts from wrath to compassion.

6. God Saves, Redeems, Lifts, and Carries

His relationship with His people is deeply compassionate.

7. Israel Grieves the Holy Spirit

Rebellion disrupts fellowship and brings discipline.

8. Israel Remembers the Exodus

Moses, the sea, God's arm, and the Spirit become evidence of past faithfulness.

9. Israel Cries to Its Father

The people appeal to God's tenderness, power, and covenant relationship.

10. Israel Pleads for God to Return

The chapter ends not with self-confidence but with dependence upon divine mercy.

Key Truth

Isaiah 63 begins with the victorious Warrior and moves toward the compassionate Father, showing that the God who judges evil is also the God who redeems, carries, leads, disciplines, remembers, and restores His people.

CLVIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 63 begins with a question:

“Who is this?”

Someone is coming.

His garments are:

Crimson.

His appearance is:

Glorious.

His stride is:

Powerful.

And He answers:

“It is I.”

He speaks:

In righteousness.

He is:

Mighty to save.

Never forget that.

The chapter contains some of Scripture's strongest language concerning:

Judgment.

But its opening declaration is also:

Salvation.

The One coming from judgment is:

Mighty to save.

Maybe you look at:

Your past.

Your failures.

Your sins.

Your circumstances.

And wonder:

Can God really save?

Isaiah says:

Mighty.

Not:

Barely able.

Not:

Possibly able.

Not:

Able only if someone else helps Him.

Mighty to save.

Then the Warrior says:

“I have trodden the winepress alone.”

No one assisted Him.

Then:

“My own arm brought salvation.”

There are moments when human help reaches:

Its limit.

Doctors may reach:

Their limit.

Friends may reach:

Their limit.

Money may reach:

Its limit.

Influence may reach:

Its limit.

Human wisdom may reach:

Its limit.

But God's arm does not become:

Short.

Weak.

Exhausted.

When no one could help:

His arm brought salvation.

Then suddenly Isaiah says:

“I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord.”

That may be exactly what someone needs to do.

Stop for a moment.

Recount.

Remember.

Name the mercies.

When did God:

Protect you?

When did He:

Provide?

When did He:

Answer prayer?

When did He:

Open a door?

When did He:

Carry you?

When did He:

Give strength?

When did He:

Forgive?

When did He:

Restore?

When did He:

Comfort?

Do not let one difficult season erase:

A lifetime of mercy.

Isaiah remembers that God:

Saved them.

Redeemed them.

Lifted them.

Carried them.

What a picture.

Sometimes we speak only of:

Walking with God.

But there were moments when Israel was:

Carried by God.

Perhaps there have been seasons when you wondered:

How did I survive that?

How did I keep going?

How did I endure that loss?

How did I survive that disappointment?

How did I get through that valley?

Maybe the answer is:

God carried you.

But then comes the warning:

“They rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit.”

What tragedy.

The people who had been:

Saved.

Lifted.

Carried.

Turned around and:

Grieved the Spirit.

We must ask:

Am I grieving the Holy Spirit?

Is there something God has repeatedly told me to:

Surrender?

Forgive?

Stop?

Begin?

Confess?

Change?

Obey?

Do not grieve the Spirit:

Who gives rest.

Then the people remember:

Moses.

The sea.

The mighty arm.

The divided waters.

And they ask:

“Where is the One?”

Perhaps you have asked:

Where is God now?

I know what He did:

Years ago.

I know what He did:

For someone else.

I know what He did:

In Scripture.

But:

Where is He now?

Isaiah's answer begins with:

Remember.

Remember:

Your Red Sea.

Remember:

Your wilderness.

Remember:

The waters that opened.

Remember:

The door that appeared.

Remember:

The prayer that was answered.

Remember:

The strength that arrived.

Remember:

The Spirit who gave rest.

Your current difficulty has not erased:

God's past faithfulness.

And His past faithfulness teaches you something about:

His character.

Then comes the prayer:

“Look down from heaven and see.”

This is not polished:

Religious language.

It is:

A cry.

God:

Look.

See.

Remember us.

Where is:

Your zeal?

Where is:

Your might?

Where is:

Your compassion?

And then faith rises with one great confession:

“You are our Father.”

Abraham may not know us.

Israel may not recognize us.

But:

You are our Father.

Human support may disappear.

People may misunderstand.

Relationships may fail.

Generations may pass.

But the believer's deepest identity rests in:

God.

Then:

“Our Redeemer from everlasting is Your name.”

Father.

Redeemer.

That is who He is.

Finally the prayer becomes:

“Return.”

What a prayer for:

An individual.

A family.

A church.

A community.

A nation.

A ministry.

Return.

Lord:

Return our hearts to You.

Restore reverence.

Restore holiness.

Restore obedience.

Restore prayer.

Restore hunger for Scripture.

Restore compassion.

Restore worship.

Restore sensitivity to the Holy Spirit.

Restore the fear of the Lord.

The sanctuary had been:

Trampled.

The people had:

Failed.

The heart had become:

Hard.

But they could still pray:

Return.

And they could still say:

“We are Yours.”

That may be the final question of Isaiah 63:

Can you say:

“I am Yours”?

Not merely:

I believe You exist.

Not merely:

I attend church.

Not merely:

My family has always been Christian.

Not merely:

I know Bible verses.

But:

I am Yours.

My life:

Yours.

My plans:

Yours.

My future:

Yours.

My body:

Yours.

My possessions:

Yours.

My ministry:

Yours.

My heart:

Yours.

Isaiah 63 begins with:

“Who is this?”

And by the end of the chapter we know.

He is:

The righteous Warrior.

The mighty Savior.

The compassionate Redeemer.

The God who suffers with His people.

The God who carries them.

The God whose Spirit dwells among them.

The God whose Spirit can be grieved.

The God who divides seas.

The God who leads through depths.

The God who gives rest.

The God who sits upon the throne of holiness and glory.

The God whose people cry:

“You are our Father.”

And the God whose everlasting name is:

Our Redeemer.

Final Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who is mighty enough to tread the winepress is tender enough to carry His people, powerful enough to divide the sea, holy enough to be grieved by rebellion, merciful enough to hear the cry “Return,” and faithful enough to remain our everlasting Redeemer.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 64 — A Plea for God’s Presence and Mercy

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 64 continues the prayer that began near the end of:

Isaiah 63.

Isaiah 63 ended with God's people looking at:

Their suffering.

Their rebellion.

Their ruined sanctuary.

Their spiritual condition.

And crying:

“You are our Father.”

Now Isaiah 64 intensifies that prayer.

The chapter opens with one of the most passionate cries in Scripture:

“Oh, that You would tear open the heavens and come down.”

This is not merely a prayer for:

Better circumstances.

Political change.

Economic improvement.

Military victory.

The deepest request is:

God Himself.

Come down.

Reveal Your presence.

Display Your power.

Make Your name known.

Cause the nations to tremble.

The people remember that there were times in the past when God acted in ways that were:

Awesome.

Unexpected.

Overwhelming.

They remember:

Sinai.

Fire.

Earthquakes.

Mountains trembling.

Divine intervention.

The prayer is essentially:

“Lord, do again what only You can do.”

But the chapter quickly moves from:

Longing for God's presence.

To:

Confession of sin.

The people acknowledge:

“We sinned.”

They admit:

“We need to be saved.”

They confess:

“We have all become like something unclean.”

Even their righteous acts cannot provide:

A sufficient covering.

Their sins are pictured as:

A wind.

And they themselves as:

Withering leaves.

Then comes an even darker confession:

“No one calls on Your name.”

Spiritual apathy has become so serious that people are not even stirring themselves to:

Take hold of God.

Yet the prayer does not end in:

Despair.

Verse 8 introduces one of Scripture's great pictures of surrender:

“You are our Father; we are the clay, and You are our potter.”

The people confess:

God made us.

God formed us.

God has authority over us.

We are the work of:

His hand.

Therefore they plead:

Do not remain angry forever.

Do not remember our sins forever.

Look at us.

We are:

Your people.

Then the prayer looks at:

Zion.

Jerusalem.

The temple.

Everything appears:

Ruined.

Burned.

Desolate.

The place where generations once praised God is:

Destroyed.

The final question is painful:

“After all this, Lord, will You hold Yourself back?”

Will You:

Remain silent?

Will judgment be:

The final word?

Isaiah 64 therefore moves through four major spiritual movements:

Presence.

Confession.

Surrender.

Mercy.

The chapter moves from:

“Come down.”

To:

“We sinned.”

From:

“No eye has seen.”

To:

“Our righteousness is insufficient.”

From:

“We are unclean.”

To:

“You are our Father.”

From:

“We are clay.”

To:

“You are our Potter.”

From:

Ruined cities.

To:

A plea for restoration.

The central truth of Isaiah 64 is:

God's people desperately need His presence because sin has left them spiritually powerless; their own righteousness cannot save them, but they may still appeal to the Lord as Father and Potter, confessing their sin, surrendering to His sovereign hand, and pleading for His mercy and restoring presence.

I. OH, THAT YOU WOULD TEAR OPEN THE HEAVENS

Isaiah 64:1 — A Cry for God to Come Down

“Oh, that You would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at Your presence—”

This is not:

Casual prayer.

It is:

Desperate prayer.

The people do not merely want:

A message from heaven.

They want:

God to come down.

The image is dramatic.

The heavens themselves are pictured as though God would:

Tear them open.

Break through.

Come down.

And reveal:

His presence.

The expected result?

The mountains:

Quake.

Creation itself responds when:

God manifests His power.

Cross References

Psalm 144:5

David asks the Lord to bend the heavens and come down, touching the mountains so that they smoke beneath His mighty presence.

Judges 5:5

When the Lord moved before His people, the mountains trembled and even Sinai shook before the God of Israel.

Mark 1:10

At Jesus' baptism, the heavens are pictured as being torn open and the Spirit descending upon Him.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest need of God's people is not merely:

Changed circumstances.

It is:

God's presence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When the problem is deeper than human strength can reach, the right prayer is not merely, “Change things,” but, “Lord, come down.”

II. “OH, THAT”

The prayer begins with:

Longing.

Desire.

Spiritual hunger.

This is the language of someone who cannot remain satisfied with:

Distance.

Silence.

Spiritual dryness.

Spiritual Principle

Revival begins when God's people become dissatisfied with:

Life without the manifest presence of God.

III. TEAR OPEN THE HEAVENS

The prayer asks God to:

Break through.

Intervene.

Reveal Himself.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There are situations no earthly door can solve because what is needed is for heaven itself to open.

IV. COME DOWN

The request is personal.

Not merely:

Send help.

Send blessing.

Send provision.

But:

Come down.

Spiritual Principle

God's presence is greater than:

God's gifts.

V. THE MOUNTAINS WOULD QUAKE

Mountains picture:

Stability.

Strength.

Permanence.

Yet before God:

They shake.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What looks immovable to us becomes unstable when God reveals His presence.

VI. FIRE KINDLES THE BRUSHWOOD

Isaiah 64:2 — Make Your Name Known

“As when fire kindles brushwood or fire makes water boil—to make Your name known to Your adversaries, so that nations might tremble before You!”

The imagery is:

Fire.

Heat.

Boiling water.

Rapid transformation.

Fire changes whatever it touches.

Dry brushwood quickly:

Ignites.

Water under heat begins:

Boiling.

Isaiah's prayer is that God's presence would become so evident that:

His adversaries notice.

His name becomes known.

The nations tremble.

Cross References

Psalm 97:5

The mountains melt like wax before the Lord, showing that all creation is powerless before the sovereign God of the whole earth.

Micah 1:4

When God comes forth in judgment, the mountains melt beneath Him and valleys split apart like wax before fire.

Habakkuk 3:6

God stands in power, shakes the earth, startles the nations, and causes ancient mountains to tremble before Him.

Spiritual Principle

God's presence exposes the weakness of:

Everything opposed to Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What human power cannot move, God's presence can melt like wax before fire.

VII. FIRE

Fire in Scripture often represents:

Purification.

Holiness.

Judgment.

Divine presence.

Spiritual Principle

God's presence is never:

Trivial.

VIII. MAKE YOUR NAME KNOWN

The prayer is concerned with:

God's reputation.

God's glory.

God's name.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True revival does not make people famous; it makes God's name known.

IX. YOUR ADVERSARIES

God has:

Opposition.

Yet adversaries are not:

His equals.

Spiritual Principle

Opposition to God never places God in:

Danger.

X. NATIONS TREMBLE

The prayer reaches beyond:

Israel.

The desired revelation is:

International.

Public.

Unmistakable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God truly reveals Himself, the effect cannot always be confined to one room, one church, or one people.

XI. WHEN YOU DID AWESOME THINGS

Isaiah 64:3 — Remembered Intervention

“When You did awesome things we did not expect, You came down, and the mountains shook at Your presence.”

The prayer looks backward.

God had acted before.

His works were:

Awesome.

Unexpected.

Overwhelming.

The people remember:

God came down.

The mountains shook.

Cross References

Psalm 65:5

God answers His people with awesome deeds of righteousness and remains the hope of people throughout the earth.

Psalm 68:8

The earth shook and the heavens poured down rain before God when He moved before His people.

Exodus 19:18

Mount Sinai was covered with smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the entire mountain shook violently.

Spiritual Principle

Past divine intervention gives God's people reason to:

Pray again.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who surprised His people with mighty works before has not exhausted His ability to act again.

XII. AWESOME THINGS

God's works can exceed:

Human expectation.

Spiritual Principle

Faith must leave room for:

God to act beyond our predictions.

XIII. THINGS WE DID NOT EXPECT

Israel could not:

Script God's intervention.

Predict every detail.

Control the outcome.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not limited to the answer you imagined when you prayed.

XIV. YOU CAME DOWN

Again the emphasis is:

God Himself.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest event is not merely:

Something happening.

But:

God acting.

XV. MOUNTAINS SHOOK

Creation responds to:

The Creator.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Mountains that intimidate people tremble before God.

XVI. NO EYE HAS SEEN

Isaiah 64:4 — God Acts for Those Who Wait

“From ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides You, who acts on behalf of those who wait for Him.”

Isaiah emphasizes:

God's uniqueness.

There is:

No rival.

No equivalent.

No comparison.

Other gods cannot do what:

The Lord does.

He acts:

For those who wait for Him.

Cross References

1 Corinthians 2:9

Paul draws upon Isaiah's language to describe what human eyes, ears, and minds could never discover on their own concerning what God has prepared for those who love Him.

1 Corinthians 2:10

What human ability could not discover, God reveals through His Spirit, because the Spirit searches even the deep things of God.

Psalm 31:19

God's goodness is abundant toward those who fear Him and take refuge in Him.

Spiritual Principle

Waiting upon God is not:

Doing nothing.

It is:

Trusting the One who acts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Waiting on God is not wasted time when the One you are waiting for is the only One who can do what needs to be done.

XVII. NO ONE HAS HEARD

Human history has not produced:

Another God like Him.

Spiritual Principle

The Lord is:

Unique.

XVIII. NO EAR HAS PERCEIVED

God's greatness cannot be discovered merely through:

Human reasoning.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not one religious option among many; Isaiah presents Him as incomparable.

XIX. NO EYE HAS SEEN

Human sight is:

Limited.

God's ability is:

Not.

Spiritual Principle

Faith trusts beyond:

What the eye presently sees.

XX. ANY GOD BESIDES YOU

This is a declaration of:

Exclusive loyalty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who alone can save deserves worship that belongs to Him alone.

XXI. WHO ACTS FOR THOSE WHO WAIT

God is not:

Passive.

He acts.

But His people sometimes must:

Wait.

Spiritual Principle

Delay does not mean:

God is inactive.

XXII. WAITING

Biblical waiting includes:

Trust.

Hope.

Prayer.

Patience.

Obedience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Waiting on God means refusing to replace Him simply because His timetable is slower than ours.

XXIII. CONFESSION OF SIN

Isaiah 64:5 — We Need to Be Saved

“You meet with the one who joyfully does righteousness, those who remember You in Your ways. But You were angry, for we sinned; in these ways we have continued, and we need to be saved.”

The prayer now changes direction.

The people no longer speak only about:

God's power.

They speak about:

Their sin.

God delights in those who:

Practice righteousness.

Remember Him.

Walk in His ways.

But Israel confesses:

“We sinned.”

And:

“We continued.”

This was not merely:

One failure.

It became:

A pattern.

Therefore:

“We need to be saved.”

Cross References

Acts 10:35

Peter explains that God shows no favoritism but receives those from every nation who fear Him and practice what is right.

Psalm 106:3

Those who practice justice and consistently do what is right are described as blessed.

James 1:25

The person who continues in God's truth and actually practices it rather than merely hearing it will be blessed in what he does.

Spiritual Principle

True confession does not merely say:

Something went wrong.

It says:

We sinned.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Revival becomes possible when excuses stop and confession begins.

XXIV. GOD MEETS THE ONE WHO DOES RIGHTEOUSNESS

The verse reveals:

God values obedience.

Spiritual Principle

God's grace never makes righteousness:

Unimportant.

XXV. JOYFULLY DOES RIGHTEOUSNESS

Obedience is not meant to be:

Reluctant only.

There can be:

Joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not merely looking for outward compliance but hearts that delight in walking His ways.

XXVI. REMEMBER YOU IN YOUR WAYS

Remembering God affects:

Conduct.

Spiritual Principle

True remembrance produces:

Obedience.

XXVII. YOU WERE ANGRY

God's anger is connected to:

Sin.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We cannot pray seriously for revival while treating lightly what grieves the God whose presence we seek.

XXVIII. WE SINNED

No:

Excuse.

Blame shifting.

Self-defense.

Just:

Confession.

Spiritual Principle

Confession agrees with:

God's verdict.

XXIX. WE CONTINUED

Sin had become:

Habitual.

Persistent.

Entrenched.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A repeated sin eventually becomes a road, and the longer we travel it, the harder turning around may feel.

XXX. WE NEED TO BE SAVED

This is the correct conclusion.

Not:

We need better public relations.

We need better circumstances.

We need more resources.

But:

We need salvation.

Spiritual Principle

Sin's deepest problem requires:

Divine rescue.

XXXI. LIKE SOMETHING UNCLEAN

Isaiah 64:6 — Our Righteousness Cannot Save

“We have all become like something unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags. We all wither like a leaf, and our sins sweep us away like the wind.”

The confession becomes:

Universal.

“We have all.”

No one can stand before God's holiness and claim:

Self-made righteousness.

Even righteous acts, when treated as a basis for earning acceptance before God, cannot:

Save.

Human righteousness cannot erase:

Sin.

The people are compared to:

Leaves.

Withering.

Drying.

Blown away by:

Wind.

Cross References

Romans 3:10

Scripture declares that no person possesses righteousness sufficient to stand before God on his own merit.

Titus 3:5

God saves not because of righteous deeds we have accomplished but according to His mercy through spiritual cleansing and renewal.

Philippians 3:9

Paul rejects dependence upon his own righteousness and desires instead the righteousness that comes through faith in Christ.

Spiritual Principle

Human goodness cannot substitute for:

Divine righteousness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The gospel begins where self-righteousness ends.

XXXII. WE HAVE ALL BECOME UNCLEAN

The confession is:

Corporate.

Universal.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is not merely:

Someone else's problem.

XXXIII. OUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS

The verse does not say merely:

Our worst deeds.

It says:

Our righteousness.

Compared with God's holiness, human merit cannot:

Save.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If even our best efforts cannot make us righteous before a holy God, salvation must come by grace.

XXXIV. FILTHY RAGS

The image destroys:

Spiritual pride.

Human righteousness cannot provide:

A clean covering.

Spiritual Principle

We need righteousness that comes from:

Outside ourselves.

XXXV. WE WITHER LIKE A LEAF

A leaf separated from its source becomes:

Dry.

Weak.

Fragile.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Life detached from God eventually loses spiritual strength the way a leaf loses life after separation from the tree.

XXXVI. OUR SINS SWEEP US AWAY

Sin is pictured as:

Wind.

Powerful enough to carry people away.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is not merely something we:

Do.

Left unchecked, it can begin to:

Control direction.

XXXVII. LIKE THE WIND

The wind carries the dry leaf wherever:

It blows.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When sin becomes the wind and we become the leaf, we lose control of the direction.

XXXVIII. NO ONE CALLS ON YOUR NAME

Isaiah 64:7 — Spiritual Apathy

“No one calls on Your name, or stirs himself up to take hold of You. For You have hidden Your face from us and made us waste away because of our iniquities.”

The problem grows deeper.

There is:

Sin.

But also:

Prayerlessness.

No one calls.

No one stirs himself.

No one reaches.

Spiritual apathy has settled over:

The people.

Cross References

Romans 3:11

Paul declares that humanity in its sinful condition does not naturally understand or seek God.

Psalm 14:3

Humanity has turned aside, become corrupt, and no one naturally produces the righteousness God requires.

Zephaniah 1:6

God judges those who turn away from following Him and those who refuse to seek or inquire of the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

One of the worst signs of spiritual decline is when people stop:

Seeking God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The most dangerous condition is not merely having a problem but losing the desire to seek the One who can solve it.

XXXIX. NO ONE CALLS

Prayerlessness reveals:

Distance.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual health produces:

Prayer.

XL. STIRS HIMSELF UP

Seeking God sometimes requires:

Intentional effort.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual hunger must sometimes refuse to wait for feelings and deliberately stir itself toward God.

XLI. TAKE HOLD OF YOU

The picture is:

Earnest.

Desperate.

Determined.

Spiritual Principle

God should be sought with:

Seriousness.

XLII. YOU HAVE HIDDEN YOUR FACE

Sin affects:

Fellowship.

The people experience:

Divine distance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We should never pray for God's face while knowingly clinging to what caused us to turn from Him.

XLIII. BECAUSE OF OUR INIQUITIES

Again:

No excuses.

They recognize:

Cause.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance connects consequences with:

Sin honestly.

XLIV. APPEAL TO THE FATHER AND POTTER

Isaiah 64:8 — We Are the Clay

“Yet now, O Lord, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You are our potter; we are all the work of Your hand.”

Two great images appear together:

Father.

Potter.

God is:

Personal.

And:

Sovereign.

As Father:

He loves.

As Potter:

He forms.

We are:

His children.

And:

His workmanship.

Cross References

Romans 9:21

Paul reminds us that a potter possesses authority over the clay and may shape it according to his purpose.

Jeremiah 18:6

God tells Israel that just as clay is in the potter's hand, so His people are in His hand.

Job 10:9

Job remembers that God formed him from clay and recognizes his complete dependence upon his Maker.

Spiritual Principle

Surrender begins when we remember:

Who is Potter.

And:

Who is clay.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Clay finds its purpose not by resisting the Potter but by yielding to His hands.

XLV. YET NOW

Despite everything:

Sin.

Judgment.

Desolation.

There remains:

A basis for appeal.

Spiritual Principle

Confession does not have to end in:

Hopelessness.

XLVI. YOU ARE OUR FATHER

This continues the confession from:

Isaiah 63:16.

The people still appeal to:

Relationship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Even after confession exposes how far we have wandered, grace teaches us where to turn: back to the Father.

XLVII. WE ARE THE CLAY

Clay is:

Dependent.

Malleable.

Formable.

Spiritual Principle

Human beings are:

Created.

Not self-created.

XLVIII. YOU ARE OUR POTTER

God has:

Authority.

Wisdom.

Purpose.

Skill.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Potter understands what the clay cannot yet see about the vessel He is forming.

XLIX. THE WORK OF YOUR HAND

Our existence points toward:

The Creator.

Spiritual Principle

What God creates belongs under:

His authority.

L. DO NOT BE EXCEEDINGLY ANGRY

Isaiah 64:9 — Remember Mercy

“Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, nor remember iniquity forever. Look and see—we are all Your people.”

The people do not deny:

Their sin.

They appeal to:

Mercy.

They ask God:

Do not remain angry forever.

Do not remember our iniquity forever.

Look.

See.

We are:

Your people.

Cross References

Psalm 79:8

God's people ask Him not to hold former sins against them but to meet them quickly with compassion because they have been brought very low.

Psalm 103:9

The Lord does not continually accuse or remain angry forever.

Micah 7:18

God is praised as the One who forgives sin, passes over transgression, and delights in showing steadfast mercy.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance does not demand:

Mercy.

It appeals to:

Mercy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The repentant heart does not tell God it deserves another chance; it asks the merciful God to give one.

LI. DO NOT REMEMBER INIQUITY FOREVER

The prayer longs for:

Forgiveness.

Restoration.

Spiritual Principle

God's mercy provides hope beyond:

Failure.

LII. LOOK AND SEE

Again:

A desperate appeal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith sometimes has no sophisticated argument left except: “Lord, look at us and have mercy.”

LIII. WE ARE YOUR PEOPLE

The appeal returns to:

Covenant identity.

Spiritual Principle

Belonging to God should produce:

Dependence upon God.

LIV. MOURNING OVER DESOLATION

Isaiah 64:10 — Zion Has Become a Desert

“Your holy cities have become a wilderness; Zion has become a desert, Jerusalem a desolation.”

The consequences of rebellion are:

Visible.

Cities once filled with:

Life.

Worship.

History.

Identity.

Now resemble:

Wilderness.

Desert.

Desolation.

Cross References

Lamentations 1:4

The roads leading to Zion mourn because no one comes to the appointed feasts, the gates stand deserted, and Jerusalem's joy has disappeared.

Lamentations 5:18

Mount Zion lies deserted and desolate, with wild animals roaming where worship once flourished.

Micah 3:12

Because of persistent sin, Zion and Jerusalem are warned that they may become like plowed ground, ruins, and overgrown heights.

Spiritual Principle

Sin eventually produces:

Desolation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Places rich with spiritual history can become barren when present generations abandon the God who made that history meaningful.

LV. YOUR HOLY CITIES

The cities had been:

Set apart.

Yet sacred association did not make them:

Immune to judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual heritage must be accompanied by:

Present faithfulness.

LVI. ZION A DESERT

What once represented:

Glory.

Worship.

Community.

Now represents:

Emptiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A glorious past cannot substitute for living faithfulness in the present.

LVII. JERUSALEM A DESOLATION

The city central to:

Worship.

Kingship.

Covenant history.

Was devastated.

Spiritual Principle

No external institution can replace:

Obedience to God.

LVIII. THE TEMPLE BURNED

Isaiah 64:11 — Sacred Things in Ruins

“Our holy and beautiful temple, where our ancestors praised You, has been burned with fire, and all that we treasured lies in ruins.”

The tragedy reaches its emotional center.

The temple was:

Holy.

Beautiful.

Treasured.

A place of:

Generational worship.

But now:

Burned.

Ruined.

Destroyed.

Cross References

2 Kings 25:9

The Babylonian forces burned the temple of the Lord, the royal palace, and important buildings throughout Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 36:19

Jerusalem's enemies burned God's temple, destroyed the city wall, set its palaces on fire, and ruined its precious possessions.

Lamentations 2:7

The Lord permitted the altar and sanctuary to be profaned as enemies entered and brought devastation into the place of worship.

Spiritual Principle

Sacred buildings cannot protect a people who persistently reject:

The God worshiped there.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A beautiful sanctuary is never a substitute for a surrendered people.

LIX. HOLY AND BEAUTIFUL

The temple had:

Splendor.

Significance.

Sacredness.

Spiritual Principle

External beauty is valuable but:

Insufficient.

LX. WHERE OUR ANCESTORS PRAISED YOU

The temple contained:

History.

Memories.

Generations.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Yesterday's worship cannot perform today's obedience for us.

LXI. BURNED WITH FIRE

The unimaginable happened.

Spiritual Principle

Consequences can reach places people assumed were:

Untouchable.

LXII. EVERYTHING TREASURED IN RUINS

The loss was:

Emotional.

Spiritual.

National.

Personal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes people discover what they truly valued only when they stand among its ruins.

LXIII. WILL YOU HOLD YOURSELF BACK?

Isaiah 64:12 — The Final Plea

“After all this, Lord, will You hold Yourself back? Will You remain silent and punish us severely?”

The chapter ends with:

Questions.

No easy resolution.

The people look at:

Desolation.

Ruins.

Sin.

Judgment.

And ask:

Lord:

Will You continue to hold back?

Will You remain silent?

Will judgment continue?

It is a plea for:

Mercy.

Intervention.

Presence.

Restoration.

Cross References

Psalm 83:1

The psalmist asks God not to remain silent, quiet, or inactive while enemies oppose His people.

Habakkuk 1:13

Habakkuk wrestles with how the holy God can appear silent while wickedness and injustice continue around him.

Psalm 13:1

David cries out from distress, asking how long the Lord will appear to forget him and hide His face.

Spiritual Principle

Faith can ask difficult questions while still:

Speaking to God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The believer's questions remain acts of faith when they are carried toward God instead of away from Him.

LXIV. AFTER ALL THIS

The prayer looks at:

Everything.

Sin.

Loss.

Ruins.

Judgment.

Spiritual Principle

God sees:

The whole picture.

LXV. WILL YOU HOLD YOURSELF BACK?

The people desperately want:

Intervention.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When human strength has reached the ruins, only divine intervention can rebuild what human rebellion destroyed.

LXVI. WILL YOU REMAIN SILENT?

Silence feels:

Painful.

Yet the very question is addressed:

To God.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer refuses to interpret apparent silence as:

A reason to stop praying.

LXVII. ISAIAH 64 AS A REVIVAL CHAPTER

“Come down.”

“Make Your name known.”

“Wait for Him.”

“We sinned.”

“We need to be saved.”

“You are our Father.”

“You are our Potter.”

“Look and see.”

“Will You remain silent?”

Key Truth

True revival includes:

Longing for God.

Confession of sin.

Recognition of helplessness.

Surrender.

Prayer.

Mercy.

LXVIII. ISAIAH 64 AS A PRAYER CHAPTER

The chapter contains:

Longing.

Memory.

Confession.

Appeal.

Questions.

Surrender.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical prayer is not always:

Polished.

Sometimes it is:

Desperate.

LXIX. ISAIAH 64 AS A CONFESSION CHAPTER

“We sinned.”

“We continued.”

“We are unclean.”

“Our righteous acts are insufficient.”

“Our sins sweep us away.”

“No one calls.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before God rebuilds the ruins around us, He often confronts the rebellion within us.

LXX. ISAIAH 64 AS A GRACE CHAPTER

Human righteousness cannot:

Save.

Therefore salvation must depend upon:

God's mercy.

Spiritual Principle

Grace begins where:

Self-sufficiency ends.

LXXI. ISAIAH 64 AS A FATHERHOOD CHAPTER

“You are our Father.”

Relationship survives as:

The basis for prayer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The confession “We have sinned” is followed by the hope “You are our Father.”

LXXII. ISAIAH 64 AS A POTTER CHAPTER

God shapes.

Clay yields.

The Potter determines:

Purpose.

Spiritual Principle

Surrender places us back into:

The Potter's hands.

LXXIII. ISAIAH 64 AS A WAITING CHAPTER

God acts for:

Those who wait for Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Waiting is faith refusing to manufacture a substitute for God's intervention.

LXXIV. ISAIAH 64 AS A DESOLATION CHAPTER

Wilderness.

Desert.

Desolation.

Burned temple.

Ruins.

Spiritual Principle

Sin destroys:

More than the sinner first imagines.

LXXV. ISAIAH 64 AS A MERCY CHAPTER

Do not remember:

Forever.

Look.

See.

We are:

Your people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The ruins may explain why mercy is desperately needed, but God's character explains why mercy may still be sought.

LXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 64 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S PRESENCE

His presence:

Shakes mountains.

Makes nations tremble.

Reveals His name.

Spiritual Principle

God's presence is:

Powerful.

LXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 64 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S UNIQUENESS

No ear.

No eye.

No other god.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is no replacement for God because there is no one comparable to God.

LXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 64 TEACHES ABOUT WAITING

God acts:

For those who wait.

Spiritual Principle

Waiting must be joined with:

Trust.

LXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 64 TEACHES ABOUT SIN

Sin:

Provokes judgment.

Defiles.

Weakens.

Carries away.

Produces distance.

Brings desolation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin always promises freedom while gradually creating bondage, distance, and ruin.

LXXX. WHAT ISAIAH 64 TEACHES ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Our righteousness cannot:

Earn salvation.

Spiritual Principle

We need:

God's righteousness.

LXXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 64 TEACHES ABOUT PRAYERLESSNESS

No one calls.

No one stirs.

No one takes hold.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When prayer disappears, spiritual decline has already moved deep into the heart.

LXXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 64 TEACHES ABOUT GOD AS FATHER

He is:

Our Father.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance returns to:

Relationship.

LXXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 64 TEACHES ABOUT GOD AS POTTER

He shapes:

Clay.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The clay may not understand the pressure of the Potter's hand, but the Potter understands the purpose of the vessel.

LXXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 64 TEACHES ABOUT MERCY

God does not remain:

Angry forever.

His people may plead:

For compassion.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment does not eliminate:

The possibility of mercy.

LXXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 64 TEACHES ABOUT SPIRITUAL HERITAGE

Ancestors praised God.

But the present generation still had to:

Seek Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A spiritual inheritance can teach you where the well is, but you still have to drink from it yourself.

LXXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 64 TEACHES ABOUT REVIVAL

Revival begins with:

“Come down.”

Continues with:

“We sinned.”

Moves through:

“We are clay.”

And cries:

“Look and see.”

Spiritual Principle

Revival involves both:

Divine visitation.

And:

Human repentance.

LXXXVII. THE OPEN HEAVENS

Divine intervention.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A closed human door does not matter when God opens heaven.

LXXXVIII. THE SHAKING MOUNTAINS

Divine power.

Spiritual Principle

Nothing in creation is:

Greater than its Creator.

LXXXIX. THE FIRE

Holy presence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God's fire comes, what is dry cannot remain unchanged.

XC. THE TREMBLING NATIONS

Divine authority.

Spiritual Principle

Every nation remains:

Accountable to God.

XCI. THE AWESOME THINGS

Unexpected intervention.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's answer may be greater than the boundaries of your request.

XCII. THOSE WHO WAIT

Patient trust.

Spiritual Principle

Waiting demonstrates:

Dependence.

XCIII. “WE SINNED”

Confession.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Two words honestly spoken before God can become the doorway to restoration: “We sinned.”

XCIV. “WE NEED TO BE SAVED”

Helplessness.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation begins with recognizing:

Need.

XCV. THE FILTHY RAGS

Human merit.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot sew enough filthy rags together to make a robe of righteousness.

XCVI. THE WITHERED LEAF

Weakness.

Spiritual Principle

Sin drains:

Spiritual vitality.

XCVII. THE WIND

Sin's force.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The safest place is not where the wind is weakest but where we remain rooted in God.

XCVIII. NO ONE CALLS

Prayerlessness.

Spiritual Principle

A silent prayer life is:

Dangerous.

XCIX. STIR YOURSELF

Intentional seeking.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not wait for spiritual desire to arrive before seeking God; sometimes seeking Him is how desire awakens.

C. TAKE HOLD OF GOD

Persistence.

Spiritual Principle

Seek God:

Earnestly.

CI. HIDDEN FACE

Broken fellowship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If God's face seems hidden, the first question should not always be, “Where did God go?” but sometimes, “Where did we wander?”

CII. THE FATHER

Relationship.

Spiritual Principle

God invites:

Return.

CIII. THE CLAY

Dependence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Clay cannot improve itself by jumping off the wheel.

CIV. THE POTTER

Sovereignty.

Spiritual Principle

God has:

Design.

CV. THE HAND

Formation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What feels like pressure may be the Potter forming something the clay cannot yet recognize.

CVI. DO NOT REMEMBER FOREVER

Mercy.

Spiritual Principle

Forgiveness provides:

Hope.

CVII. YOUR PEOPLE

Identity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The strongest appeal of the repentant is not personal merit but God's covenant mercy.

CVIII. THE WILDERNESS

Desolation.

Spiritual Principle

Sin empties what obedience could have:

Filled.

CIX. THE DESERT

Barrenness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual barrenness is often the visible evidence of deeper spiritual distance.

CX. THE BURNED TEMPLE

Lost glory.

Spiritual Principle

Buildings cannot preserve:

Faithfulness.

CXI. THE RUINS

Consequences.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Ruins preach a sermon about what happens when sacred things are taken for granted.

CXII. THE SILENCE

Waiting for God.

Spiritual Principle

Apparent silence should produce:

Persistent prayer.

CXIII. TWELVE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 64

1. **Closed Heavens → God Coming Down**
2. **Stable Mountains → Mountains Trembling**
3. **Hidden God → Name Made Known**
4. **Human Expectation → Awesome Unexpected Works**
5. **Human Sight → Divine Revelation**

6. **Waiting → God Acting**
7. **Righteous Calling → Human Sin**
8. **Self-Righteousness → Need for Salvation**
9. **Living Strength → Withered Leaves**
10. **Prayerlessness → Taking Hold of God**
11. **Clay → Potter**
12. **Ruins → Plea for Mercy**

Key Truth

Isaiah 64 exposes human helplessness so that the people will stop trusting themselves and seek:

The God who comes down.

The God who saves.

The Father.

The Potter.

The merciful Lord.

CXIV. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 64

1. We Need God's Presence

Principle:

The deepest need is not more activity but:

God Himself.

2. God's Presence Changes Everything

Principle:

Even mountains tremble before Him.

3. Revival Should Glorify God's Name

Principle:

God's intervention should make Him known.

4. God Can Do the Unexpected

Principle:

His power exceeds human expectation.

5. God Acts for Those Who Wait

Principle:

Faith trusts God's timing.

6. Sin Must Be Confessed

Principle:

Restoration begins with honesty.

7. Human Righteousness Cannot Save

Principle:

Salvation must come through God's grace.

8. Prayerlessness Is Dangerous

Principle:

Spiritual apathy reveals spiritual decline.

9. God Is Our Father

Principle:

Repentant people can return to Him.

10. God Is the Potter

Principle:

Our lives belong under His shaping authority.

11. Sin Produces Desolation

Principle:

Rebellion destroys more than we initially expect.

12. Mercy Can Still Be Sought

Principle:

Ruins do not prevent God's people from crying:

“Lord, act again.”

CXV. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What does Isaiah ask God to tear open?

The heavens.

Question 2

What does Isaiah ask God to do?

Come down.

Question 3

What would happen to the mountains at God's presence?

They would quake.

Question 4

What two images describe the effect of God's presence?

Fire kindling brushwood and fire causing water to boil.

Question 5

Why does Isaiah want God to reveal Himself?

To make His name known to His adversaries and cause the nations to tremble.

Question 6

What had God done in the past?

Awesome things His people did not expect.

Question 7

What happened when God came down?

The mountains shook at His presence.

Question 8

What does verse 4 say no one has seen?

Any God besides the Lord who acts for those who wait for Him.

Question 9

For whom does God act?

Those who wait for Him.

Question 10

Whom does God meet?

Those who joyfully practice righteousness and remember Him in His ways.

Question 11

Why was God angry?

Because His people sinned.

Question 12

How long had they continued in sin?

Their sin had become an ongoing pattern.

Question 13

What did they recognize they needed?

To be saved.

Question 14

What had everyone become like?

Something unclean.

Question 15

What were their righteous acts compared to?

Filthy rags.

Question 16

What were the people compared to?

Withering leaves.

Question 17

What carried them away?

Their sins, like wind carrying dry leaves.

Question 18

What did no one do?

Call upon God's name.

Question 19

What did no one stir himself to do?

Take hold of God.

Question 20

Why had God hidden His face?

Because of their iniquities.

Question 21

What relationship do the people claim with God?

He is their Father.

Question 22

What are the people compared to?

Clay.

Question 23

What is God compared to?

A Potter.

Question 24

Whose workmanship are the people?

The work of God's hand.

Question 25

What do they ask God not to remember forever?

Their iniquity.

Question 26

What do they ask God to recognize?

That they are all His people.

Question 27

What had happened to the holy cities?

They had become a wilderness.

Question 28

What had Zion become?

A desert.

Question 29

What had Jerusalem become?

A desolation.

Question 30

What happened to the holy and beautiful temple?

It was burned with fire.

Question 31

What happened to what the people treasured?

It lay in ruins.

Question 32

What final questions are asked of God?

Whether He will continue to hold Himself back, remain silent, and punish them severely.

Question 33

What is the main message of Isaiah 64?

God's people desperately need His presence and mercy because their sin has left them unable to save themselves; therefore they confess their sin, acknowledge God as Father and Potter, and plead for Him to come down, forgive, restore, and act again.

CXVI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 64 asks several searching questions.

Do I truly hunger for:

God's presence?

Or am I satisfied with:

Religious activity?

Could I sincerely pray:

“Oh, that You would tear open the heavens and come down”?

Do I want:

God?

Or only:

Something from God?

Do I believe God's presence can shake:

The mountains in front of me?

What appears:

Immovable?

Permanent?

Impossible?

Do I remember that mountains:

Tremble before Him?

Is my greatest concern:

My reputation?

My comfort?

My success?

Or:

God's name being made known?

Do I still believe God can do:

Awesome things?

Unexpected things?

Things beyond:

My plans?

Have I limited God to:

What I expect?

Am I willing to:

Wait for Him?

Or do I quickly manufacture:

My own solution?

Do I trust God's:

Timing?

When God confronts sin, do I say:

“They sinned”?

Or:

“We sinned”?

Have I stopped:

Making excuses?

Am I continuing in something God has already identified as:

Wrong?

Do I understand that I:

Need to be saved?

Am I depending upon:

My own goodness?

My religious works?

My Bible knowledge?

My ministry?

My church attendance?

My reputation?

My accomplishments?

Or am I trusting:

God's grace?

Do I realize that human righteousness cannot:

Save me?

Have I become like:

A withered leaf?

Spiritually:

Dry?

Weak?

Brittle?

Easily moved?

What wind has been:

Carrying me?

Culture?

Fear?

Temptation?

Bitterness?

Pride?

Disappointment?

Sin?

Am I rooted in:

God?

Do I call upon:

His name?

Is my prayer life:

Alive?

Or:

Silent?

Have I stopped stirring myself to:

Seek Him?

Do I need to:

Take hold of God again?

Can I say:

“You are our Father”?

Do I trust the Father's:

Heart?

Can I say:

“We are the clay”?

Or am I fighting:

The Potter?

Have I demanded:

My own shape?

My own purpose?

My own timing?

My own design?

Am I willing to remain:

In His hands?

Do I believe the Potter knows:

What He is making?

Are there ruins in my life?

Ruined:

Relationships?

Dreams?

Opportunities?

Spiritual disciplines?

Family situations?

Ministry situations?

Is there somewhere that once seemed:

Beautiful.

But now seems:

Desolate?

Have I assumed:

Ruins mean God can never restore?

Can I still pray:

Look.

See.

Have mercy.

Do not remain silent.

Lord:

Come down.

Am I asking God merely to rebuild:

The ruins?

Or first to rebuild:

My heart?

Do I want revival enough to:

Confess?

Repent?

Surrender?

Wait?

Pray?

Obey?

Can I honestly say:

“You are the Potter.”

And:

“I am the clay.”

CXVII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Revival Begins When God's Presence Becomes More Important Than Our Comfort”

The prayer does not begin:

Lord, make life easier.

It begins:

“Come down.”

Principle:

The heart of revival is not merely improved circumstances but renewed awareness and experience of God's holy presence.

CXVIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Mountains Tremble When God Comes Down”

The mountain looks:

Massive.

Permanent.

Immovable.

But before:

God—

It shakes.

Principle:

Never measure God's ability by the size of the obstacle standing in front of you.

CXIX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Can Do What You Did Not Expect”

Isaiah remembers:

Awesome things.

Things:

Unexpected.

Principle:

Leave room in your prayers for God to answer in ways larger than your imagination.

CXX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Waiting Is Not Wasting When You Are Waiting for God”

God acts:

For those who wait.

Principle:

The delay of God is not the absence of God, and faithful waiting is never wasted when trust remains fixed upon Him.

CXXI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Revival Cannot Be Built on Excuses”

They said:

“We sinned.”

They did not say:

Our environment caused it.

Our enemies caused it.

Our circumstances caused it.

Principle:

Restoration moves forward when confession stops looking for someone else to blame.

CXXII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Our Best Cannot Replace His Righteousness”

Human righteousness is:

Insufficient.

Principle:

Salvation rests not upon how impressive we can make ourselves appear but upon the mercy and righteousness God provides.

CXXIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Become a Leaf in the Wind”

Withered leaves are:

Dry.

Detached.

Easily carried.

Principle:

A life no longer rooted deeply in God will eventually be carried by whatever spiritual wind blows strongest.

CXXIV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Stir Yourself to Seek God”

No one:

Called.

No one:

Stirred himself.

Principle:

Do not make spiritual apathy comfortable; deliberately return to prayer, Scripture, worship, confession, and obedience.

CXXV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Clay Is Safest in the Potter's Hands”

We are:

Clay.

He is:

Potter.

Principle:

Surrender does not place us in danger; surrender places us in the hands of the One who knows what we were created to become.

CXXVI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“A Beautiful Building Cannot Replace a Holy People”

The temple was:

Beautiful.

Holy.

Treasured.

Yet it became:

Ruins.

Principle:

God never intended architecture to substitute for obedience.

CXXVII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Take Your Questions to God”

The chapter ends:

Will You hold back?

Will You remain silent?

Principle:

Faith does not mean never asking painful questions; faith means refusing to stop talking to God while asking them.

CXXVIII. THE HEAVENS

Need for:

Divine intervention.

Spiritual Principle

Human need reaches:

Upward.

CXXIX. THE MOUNTAINS

Obstacles.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Nothing remains immovable when the Creator chooses to move.

CXXX. THE FIRE

Purity.

Power.

Presence.

Spiritual Principle

God's presence changes:

Whatever it touches.

CXXXI. THE NAME

Glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The highest purpose of revival is not to make our church known but to make God's name known.

CXXXII. THE NATIONS

Witness.

Spiritual Principle

God's glory reaches:

Beyond borders.

CXXXIII. AWESOME THINGS

Divine intervention.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never let familiarity with Scripture make you forget that God specializes in works humans call impossible.

CXXXIV. WAIT FOR HIM

Faith.

Spiritual Principle

Waiting demonstrates:

Trust.

CXXXV. WE SINNED

Repentance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Confession becomes powerful when it becomes personal.

CXXXVI. WE NEED TO BE SAVED

Dependence.

Spiritual Principle

Humanity needs:

A Savior.

CXXXVII. UNCLEAN

Condition.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin is not merely a mistake requiring improvement; it creates defilement requiring cleansing.

CXXXVIII. FILTHY RAGS

Insufficient righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

Self-righteousness cannot:

Save.

CXXXIX. WITHERED LEAF

Spiritual weakness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What is disconnected from its source cannot remain alive forever.

CXL. SWEPT BY THE WIND

Loss of direction.

Spiritual Principle

Sin produces:

Bondage.

CXLI. NO ONE CALLS

Apathy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The silence of prayer can become louder evidence of spiritual decline than the noise of open rebellion.

CXLII. TAKE HOLD OF YOU

Seeking.

Spiritual Principle

Pursue God:

Earnestly.

CXLIII. HIDDEN FACE

Distance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The solution to spiritual distance is not pretending closeness; it is confession and return.

CXLIV. OUR FATHER

Relationship.

Spiritual Principle

God welcomes:

Repentance.

CXLV. THE CLAY

Humility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Clay has no reason for pride because everything it becomes depends upon the Potter.

CXLVI. THE POTTER

Authority.

Spiritual Principle

God shapes:

Purposefully.

CXLVII. WORK OF YOUR HAND

Ownership.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The hands that made us have the right to shape us.

CXLVIII. DO NOT REMEMBER FOREVER

Forgiveness.

Spiritual Principle

Mercy offers:

Hope.

CXLIX. WE ARE YOUR PEOPLE

Belonging.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Covenant identity should produce covenant humility.

CL. WILDERNESS

Spiritual consequence.

Spiritual Principle

Rebellion leads toward:

Barrenness.

CLI. ZION A DESERT

Lost vitality.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sacred places become spiritually empty when sacred devotion disappears.

CLII. TEMPLE BURNED

Judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Sacred history alone cannot:

Protect.

CLIII. TREASURES IN RUINS

Loss.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never wait until something is ruined to decide whether it was worth guarding.

CLIV. WILL YOU REMAIN SILENT?

Desperate prayer.

Spiritual Principle

Keep calling upon:

God.

CLV. ISAIAH 63 AND ISAIAH 64

Isaiah 63:

“You are our Father.”

Isaiah 64:

“You are our Father.”

The declaration continues.

Key Truth

In both chapters, the people appeal to:

God's fatherhood.

CLVI. ISAIAH 63 AND THE DIVINE ARM

Isaiah 63:

God's own arm brought:

Salvation.

Isaiah 64:

Human righteousness cannot:

Save.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah 63 tells us whose arm saves; Isaiah 64 tells us why our own righteousness cannot.

CLVII. ISAIAH 63 AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Isaiah 63 warns:

Do not grieve:

The Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 64 reveals:

The consequences of continued rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

Persistent resistance eventually produces:

Spiritual desolation.

CLVIII. ISAIAH 64 AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

Paul uses the language of Isaiah 64:4 in:

1 Corinthians 2.

But Paul explains that God reveals His truth through:

The Spirit.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What human eyes cannot discover by themselves, God is able to reveal by His Spirit.

CLIX. ISAIAH 64 AND GRACE

Verse 6 destroys:

Self-righteousness.

Verse 8 restores:

Relationship.

Verse 9 appeals to:

Mercy.

Key Truth

Grace does not deny:

Sin.

Grace provides:

Hope after confession.

CLX. ISAIAH 64 AS A WHOLE

The chapter moves:

From:

Closed heavens.

To:

God coming down.

From:

Mountains standing.

To:

Mountains shaking.

From:

Unknown intervention.

To:

God's name being known.

From:

Human expectation.

To:

Awesome works.

From:

Waiting.

To:

God acting.

From:

Righteousness.

To:

Confession of sin.

From:

Self-confidence.

To:

“We need to be saved.”

From:

Human righteousness.

To:

Filthy rags.

From:

Strength.

To:

Withered leaves.

From:

Prayerlessness.

To:

Taking hold of God.

From:

Sinful people.

To:

The Father.

From:

Human independence.

To:

Clay in the Potter's hand.

From:

Anger.

To:

A plea for mercy.

From:

Holy cities.

To:

Wilderness.

From:

A beautiful temple.

To:

Ruins.

From:

Divine silence.

To:

A desperate prayer:

“Will You remain silent?”

Key Truth

Isaiah 64 teaches that revival requires God's presence, salvation requires God's grace, restoration requires confession, and spiritual renewal requires surrender to the Father and Potter who alone can reshape what sin has ruined.

CLXI. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 64

1. God's People Cry for Heaven to Open

They long for God Himself to come down.

2. God's Presence Shakes Creation

Mountains tremble and nations fear.

3. God's Past Works Are Remembered

He has done awesome and unexpected things.

4. God's Uniqueness Is Declared

No other God acts like Him for those who wait.

5. Sin Is Confessed

The people acknowledge:

“We sinned.”

6. Self-Righteousness Is Abandoned

Human righteousness cannot provide salvation.

7. Prayerlessness Is Exposed

No one stirs himself to seek God.

8. God Is Confessed as Father and Potter

His people recognize both relationship and sovereignty.

9. Desolation Is Mourned

Cities, Zion, Jerusalem, and the temple lie ruined.

10. Mercy Is Desperately Requested

The chapter ends asking God not to remain silent.

Key Truth

Isaiah 64 moves from the cry “Come down” to the confession “We sinned,” then to the surrender “We are the clay,” and finally to the plea “Do not remain silent,” revealing the path from spiritual desolation toward hoped-for restoration.

CLXII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 64 begins with:

A cry.

Not:

A lecture.

Not:

A program.

Not:

A strategy.

A cry:

“Oh, that You would tear open the heavens and come down.”

There are moments when God's people realize:

We do not merely need:

Better plans.

Better programs.

Better organization.

Better methods.

Better advertising.

Better politics.

Better circumstances.

We need:

God.

Come down.

That is the heart of:

Revival.

Lord:

Come down into:

Our churches.

Our homes.

Our families.

Our communities.

Our hearts.

Our ministries.

Our prayer lives.

Come down.

Then Isaiah says:

The mountains would:

Quake.

Whatever mountain stands before you—

Fear.

Addiction.

Grief.

Rebellion.

Pride.

Brokenness.

Sin.

Impossible circumstances.

Remember:

Mountains tremble before:

God.

Then the prayer asks that God's name become:

Known.

That must always remain the goal.

Not:

Our name.

Not:

Our ministry.

Not:

Our denomination.

Not:

Our church.

Not:

Our achievements.

But:

His name.

Then Isaiah remembers:

God has done:

Awesome things.

Unexpected things.

Maybe you need to remember:

The unexpected things God has already done.

Perhaps there was a time when you said:

I do not know how this can work out.

And somehow:

God made a way.

Perhaps there was a prayer you thought:

Impossible.

But God answered.

Perhaps there was a season you thought:

Would destroy you.

But you survived.

Perhaps there was a door you never expected:

To open.

But it opened.

Do not forget:

God has done unexpected things before.

Then Isaiah says:

God acts for those who:

Wait.

Waiting can be difficult.

We want:

Immediate answers.

Immediate relief.

Immediate direction.

Immediate change.

But waiting is not:

Doing nothing.

Waiting says:

I will not replace God.

I will not run ahead of God.

I will not abandon God.

I will trust:

God.

Then everything changes.

Isaiah says:

“We sinned.”

That is where revival becomes:

Personal.

It is easy to pray:

God fix:

The country.

The church.

The culture.

Them.

But Isaiah says:

We.

We sinned.

True revival eventually brings the prayer from:

Them.

To:

Us.

From:

They need to repent.

To:

I need to repent.

Then comes one of Scripture's most humbling statements:

“All our righteous acts are like filthy rags.”

Your best cannot:

Save you.

Your religion cannot:

Save you.

Your good deeds cannot:

Erase your sin.

Your ministry cannot:

Purchase forgiveness.

Your generosity cannot:

Earn righteousness.

Your church attendance cannot:

Create salvation.

You need:

Grace.

You need:

Mercy.

You need:

A Savior.

Then Isaiah pictures people like:

Withered leaves.

And sin like:

Wind.

Have you ever watched a dead leaf in the wind?

It has:

No direction of its own.

The wind determines:

Where it goes.

That is what sin eventually does.

At first people think:

I control this.

I can stop anytime.

I know what I am doing.

But eventually:

The wind controls the leaf.

Do not let sin become:

Your wind.

Stay rooted in:

God.

Then comes perhaps one of the saddest statements:

“No one calls on Your name.”

Nobody:

Praying.

Nobody:

Seeking.

Nobody:

Stirring himself.

Nobody:

Taking hold of God.

Could that describe:

A church?

A family?

A generation?

A Christian?

Plenty of:

Activity.

But little:

Prayer.

Plenty of:

Talking.

But little:

Seeking.

Plenty of:

Religion.

But little:

Taking hold of God.

Isaiah says:

Stir yourself.

Maybe you do not:

Feel like praying.

Pray.

Maybe you do not:

Feel like reading Scripture.

Read.

Maybe you do not:

Feel like worshiping.

Worship.

Maybe you do not:

Feel spiritually hungry.

Seek God anyway.

Sometimes hunger comes:

After you sit at the table.

Then comes:

Hope.

“Yet now, O Lord, You are our Father.”

Yet.

What a word.

We sinned.

Yet:

You are our Father.

We became unclean.

Yet:

You are our Father.

We stopped praying.

Yet:

You are our Father.

We wandered.

Yet:

You are our Father.

Then:

“We are the clay, and You are our Potter.”

That means:

Stop fighting the Potter.

Stop telling the Potter:

What shape you must become.

Stop demanding:

Your timetable.

Your plan.

Your design.

Your purpose.

Put yourself back:

On the wheel.

And say:

Shape me.

Correct me.

Clean me.

Use me.

Break what must be:

Broken.

Form what must be:

Formed.

Remove what must be:

Removed.

I am:

Clay.

You are:

Potter.

Then the prayer looks at the ruins.

Zion:

Desert.

Jerusalem:

Desolation.

Temple:

Burned.

Treasures:

Ruined.

Perhaps someone reading this feels like:

That.

A life that once seemed:

Beautiful.

Now:

Ruins.

A relationship:

Ruined.

A dream:

Ruined.

A ministry:

Ruined.

A family situation:

Ruined.

A reputation:

Ruined.

A spiritual life:

Ruined.

Isaiah does not pretend:

The ruins are not there.

But he does something important.

He brings:

The ruins to God.

And asks:

“Will You hold Yourself back?”

In other words:

Lord:

Look at this.

Look at what sin has done.

Look at the desolation.

Look at the ashes.

Look at the ruins.

And then:

Act.

The chapter begins:

“Come down.”

And ends:

“Will You remain silent?”

That is the prayer of someone who knows:

Only God can change this.

So Isaiah 64 leaves us asking:

Am I hungry enough for God to pray:

Come down?

Am I honest enough to confess:

We sinned?

Am I humble enough to admit:

I cannot save myself?

Am I desperate enough to:

Call upon His name?

Am I surrendered enough to say:

I am the clay?

Am I trusting enough to say:

You are the Potter?

Am I broken enough to show Him:

The ruins?

Am I hopeful enough to believe:

Ruins do not have to be the final chapter?

Because the God who shakes mountains:

Can restore hearts.

The God who comes down:

Can lift up.

The God who exposes sin:

Can forgive sin.

The God who is Potter:

Can reshape broken clay.

The God who sees ruins:

Can rebuild.

The God who appears silent:

Can speak again.

The God who seems distant:

Can come down.

Final Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God's people stop trusting their own righteousness, confess their sin, stir themselves to seek Him, surrender as clay in the Potter's hands, and cry for heaven to open, they discover that the God who shakes mountains is also the Father who hears His people and the Potter who can reshape what sin has broken.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 65 — A New Heaven and a New Earth

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 65 is God's answer to the desperate prayer of:

Isaiah 63.

And:

Isaiah 64.

Isaiah 64 ended with God's people asking:

“Will You remain silent?”

Isaiah 65 begins with God:

Speaking.

The people had asked:

Will You answer?

God answers.

They had asked:

Will You remain silent?

God reveals that He has not been:

Silent.

Inactive.

Unavailable.

Instead He says:

“Here I am, here I am.”

The chapter begins with one of the great surprises of grace.

God says He revealed Himself to people who:

Did not ask for Him.

He was found by people who:

Did not seek Him.

At the same time, He describes Israel as a people toward whom He had stretched out His hands:

“All day long.”

God was calling.

They were:

Resisting.

God was inviting.

They were:

Following their own thoughts.

God was reaching.

They were:

Rebelling.

This creates one of the great contrasts of the chapter:

Those who were not looking for God:

Find Him.

Those who had God's revelation:

Reject Him.

Paul later uses this passage in Romans 10 to explain God's grace reaching:

The Gentiles.

And Israel's persistent resistance to:

God's call.

Isaiah 65 therefore shows us that God's grace is:

Unexpected.

Sovereign.

Wide-reaching.

But God's grace does not mean:

Sin is ignored.

Verses 3–7 describe people involved in:

Idolatry.

Forbidden practices.

Religious corruption.

Self-righteousness.

They even say:

“I am holier than you.”

Yet God says such pride is like:

Smoke in His nostrils.

The chapter then makes another important distinction.

God will judge:

Rebellion.

But He will preserve:

A remnant.

The picture is a cluster of grapes.

Someone sees juice still within it and says:

“Do not destroy it, for a blessing is in it.”

God therefore promises:

“I will not destroy them all.”

Judgment does not eliminate:

Grace.

Discipline does not erase:

God's covenant purpose.

A remnant remains.

Then Isaiah contrasts:

God's servants.

And:

Those who forsake Him.

God's servants will:

Eat.

Drink.

Rejoice.

Sing.

Those who reject Him will experience:

Hunger.

Thirst.

Shame.

Anguish.

The distinction is not accidental.

God knows:

Those who serve Him.

God knows:

Those who reject Him.

Then the chapter rises toward one of the greatest promises in all of Isaiah:

“For behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth.”

The chapter began with:

Rebellion.

It ends with:

Restoration.

It began with:

Idolatry.

It ends with:

Peace.

It began with:

People provoking God.

It ends with:

God delighting in His people.

It began with:

Judgment.

It ends with:

Creation renewed.

The final section pictures:

Joy.

Long life.

Secure homes.

Fruitful vineyards.

Meaningful labor.

Blessed descendants.

Answered prayer.

Peace in creation.

No harm.

No destruction.

The wolf and lamb:

Feed together.

The chapter therefore moves from:

Rebellion.

To:

Renewal.

From:

Judgment.

To:

Joy.

From:

Self-righteousness.

To:

A new name.

From:

Hunger.

To:

Provision.

From:

Crying.

To:

Rejoicing.

From:

Former troubles.

To:

New creation.

From:

A fallen world.

To:

A world where nothing harms or destroys on God's holy mountain.

The central truth of Isaiah 65 is:

The Lord graciously reveals Himself to those who were not seeking Him, patiently reaches toward rebellious people, judges persistent sin, preserves a faithful remnant, distinguishes between His servants and those who reject Him, and ultimately promises a renewed creation characterized by joy, security, fruitful labor, answered prayer, and peace.

I. GOD FOUND BY THOSE NOT SEEKING HIM

Isaiah 65:1 — “Here I Am”

“The Lord says: ‘I revealed Myself to those who did not ask for Me; I was found by those who did not seek Me. To a nation not called by My name, I said, “Here I am, here I am.”’”

The chapter begins with:

Grace.

Unexpected grace.

God reveals Himself to:

People who had not asked.

He is found by:

People who had not been seeking.

He speaks to a nation:

Not called by His name.

His words are:

“Here I am.”

Twice.

This reveals:

Divine initiative.

God moves toward people who were not naturally moving toward:

Him.

Cross References

Romans 10:20

Paul directly applies Isaiah's words to God's gracious revelation among those who had not been seeking Him.

Romans 9:30

Gentiles who were not pursuing righteousness nevertheless received righteousness through faith.

Deuteronomy 32:21

God warned Israel that because they provoked Him through false gods, He would provoke them through a people previously regarded as outside His covenant nation.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation begins with:

God's initiative.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace is astonishing because God can say “Here I am” to people who were not even looking for Him.

II. “I REVEALED MYSELF”

God makes Himself:

Known.

Human beings do not discover God merely because they are:

Clever.

God reveals:

Himself.

Spiritual Principle

Knowledge of God depends upon:

Divine revelation.

III. THOSE WHO DID NOT ASK

Grace reaches people who had:

No covenant claim.

No spiritual achievement.

No history of seeking.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's grace can reach a person before that person understands how desperately he needs grace.

IV. THOSE WHO DID NOT SEEK

This is not a celebration of:

Spiritual indifference.

It is a celebration of:

Divine initiative.

Spiritual Principle

God is often at work before:

We recognize His work.

V. “HERE I AM, HERE I AM”

God presents Himself as:

Available.

Revealed.

Near.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The tragedy is not that God never reveals Himself; the tragedy is that people can hear “Here I am” and still turn away.

VI. ALL DAY LONG I HELD OUT MY HANDS

Isaiah 65:2 — A Rebellious People

“All day long I have held out My hands to a rebellious people, who walk in ways that are not good, following their own thoughts.”

God's posture is remarkable.

His hands are:

Extended.

Not briefly.

But:

All day long.

Yet the people are:

Rebellious.

They walk:

Wrong paths.

They follow:

Their own thoughts.

Cross References

Romans 10:21

Paul quotes this verse to describe Israel's persistent disobedience despite God's continuing invitation.

Proverbs 1:24

Wisdom describes calling out to people who refused to listen even though the invitation was extended.

Jeremiah 7:13

God repeatedly spoke to His people, but they refused to listen or answer Him.

Spiritual Principle

God's patience does not mean:

Human rebellion is harmless.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The hands Israel rejected were hands that had been reaching toward them all day long.

VII. GOD'S OUTSTRETCHED HANDS

The image suggests:

Invitation.

Appeal.

Patience.

Spiritual Principle

God's warnings are expressions of:

Mercy.

VIII. A REBELLIOUS PEOPLE

Rebellion is not:

Ignorance alone.

It is resistance to:

Known truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Rebellion becomes especially serious when it continues in front of God's outstretched hands.

IX. WALKING IN WAYS NOT GOOD

Wrong belief eventually becomes:

Wrong direction.

Spiritual Principle

A person's path reveals:

What he is following.

X. FOLLOWING THEIR OWN THOUGHTS

Their ultimate authority had become:

Themselves.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One of the oldest forms of rebellion is replacing “Thus says the Lord” with “This is what I think.”

XI. THEY PROVOKE ME CONTINUALLY

Isaiah 65:3 — Religious Rebellion

“They provoke Me continually to My face, offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on altars of brick.”

Their rebellion was:

Religious.

They still practiced:

Worship.

But it was worship God had:

Not commanded.

They were religious while:

Rebellious.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 32:16

Israel provoked God to jealousy by turning to foreign gods and detestable practices.

2 Kings 17:17

Israel became involved in forbidden religious practices and gave itself over to evil in God's sight.

Isaiah 1:29

Isaiah earlier warned that the people would be ashamed of the gardens and sacred places they had chosen for idolatrous worship.

Spiritual Principle

Religion is not automatically:

Obedience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Worship does not honor God merely because it is called worship; God must be worshiped according to truth.

XII. TO MY FACE

The rebellion was:

Open.

Defiant.

Persistent.

Spiritual Principle

God sees:

Religious hypocrisy.

XIII. SACRIFICES IN GARDENS

The people adopted:

Unauthorized worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A spiritual practice does not become holy simply because someone attaches religious language to it.

XIV. INCENSE ON BRICK ALTARS

The people created their own:

Places.

Methods.

Objects.

Of worship.

Spiritual Principle

Human invention cannot replace:

Divine instruction.

XV. AMONG THE GRAVES

Isaiah 65:4 — Forbidden Practices

“They sit among the graves, and spend the night in secret places; they eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their pots.”

The people had crossed:

Spiritual boundaries.

The practices described involve:

Defilement.

Forbidden food.

Occult-like settings.

Secret religious activity.

Cross References

Isaiah 66:17

Isaiah again condemns those who engage in forbidden rituals and eat what God's law declared unclean.

Leviticus 11:7

Under Israel's covenant law, the pig was classified as unclean and forbidden as food.

Mark 5:2

The New Testament account of the demon-possessed man among the tombs provides another picture connecting graves with uncleanness and spiritual darkness.

Spiritual Principle

Rebellion often travels farther than:

The rebel originally intended.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When people reject God's boundaries, they frequently discover that sin has boundaries of its own—and those boundaries become prisons.

XVI. SECRET PLACES

Sin often prefers:

Darkness.

Secrecy.

Isolation.

Spiritual Principle

What cannot survive exposure to truth should be:

Examined carefully.

XVII. UNCLEAN FOOD

The people were deliberately violating:

Covenant commands.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Persistent disobedience eventually treats what God calls unclean as though His judgment no longer matters.

XVIII. “I AM HOLIER THAN YOU”

Isaiah 65:5 — Religious Pride

“They say, ‘Keep away from me, do not come near me, for I am holier than you.’ These are like smoke in My nostrils, a fire that burns all day long.”

Perhaps the greatest irony appears here.

People involved in:

Disobedience.

False worship.

Forbidden practices.

Still considered themselves:

Superior.

They said:

“I am holier than you.”

This is:

Self-righteousness.

Cross References

Luke 18:11

The Pharisee thanked God that he was not like other people and compared himself favorably to those he considered sinners.

Luke 18:9

Jesus told the parable specifically to people who trusted in their own righteousness and looked down on others.

Galatians 6:3

Paul warns that anyone who thinks he is something when he is nothing deceives himself.

Spiritual Principle

Pride can exist even inside:

Religion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One of the clearest signs of spiritual blindness is feeling morally superior while openly resisting God.

XIX. KEEP AWAY FROM ME

Self-righteousness separates:

People.

Spiritual Principle

True holiness produces:

Humility.

Not:

Arrogance.

XX. HOLIER THAN YOU

They measured holiness by:

Comparison with others.

God measures according to:

His standard.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You can always find someone who makes you look righteous by comparison, but comparison will never make you righteous before God.

XXI. SMOKE IN GOD'S NOSTRILS

God finds their pride:

Offensive.

Persistent.

Provoking.

Spiritual Principle

Religious pride does not impress:

God.

XXII. GOD REPAYS SIN

Isaiah 65:6 — It Is Written Before Me

“See, it is written before Me: I will not keep silent, but I will repay—yes, I will repay into their lap—”

God has:

A record.

Nothing has been:

Forgotten.

The people asked in Isaiah 64:

Will You remain silent?

God answers:

“I will not keep silent.”

But His answer includes:

Judgment.

Cross References

Revelation 20:12

At final judgment, books are opened and people are judged according to what has been recorded concerning their deeds.

Jeremiah 17:1

Judah's sin is described as deeply engraved, emphasizing that their rebellion is not hidden from God.

Romans 2:6

God will repay each person according to his deeds.

Spiritual Principle

God's silence should never be interpreted as:

Forgetfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who appears silent may still be keeping perfect account.

XXIII. “IT IS WRITTEN BEFORE ME”

God remembers:

Perfectly.

Spiritual Principle

Nothing escapes:

Divine knowledge.

XXIV. I WILL REPAY

God's judgment is:

Just.

Measured.

Certain.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace should never be twisted into the belief that God has stopped caring about justice.

XXV. THE SINS OF THE ANCESTORS

Isaiah 65:7 — Generational Rebellion

“Both your sins and the sins of your ancestors,” says the Lord, “because they burned incense on the mountains and mocked Me on the hills. I will measure into their lap the full payment for their former deeds.”

The present generation stood within:

A history of rebellion.

They continued patterns established by:

Previous generations.

Cross References

Exodus 20:5

God warns that persistent hatred and rebellion can have consequences extending through generations.

Jeremiah 32:18

Jeremiah acknowledges both God's steadfast love and His righteous dealings with entrenched generational sin.

Leviticus 26:39

Israel is warned that covenant rebellion could result in people suffering under both their own iniquity and the inherited consequences of ancestral rebellion.

Spiritual Principle

A sinful pattern can become:

Generational.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You do not have to repeat every spiritual failure you inherited. A family pattern can explain temptation without excusing continuation.

XXVI. MOCKED ME ON THE HILLS

Their worship became:

Insult.

Spiritual Principle

Idolatry gives God's glory to:

Another.

XXVII. FULL PAYMENT

God's judgment is not:

Random.

It is measured according to:

Truth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God never underestimates sin, but neither does He judge unjustly; His measurement is perfect.

XXVIII. A BLESSING IN THE CLUSTER

Isaiah 65:8 — The Remnant Preserved

“This is what the Lord says: ‘As new wine is found in a cluster, and someone says, “Do not destroy it, for a blessing is in it,” so I will do for the sake of My servants—I will not destroy them all.’”

This verse introduces:

Hope.

A cluster of grapes may appear:

Ready for destruction.

But someone discovers:

Good juice.

Therefore:

Do not destroy it.

There is:

A blessing within.

God applies the picture to:

His people.

He will judge.

But:

Not destroy everyone.

A remnant will remain.

Cross References

Joel 2:24

God promises restored abundance with threshing floors full of grain and vats overflowing with wine and oil.

Romans 11:5

Paul teaches that even in a time of widespread unbelief, God preserves a remnant according to grace.

Genesis 18:32

Abraham intercedes for Sodom, asking whether God would spare the city for the sake of a small number of righteous people.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment does not cancel:

God's preserving grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can look at a cluster others would throw away and say, “Do not destroy it; there is still blessing there.”

XXIX. NEW WINE IN THE CLUSTER

Not everything in the cluster is:

Worthless.

Spiritual Principle

God knows how to distinguish:

The faithful.

XXX. FOR THE SAKE OF MY SERVANTS

The remnant is identified as:

Servants.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

In a generation of rebellion, God still sees those who belong to Him.

XXXI. I WILL NOT DESTROY THEM ALL

Judgment is:

Real.

But preservation is:

Real.

Spiritual Principle

God's covenant purpose survives:

Human failure.

XXXII. DESCENDANTS FROM JACOB

Isaiah 65:9 — My Chosen Ones Will Inherit

“I will bring forth descendants from Jacob, and from Judah those who will inherit My mountains. My chosen ones will inherit it, and My servants will dwell there.”

God's promise continues through:

A preserved people.

They will:

Inherit.

Dwell.

Possess.

Cross References

Genesis 28:13

God promised Jacob the land and declared that his descendants would receive the inheritance.

Romans 9:8

Paul explains that God's promise is not fulfilled merely through natural descent but through the children of promise.

Ezekiel 37:25

God promises His restored people that they will dwell in the land associated with His covenant promises.

Spiritual Principle

God's promises are not destroyed by:

Human rebellion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can preserve a promise through a remnant when the majority walks away.

XXXIII. MY CHOSEN ONES

God distinguishes:

His servants.

Spiritual Principle

The Lord knows:

Those who are His.

XXXIV. MY SERVANTS WILL DWELL THERE

The promise includes:

Security.

Belonging.

Rest.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's servants may pass through displacement, but His purpose moves toward dwelling.

XXXV. SHARON A PASTURE

Isaiah 65:10 — The Valley of Trouble Becomes Rest

“Sharon will be a pasture for flocks, and the Valley of Achor a resting place for herds, for My people who seek Me.”

The land once associated with:

Trouble.

Becomes:

Rest.

The Valley of Achor recalls:

Judgment.

Yet God promises:

Restoration.

Cross References

Hosea 2:15

God promises to transform the Valley of Achor—a valley associated with trouble—into a door of hope.

Joshua 7:26

The Valley of Achor received its name through the judgment connected with Achan's sin.

Song of Solomon 2:1

The imagery of Sharon is associated with beauty and flourishing life.

Spiritual Principle

God can transform:

A place of trouble.

Into:

A place of rest.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace can turn yesterday's Valley of Trouble into tomorrow's pasture of peace.

XXXVI. MY PEOPLE WHO SEEK ME

Verse 1 described:

People who did not seek God.

Verse 10 describes:

People who now seek Him.

Spiritual Principle

Grace creates:

Seekers.

XXXVII. JUDGMENT ON THE UNFAITHFUL

Isaiah 65:11 — Forsaking the Lord

“But as for you who forsake the Lord, who forget My holy mountain, who prepare a table for Fortune and fill cups of mixed wine for Destiny,”

The people replaced:

The Lord.

With:

False spiritual powers.

Fortune.

Destiny.

They abandoned:

God.

And attempted to secure their future through:

Idolatry.

Cross References

1 Corinthians 10:21

Paul warns that believers cannot participate in the Lord's table while also participating in idolatrous worship.

Jeremiah 7:9

Jeremiah condemns people who commit serious sin and then continue religious activity as though worship could excuse rebellion.

2 Kings 21:5

Manasseh built altars for heavenly powers in the courts of the Lord's temple.

Spiritual Principle

People who abandon God often look for another power to:

Control the future.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When people forsake the Lord, they rarely stop worshiping; they simply give their trust to something else.

XXXVIII. FORGET MY HOLY MOUNTAIN

Spiritual forgetting leads to:

Spiritual replacement.

Spiritual Principle

What we stop remembering about God eventually affects:

What we worship.

XXXIX. FORTUNE AND DESTINY

The irony is strong.

They worship:

Fortune.

Destiny.

But God says He will determine:

Their destiny.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The future does not belong to Fortune or Destiny; it belongs to the sovereign Lord.

XL. WHEN I CALLED, YOU DID NOT ANSWER

Isaiah 65:12 — Chosen Rebellion

“I will destine you for the sword, and all of you will bow down to the slaughter. For when I called, you did not answer; when I spoke, you did not listen. You did evil before My eyes and chose what displeased Me.”

Judgment has a stated reason.

God:

Called.

They:

Did not answer.

God:

Spoke.

They:

Did not listen.

They:

Chose evil.

Cross References

Matthew 22:7

Jesus' parable describes severe judgment upon those who rejected and mistreated the king's messengers.

Jeremiah 15:2

Jeremiah describes differing forms of judgment coming upon a people who persistently reject God.

Proverbs 1:28

Those who repeatedly rejected wisdom eventually call after consequences arrive, but find that the opportunity they despised has passed.

Spiritual Principle

Repeated refusal eventually has:

Consequences.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The most frightening words in verse 12 may not be “sword” or “slaughter,” but “I called, and you did not answer.”

XLI. GOD CALLED

Judgment came after:

Invitation.

Spiritual Principle

God's warnings reveal:

Patience.

XLII. YOU DID NOT LISTEN

Hearing sound is not the same as:

Listening.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You can hear God's Word repeatedly while training your heart not to listen.

XLIII. YOU CHOSE WHAT DISPLEASED ME

The verse emphasizes:

Choice.

Spiritual Principle

Rebellion involves:

Moral responsibility.

XLIV. MY SERVANTS WILL EAT

Isaiah 65:13 — Two Different Outcomes

“Therefore this is what the Lord God says: ‘My servants will eat, but you will go hungry; My servants will drink, but you will be thirsty; My servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame.’”

The contrast becomes:

Sharp.

My servants:

Eat.

Others:

Hunger.

My servants:

Drink.

Others:

Thirst.

My servants:

Rejoice.

Others:

Experience shame.

Cross References

Luke 6:21

Jesus pronounces blessing upon those who hunger now because God's kingdom will bring satisfaction.

Luke 6:25

Jesus also warns those who live satisfied without God that their condition will ultimately be reversed.

Matthew 5:6

Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness are promised satisfaction from God.

Spiritual Principle

God distinguishes between:

Faithfulness.

And:

Rebellion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Present appearances do not tell the whole story; God can reverse hunger and fullness, sorrow and joy, shame and honor.

XLV. MY SERVANTS

Repeatedly the faithful are called:

Servants.

Spiritual Principle

Belonging to God includes:

Serving God.

XLVI. THEY WILL REJOICE

The destiny of God's servants includes:

Joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Service to God may involve hardship now, but shame does not have the final word over God's servants.

XLVII. SINGING AND WAILING

Isaiah 65:14 — Joy of Heart

“My servants will sing out of joy of heart, but you will cry out from anguish of heart and wail from a broken spirit.”

Two sounds fill the verse:

Singing.

And:

Wailing.

One arises from:

Joy.

The other:

Anguish.

Cross References

John 16:20

Jesus teaches that the sorrow of His disciples would be transformed into joy.

Psalm 126:5

Those who sow in tears are promised a harvest accompanied by songs of joy.

James 5:1

James warns the wealthy oppressor to weep and mourn because judgment is coming.

Spiritual Principle

God can produce:

Joy after sorrow.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The final song belongs not to rebellion but to the servants of God.

XLVIII. JOY OF HEART

Biblical joy is deeper than:

Circumstances.

Spiritual Principle

God can create joy:

Within.

XLIX. ANGUISH OF HEART

Rebellion has an:

Inner consequence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sin promises pleasure but ultimately produces a broken spirit when its final wages arrive.

L. ANOTHER NAME

Isaiah 65:15 — God Renames His Servants

“You will leave your name as a curse for My chosen ones; the Lord God will put you to death, but He will give His servants another name.”

Names again become important.

Isaiah 62 spoke of:

A new name.

Isaiah 65 again promises:

Another name.

The rebellious identity ends.

God's servants receive:

New identity.

Cross References

Jeremiah 29:22

The names of those judged for wickedness became proverbial examples of divine judgment.

Revelation 2:17

Christ promises the faithful a new name known in connection with His personal covenant reward.

Acts 11:26

The disciples at Antioch came to be known by the new public designation:

Christians.

Spiritual Principle

God has authority to:

Define identity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The name rebellion gives you does not have to be the name grace leaves you with.

LI. THE OLD NAME BECOMES A WARNING

Some names become:

Examples.

Spiritual Principle

A life can become either:

Testimony.

Or:

Warning.

LII. GOD GIVES ANOTHER NAME

New name represents:

New identity.

New relationship.

New future.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not merely change circumstances; He can change the identity attached to them.

LIII. THE GOD OF TRUTH

Isaiah 65:16 — Former Troubles Forgotten

“Whoever invokes a blessing in the land will do so by the God of truth; and whoever takes an oath in the land will swear by the God of truth. For the former troubles will be forgotten and hidden from My eyes.”

False gods disappear.

Truth remains.

God is called:

The God of truth.

The past troubles no longer dominate:

The future.

Cross References

2 Corinthians 5:17

Anyone who is in Christ belongs to a new creation in which the old has passed and the new has come.

2 Corinthians 1:20

Every promise of God finds its ultimate “Yes” in Christ.

Psalm 41:13

The God of Israel is praised from everlasting to everlasting.

Spiritual Principle

God's future can become greater than:

Former trouble.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God creates the new, the old no longer has authority to define everything that follows.

LIV. GOD OF TRUTH

In contrast with:

Fortune.

Destiny.

Idols.

The Lord is:

Truth.

Spiritual Principle

Faith rests upon:

Reality.

Not:

Superstition.

LV. FORMER TROUBLES FORGOTTEN

This does not mean God loses:

Knowledge.

It means former troubles no longer dominate:

Experience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can bring His people into a future where yesterday's pain is no longer today's controlling reality.

LVI. THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH

Isaiah 65:17 — God Creates Again

“For behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.”

This is one of the greatest promises in:

Scripture.

God declares:

“I will create.”

The Creator of:

Genesis.

Will create:

Again.

New heavens.

New earth.

Cross References

Revelation 21:1

John sees a new heaven and a new earth after the former creation has passed away.

2 Peter 3:13

Peter says believers look forward to new heavens and a new earth characterized by righteousness.

Isaiah 66:22

Isaiah again speaks of the new heavens and new earth God will make and connects them with the enduring future of His people.

Spiritual Principle

God's plan ends not merely with:

Repair.

But:

Renewal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Bible begins with God creating heaven and earth and moves toward God declaring, “I will create new heavens and a new earth.”

LVII. “BEHOLD”

Pay attention.

Look.

Consider.

Something extraordinary is:

Coming.

Spiritual Principle

Hope looks forward to:

God's promised future.

LVIII. I WILL CREATE

The future depends upon:

God's creative power.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who created something from nothing is not intimidated by what sin has ruined.

LIX. NEW HEAVENS

Creation itself participates in:

Renewal.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption has:

Cosmic dimensions.

LX. A NEW EARTH

Biblical hope is not merely:

Escape.

It includes:

Creation renewed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's final answer to a fallen world is not abandonment but renewal.

LXI. FORMER THINGS NOT REMEMBERED

The new reality will be so:

Complete.

Joyful.

Glorious.

That former sorrow will no longer dominate:

Consciousness.

Spiritual Principle

God's future overwhelms:

Former pain.

LXII. BE GLAD AND REJOICE FOREVER

Isaiah 65:18 — Jerusalem a Delight

“But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create; for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy.”

God commands:

Rejoicing.

Not temporarily.

But:

Forever.

Why?

Because of what:

He creates.

Jerusalem becomes:

A delight.

Its people:

A joy.

Cross References

Zechariah 8:3

God promises to return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem, transforming the city into a place characterized by truth and holiness.

Psalm 48:2

Zion is described as beautiful and as a source of joy.

Nehemiah 12:43

At Jerusalem's dedication, God's people rejoiced so greatly that their joy could be heard from far away.

Spiritual Principle

God's restoration produces:

Joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God finishes His work, ruins do not get the final word—rejoicing does.

LXIII. REJOICE FOREVER

This is not:

Temporary relief.

Spiritual Principle

God's final restoration produces:

Enduring joy.

LXIV. I WILL CREATE JERUSALEM

The city once:

Desolate.

Becomes:

Delight.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can take the place that once made people weep and make it a place of joy.

LXV. GOD REJOICES OVER HIS PEOPLE

Isaiah 65:19 — No More Weeping

“I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in My people. The sound of weeping and crying will be heard in it no more.”

Isaiah 62 said:

God rejoices over His people.

Isaiah 65 repeats:

The Lord Himself rejoices.

God delights in:

His people.

Weeping disappears.

Crying disappears.

Cross References

Revelation 21:4

God wipes away every tear, and death, mourning, crying, and pain belong to the former order that has passed away.

Isaiah 25:8

God promises to swallow up death and wipe tears from His people's faces.

Jeremiah 31:12

God's restored people rejoice in His goodness, and their sorrow is replaced by gladness.

Spiritual Principle

God's final purpose for His people is not:

Endless mourning.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who hears His people weep is preparing a future where the sound of weeping is no longer heard.

LXVI. I WILL REJOICE

God is not presented as:

Reluctantly tolerating.

His people.

He:

Rejoices.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration produces:

Divine delight.

LXVII. NO MORE CRYING

Sorrow has:

An expiration date.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

For God's redeemed people, tears are real—but they are not eternal.

LXVIII. EXTRAORDINARY LONGEVITY

Isaiah 65:20 — Life Without Premature Loss

“Never again will there be in it an infant who lives only a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; the one who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere child; the one who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed.”

Isaiah pictures extraordinary:

Longevity.

Premature death becomes:

Unusual.

The imagery communicates a world transformed by:

Blessing.

Cross References

Zechariah 8:4

Zechariah pictures elderly men and women once again sitting safely in Jerusalem because of their advanced age.

Job 5:26

Long life is compared to grain being gathered at full maturity.

Genesis 25:8

Abraham dies at a good old age, full of years, presenting long life as a sign of completed earthly blessing.

Spiritual Principle

God's restoration reverses:

Premature loss.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah pictures restoration so abundant that what now seems like exceptional longevity becomes ordinary.

LXIX. LIFE FLOURISHES

Death no longer dominates:

Daily existence.

Spiritual Principle

God is the giver of:

Life.

LXX. BUILD HOUSES AND LIVE IN THEM

Isaiah 65:21 — Secure Labor

“They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit.”

Work becomes:

Meaningful.

Secure.

Enjoyable.

People build:

And stay.

Plant:

And eat.

Their labor is not:

Stolen.

Cross References

Amos 9:14

God promises restoration in which His people rebuild ruined cities, live in them, plant vineyards, and enjoy their produce.

Deuteronomy 28:30

Under covenant judgment people could build a house and lose it to someone else; Isaiah reverses that curse.

Jeremiah 29:5

Exiles were told to build houses, live in them, plant gardens, and eat their produce even during displacement.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration reconnects:

Labor.

With:

Enjoyment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

In God's restored order, the person who builds enjoys the house and the person who plants enjoys the vineyard.

LXXI. BUILD AND DWELL

Security.

Spiritual Principle

God's blessing includes:

Stability.

LXXII. PLANT AND EAT

Fruitfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God cares not only that His people labor but that their labor reaches its proper fruit.

LXXIII. OTHERS WILL NOT TAKE IT

Isaiah 65:22 — The Work of Their Hands

“They will not build and others inhabit, they will not plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of My people; My chosen ones will long enjoy the work of their hands.”

The curse of:

Exploitation.

Is reversed.

No longer:

Build for someone else.

Plant for someone else.

Lose what you worked for.

Instead:

Enjoy the work.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:30

Covenant judgment included building a house only for another person to possess it.

Leviticus 26:16

Disobedience could result in enemies consuming what God's people planted.

Psalm 92:12

The righteous are compared to flourishing trees, especially palms and cedars.

Spiritual Principle

God's kingdom includes:

Justice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Restoration means the enemy does not always get to eat the harvest.

LXXIV. LIKE THE DAYS OF A TREE

A tree suggests:

Longevity.

Rootedness.

Stability.

Fruitfulness.

Spiritual Principle

God's people are pictured as:

Established.

LXXV. ENJOY THE WORK OF THEIR HANDS

Work is no longer:

Meaningless.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's redemption does not treat meaningful work as an enemy; it rescues work from futility.

LXXVI. THEY WILL NOT LABOR IN VAIN

Isaiah 65:23 — Blessed Generations

“They will not labor in vain, nor bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by the Lord, they and their descendants with them.”

Two great frustrations disappear:

Meaningless labor.

Fear for future generations.

God's blessing reaches:

Children.

Descendants.

Cross References

1 Corinthians 15:58

Because of Christ's resurrection, believers know their labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Philippians 2:16

Paul desires to know that his spiritual labor was not empty or wasted.

Deuteronomy 28:4

Covenant blessing included God's favor upon both children and the fruit of the land.

Spiritual Principle

In God's purposes, faithful labor is:

Not meaningless.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's future removes two deep human fears: “Was my work wasted?” and “What will happen to my children?”

LXXVII. LABOR NOT IN VAIN

God gives:

Meaning.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness matters.

LXXVIII. CHILDREN BLESSED

The blessing reaches:

Generations.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's vision of restoration includes not merely individuals but households and generations.

LXXIX. BEFORE THEY CALL

Isaiah 65:24 — God Answers

“Before they call, I will answer; while they are still speaking, I will hear.”

What a contrast with:

Isaiah 64.

There the people asked:

Will You remain silent?

Now God says:

Before they call:

I will answer.

While they speak:

I will hear.

This pictures:

Intimacy.

Nearness.

Immediate fellowship.

Cross References

Daniel 9:23

While Daniel was praying, the answer was already being sent from God.

Matthew 6:8

Jesus teaches that the Father knows what His children need before they ask Him.

Psalm 91:15

God promises to answer when His faithful servant calls and to be with him in trouble.

Spiritual Principle

God knows our need before:

We finish explaining it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who seemed silent in Isaiah 64 promises in Isaiah 65 to answer before His people finish calling.

LXXX. BEFORE THEY CALL

God's knowledge precedes:

Our prayer.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer informs us of:

Dependence.

Not God of:

Information.

LXXXI. WHILE THEY ARE SPEAKING

God is:

Near.

Attentive.

Responsive.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prayer is never sent toward a distracted God.

LXXXII. THE WOLF AND THE LAMB

Isaiah 65:25 — Peace in Creation

“The wolf and the lamb will feed together, the lion will eat straw like the ox, and dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all My holy mountain,” says the Lord.

The chapter ends with:

Peace.

Predator and prey:

Feed together.

The lion's nature is pictured as:

Transformed.

Violence ends.

Harm ends.

Destruction ends.

God's holy mountain becomes:

A place of peace.

Cross References

Isaiah 11:6

Isaiah earlier pictured the wolf dwelling with the lamb and predators living peacefully with animals they would ordinarily attack.

Isaiah 11:9

Nothing will hurt or destroy on God's holy mountain because the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

Hosea 2:18

God promises a covenant of peace involving creation and safety for His people.

Spiritual Principle

God's restoration reaches beyond:

Human society.

It affects:

Creation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Bible's story moves from violence entering creation to God declaring, “They will neither harm nor destroy.”

LXXXIII. WOLF AND LAMB TOGETHER

Natural enemies:

Reconciled.

Spiritual Principle

God can establish:

Peace.

Where hostility once seemed:

Natural.

LXXXIV. LION EATING STRAW

The imagery describes:

Radical transformation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's final peace is not merely enemies restrained; it pictures creation itself transformed.

LXXXV. THE SERPENT

The serpent remains associated with:

Humiliation.

Spiritual Principle

Evil does not receive:

Final victory.

LXXXVI. NO HARM OR DESTRUCTION

The chapter ends with:

Safety.

Peace.

Holiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's holy mountain becomes the place where harm and destruction finally lose their authority.

LXXXVII. ISAIAH 65 AS A GRACE CHAPTER

Verse 1:

God reveals Himself to people who were not:

Seeking.

Spiritual Principle

Grace takes:

Initiative.

LXXXVIII. ISAIAH 65 AS A REBELLION CHAPTER

All day long God reaches.

The people:

Resist.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The persistence of God's invitation makes persistent rebellion more tragic, not less.

LXXXIX. ISAIAH 65 AS A JUDGMENT CHAPTER

God says:

I will repay.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is:

Accountable.

XC. ISAIAH 65 AS A REMNANT CHAPTER

“Do not destroy it.”

“A blessing is in it.”

“I will not destroy them all.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When everything appears spiritually ruined, God may still have a remnant hidden in the cluster.

XCI. ISAIAH 65 AS A SERVANT CHAPTER

Repeatedly God says:

“My servants.”

They:

Inherit.

Dwell.

Eat.

Drink.

Rejoice.

Sing.

Receive another name.

Enjoy their labor.

Spiritual Principle

Serving God is connected with:

Belonging to God.

XCII. ISAIAH 65 AS A SEPARATION CHAPTER

Two groups.

The rebellious.

The servants.

Two responses.

Two futures.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah 65 does not allow us to erase the distinction between those who seek God and those who forsake Him.

XCIII. ISAIAH 65 AS A NEW CREATION CHAPTER

New heavens.

New earth.

New Jerusalem.

New joy.

New conditions.

Spiritual Principle

God's redemption moves toward:

Renewal.

XCIV. ISAIAH 65 AS A JOY CHAPTER

Rejoice forever.

Jerusalem a delight.

People a joy.

God rejoices.

Servants sing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The final atmosphere of God's restored creation is not mourning but joy.

XCV. ISAIAH 65 AS A PRAYER CHAPTER

Before they call:

God answers.

While they speak:

He hears.

Spiritual Principle

God desires:

Fellowship.

XCVI. ISAIAH 65 AS A PEACE CHAPTER

Wolf.

Lamb.

Lion.

Ox.

No harm.

No destruction.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's final restoration is not merely the absence of war; it is the presence of deep creation-wide peace.

XCVII. WHAT ISAIAH 65 TEACHES ABOUT GRACE

Grace reaches:

Outsiders.

Grace reveals:

God.

Grace preserves:

A remnant.

Grace gives:

A new name.

Grace creates:

A new world.

Spiritual Principle

Grace accomplishes what:

Human merit cannot.

XCVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 65 TEACHES ABOUT REBELLION

Rebellion follows:

Its own thoughts.

Rejects God's call.

Creates false worship.

Chooses what displeases Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Rebellion is not merely breaking rules; it is choosing our own voice over God's voice.

XCIX. WHAT ISAIAH 65 TEACHES ABOUT SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS

“I am holier than you.”

God describes this attitude as:

Offensive smoke.

Spiritual Principle

True holiness produces:

Humility.

C. WHAT ISAIAH 65 TEACHES ABOUT JUDGMENT

It is:

Recorded.

Measured.

Repayed.

Just.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's judgment is never careless because God's record is never inaccurate.

CI. WHAT ISAIAH 65 TEACHES ABOUT THE REMNANT

Not all are:

Destroyed.

God preserves:

Servants.

Chosen ones.

Seekers.

Spiritual Principle

God keeps:

His people.

CII. WHAT ISAIAH 65 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S SERVANTS

They will:

Eat.

Drink.

Rejoice.

Sing.

Receive a new name.

Dwell securely.

Enjoy their labor.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God knows the difference between those who merely carry religious language and those who truly serve Him.

CIII. WHAT ISAIAH 65 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S FUTURE

New heavens.

New earth.

Joy.

Peace.

Security.

Fruitfulness.

Answered prayer.

Spiritual Principle

The future of God's people is:

Hopeful.

CIV. WHAT ISAIAH 65 TEACHES ABOUT WORK

Build.

Dwell.

Plant.

Eat.

Enjoy.

Not in vain.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

In God's restored creation, work is freed from futility and reunited with joy.

CV. WHAT ISAIAH 65 TEACHES ABOUT PRAYER

Before calling:

Answer.

While speaking:

Hearing.

Spiritual Principle

God is intimately aware of:

His people's needs.

CVI. WHAT ISAIAH 65 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE

Predator and prey:

Together.

No harm.

No destruction.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The peace God promises is deeper than a cease-fire; it reaches the structures of creation itself.

CVII. “HERE I AM”

Availability.

Spiritual Principle

God reveals:

Himself.

CVIII. OUTSTRETCHED HANDS

Patience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before focusing only on how far the sinner wandered, remember how long God's hands were extended.

CIX. THEIR OWN THOUGHTS

Self-rule.

Spiritual Principle

Human wisdom must submit to:

Divine truth.

CX. GARDEN SACRIFICES

False worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A worship experience can be emotionally powerful and still be spiritually wrong.

CXI. “HOLIER THAN YOU”

Pride.

Spiritual Principle

Comparison feeds:

Self-righteousness.

CXII. WRITTEN BEFORE GOD

Record.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Nothing we successfully hide from people becomes hidden from God.

CXIII. I WILL REPAY

Justice.

Spiritual Principle

God judges:

Righteously.

CXIV. BLESSING IN THE CLUSTER

Remnant.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not destroy what God says still contains blessing.

CXV. MY CHOSEN ONES

Divine preservation.

Spiritual Principle

God retains:

A people.

CXVI. THE VALLEY OF ACHOR

Trouble transformed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can place cattle at rest in the valley once named Trouble.

CXVII. THOSE WHO SEEK ME

Faithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

Seek the Lord:

Earnestly.

CXVIII. FORTUNE

False trust.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Luck is a poor substitute for providence.

CXIX. DESTINY

False sovereignty.

Spiritual Principle

God determines:

The future.

CXX. I CALLED

Invitation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before judgment came, there was a voice calling.

CXXI. YOU DID NOT ANSWER

Rejection.

Spiritual Principle

God's call requires:

Response.

CXXII. YOU DID NOT LISTEN

Hardness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Repeated exposure to truth does not automatically soften the heart; truth must be received.

CXXIII. MY SERVANTS WILL EAT

Provision.

Spiritual Principle

God cares for:

His servants.

CXXIV. MY SERVANTS WILL REJOICE

Joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The servants who may appear forgotten now are not forgotten in God's future.

CXXV. ANOTHER NAME

Identity.

Spiritual Principle

God can:

Rename.

CXXVI. GOD OF TRUTH

Reliability.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every false god eventually fails because only the true God possesses the future.

CXXVII. FORMER TROUBLES

Past sorrow.

Spiritual Principle

God can move His people:

Beyond.

CXXVIII. NEW HEAVENS

Cosmic renewal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's plan of redemption is larger than individual rescue; He intends renewal on a cosmic scale.

CXXIX. NEW EARTH

Restored creation.

Spiritual Principle

Creation has:

A future.

CXXX. REJOICE FOREVER

Enduring joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The sorrow of the present age is temporary; the joy of God's completed work is permanent.

CXXXI. GOD DELIGHTS IN HIS PEOPLE

Relationship.

Spiritual Principle

God's restoration includes:

Affection.

CXXXII. NO MORE WEEPING

Comfort.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God counts the tears of this age while preparing an age where tears disappear.

CXXXIII. BUILD HOUSES

Security.

Spiritual Principle

Restoration produces:

Stability.

CXXXIV. PLANT VINEYARDS

Fruitfulness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Planting makes sense when God promises a future long enough to enjoy the harvest.

CXXXV. OTHERS WILL NOT TAKE IT

Justice.

Spiritual Principle

Exploitation ends.

CXXXVI. LABOR NOT IN VAIN

Purpose.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

In God's hands, faithful labor has meaning beyond what the worker can presently see.

CXXXVII. DESCENDANTS BLESSED

Generational blessing.

Spiritual Principle

God's restoration reaches:

Families.

CXXXVIII. BEFORE THEY CALL

Divine knowledge.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's answer can already be moving before the first sentence of the prayer is finished.

CXXXIX. I WILL HEAR

Attention.

Spiritual Principle

God listens to:

His people.

CXL. WOLF AND LAMB

Reconciliation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can create fellowship where nature itself once predicted conflict.

CXLI. NO HARM

Safety.

Spiritual Principle

God's kingdom moves toward:

Peace.

CXLII. NO DESTRUCTION

Restoration completed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Bible's final direction is away from destruction and toward God's holy peace.

CXLIII. ISAIAH 64 AND ISAIAH 65

Isaiah 64:

“Will You remain silent?”

Isaiah 65:

“I will not keep silent.”

Key Truth

God answers:

The prayer.

But His answer includes both:

Judgment.

And:

Restoration.

CXLIV. ISAIAH 64 AND THE POTTER

Isaiah 64:

God is:

Potter.

Isaiah 65:

God says:

“I will create.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Potter of Isaiah 64 becomes the Creator of new heavens and a new earth in Isaiah 65.

CXLV. ISAIAH 62 AND ISAIAH 65

Isaiah 62:

God gives His people:

A new name.

Isaiah 65:

God gives His servants:

Another name.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption changes:

Identity.

CXLVI. ISAIAH 11 AND ISAIAH 65

Isaiah 11:

Wolf with lamb.

Nothing harms on:

God's holy mountain.

Isaiah 65:

Wolf and lamb feed together.

Nothing harms or destroys.

Key Truth

Isaiah's vision of Messianic peace reaches forward toward:

Creation restored.

CXLVII. REVELATION 21 AND ISAIAH 65

Isaiah 65:

New heavens.

New earth.

No more crying.

Jerusalem rejoices.

Revelation 21:

New heaven.

New earth.

Holy city.

No more tears.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The final chapters of the Bible echo promises God was already speaking through Isaiah centuries earlier.

CXLVIII. TEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 65

1. **Not Seeking God → God Revealing Himself**
2. **Outstretched Hands → Rebellious People**
3. **True Worship → False Worship**
4. **Humility → "I Am Holier Than You"**
5. **Judgment → Preserved Remnant**
6. **Forsaking God → Seeking God**
7. **Hunger → Eating**
8. **Anguish → Singing**
9. **Former Troubles → New Creation**
10. **Harm and Destruction → Peace**

Key Truth

Isaiah 65 contrasts two ways of life and two outcomes:

Rebellion ends in:

Judgment.

God's servants move toward:

Joy.

Inheritance.

Restoration.

Peace.

CXLIX. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 65

1. God Takes the Initiative in Grace

Principle:

He reveals Himself even to those who were not seeking Him.

2. God Is Patient with Rebellious People

Principle:

His hands remain extended before judgment falls.

3. Religion Without Obedience Is Empty

Principle:

Religious activity cannot replace faithfulness.

4. Self-Righteousness Offends God

Principle:

True holiness creates humility.

5. God Judges Sin

Principle:

Nothing is forgotten or hidden from Him.

6. God Preserves a Remnant

Principle:

Even in judgment, grace remains active.

7. God Transforms Trouble into Hope

Principle:

The Valley of Achor can become a resting place.

8. God's Call Must Be Answered

Principle:

Repeatedly refusing His voice has consequences.

9. God Distinguishes His Servants

Principle:

He knows those who seek and serve Him.

10. God Will Create a New Heaven and New Earth

Principle:

The ultimate future is renewal.

11. God Hears His People

Principle:

He can answer before the prayer is finished.

12. God's Kingdom Ends in Peace

Principle:

Harm and destruction do not have the final word.

CL. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

To whom did God reveal Himself?

To people who had not asked for Him.

Question 2

Who found God?

Those who had not been seeking Him.

Question 3

What did God say to the nation not called by His name?

“Here I am, here I am.”

Question 4

How long had God held out His hands to rebellious Israel?

All day long.

Question 5

What were the rebellious people following?

Their own thoughts.

Question 6

How did they provoke God?

Through false worship and disobedient religious practices.

Question 7

What attitude did they display in verse 5?

Self-righteousness and spiritual pride.

Question 8

What did they say?

“I am holier than you.”

Question 9

How did God describe their self-righteousness?

Like smoke in His nostrils and a continually burning fire.

Question 10

Was their sin forgotten?

No. It was written before God.

Question 11

What did God promise to do?

Repay according to their deeds.

Question 12

What picture illustrates God's preservation of a remnant?

New wine remaining within a cluster of grapes.

Question 13

What does God say about the cluster?

“Do not destroy it, for a blessing is in it.”

Question 14

Would God destroy everyone?

No. He promised not to destroy them all.

Question 15

Who would inherit God's mountains?

His chosen ones.

Question 16

Who would dwell there?

His servants.

Question 17

What would the Valley of Achor become?

A resting place for herds.

Question 18

For whom would this restoration be given?

God's people who seek Him.

Question 19

What had the unfaithful done?

Forsaken the Lord and forgotten His holy mountain.

Question 20

Why was judgment coming upon them?

Because God called and they did not answer, He spoke and they did not listen, and they chose what displeased Him.

Question 21

What would God's servants do?

Eat, drink, rejoice, and sing.

Question 22

What would the rebellious experience?

Hunger, thirst, shame, anguish, and brokenness.

Question 23

What would God give His servants?

Another name.

Question 24

How is God identified in verse 16?

The God of truth.

Question 25

What would happen to former troubles?

They would be forgotten and hidden from view.

Question 26

What does God promise to create?

New heavens and a new earth.

Question 27

What would Jerusalem become?

A delight.

Question 28

How would God respond to Jerusalem?

He would rejoice over it and delight in His people.

Question 29

What sounds would disappear?

Weeping and crying.

Question 30

What would God's people do with the houses they built?

Live in them.

Question 31

What would they do with the vineyards they planted?

Eat their fruit.

Question 32

Would others take the results of their labor?

No. God's people would enjoy the work of their own hands.

Question 33

Would they labor in vain?

No.

Question 34

Who would share in God's blessing?

His people and their descendants.

Question 35

When would God answer their prayers?

Before they called.

Question 36

When would He hear?

While they were still speaking.

Question 37

Which animals are pictured feeding together?

The wolf and the lamb.

Question 38

What would the lion eat?

Straw like the ox.

Question 39

What would no longer occur on God's holy mountain?

Harm and destruction.

Question 40

What is the main message of Isaiah 65?

God graciously reveals Himself, patiently calls rebellious people, judges persistent sin, preserves a faithful remnant, distinguishes His servants from the unfaithful, and promises a renewed creation filled with joy, security, answered prayer, fruitful labor, and peace.

CLI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 65 asks several searching questions.

Do I understand that my relationship with God began with:

Grace?

Am I grateful that God revealed Himself rather than waiting for me to become:

Worthy?

Can I look back and see times when God was saying:

“Here I am”

before I understood:

What He was doing?

Have I ignored:

God's outstretched hands?

Is He calling me about something I continue to:

Resist?

Has He spoken through:

Scripture?

Conviction?

Wise counsel?

Circumstances?

And have I refused to:

Listen?

Am I following:

God's thoughts?

Or:

My own thoughts?

Have I ever substituted:

Religious activity.

For:

Obedience?

Do I assume something is acceptable to God merely because it feels:

Spiritual?

Am I involved in anything that contradicts:

His Word?

Do I compare myself with:

Other people?

Do I secretly think:

“I am holier than you”?

Has spiritual pride made me:

Critical?

Superior?

Judgmental?

Do I remember that holiness should produce:

Humility?

Do I live as though God:

Sees everything?

Do I remember that nothing is:

Hidden from Him?

Am I trusting God's:

Grace.

Without treating His:

Justice lightly?

Do I believe God can preserve:

A remnant?

When the culture seems:

Dark.

When churches seem:

Compromised.

When faith appears:

Weak.

Do I remember God's words:

“Do not destroy it, for a blessing is in it”?

Could there still be:

A blessing in the cluster?

Am I one of those who:

Seek Him?

Has my Valley of Achor become:

A place of trouble?

Do I believe God can transform:

Trouble into hope?

Restlessness into:

Rest?

Have I placed my confidence in:

Fortune?

Luck?

Chance?

Destiny?

Money?

Government?

Influence?

People?

Or:

God?

When God calls:

Do I answer?

When God speaks:

Do I listen?

Or have I become skilled at:

Hearing sermons.

Reading verses.

Receiving conviction.

And doing:

Nothing?

Am I living as:

A servant of God?

Would the word:

Servant

accurately describe:

My life?

Do I look forward to:

God's future?

Do I believe He can give:

A new name?

Do I believe former troubles do not have to:

Define eternity?

Do I believe God is:

The God of truth?

Am I looking toward:

The new heavens.

And:

The new earth?

Does eternal hope affect:

How I live now?

Do I understand that God Himself intends to:

Rejoice over His people?

Have I allowed present sorrow to convince me:

Sorrow is permanent?

Do I believe:

Weeping has an ending?

Am I doing meaningful work for:

God?

Do I believe my labor in Him is:

Not in vain?

Am I praying for:

My children?

Grandchildren?

Future generations?

Do I believe God cares about:

Their future?

Do I believe God hears:

My prayers?

Do I understand that before I even:

Call—

He knows?

While I am still:

Speaking—

He hears?

Where do I need:

Peace?

In my heart?

Home?

Family?

Church?

Relationships?

Do I believe the God who promises peace between:

Wolf.

And lamb.

Can bring reconciliation where I see only:

Conflict?

And most importantly:

Which group in Isaiah 65 describes me?

Those who:

Forsake the Lord?

Or:

His servants?

Those who:

Do not answer?

Or:

Those who seek Him?

Those who follow:

Their own thoughts?

Or:

Those who listen to:

His voice?

CLII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Grace Says ‘Here I Am’ Before We Know Enough to Seek”

God says:

I revealed Myself.

I was found.

I said:

“Here I am.”

Principle:

Salvation begins not with humanity successfully finding a hidden God but with God graciously making Himself known.

CLIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Never Ignore the Hands That Have Been Reaching Toward You All Day”

God says:

“All day long I have held out My hands.”

Principle:

Every repeated invitation from God should soften the heart rather than train it to resist one more time.

CLIV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Following Your Own Thoughts Can Become Rebellion”

The people walked according to:

Their own thoughts.

Principle:

Personal sincerity does not make a wrong path right when God's Word points another direction.

CLV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Religion Cannot Cover Rebellion”

They sacrificed.

Burned incense.

Practiced religious rituals.

Yet:

Provoked God.

Principle:

Religious activity becomes dangerous when it allows us to feel close to God while refusing to obey Him.

CLVI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Self-Righteousness Is Smoke, Not Incense”

They said:

“I am holier than you.”

God called it:

Smoke.

Principle:

What smells like holiness to a proud person may smell like smoke to God.

CLVII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“There May Still Be Blessing in the Cluster”

The cluster looked ready for:

Destruction.

Someone said:

Do not destroy.

There is:

Blessing.

Principle:

Never assume God has nothing left to preserve simply because you see widespread failure.

CLVIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Can Turn the Valley of Trouble into a Place of Rest”

Achor meant:

Trouble.

God makes it:

Pasture.

Rest.

Principle:

The location of yesterday's judgment can become the location of tomorrow's restoration.

CLIX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Voice You Continually Ignore May One Day Become the Voice Explaining Your Judgment”

God said:

I called.

You did not answer.

I spoke.

You did not listen.

Principle:

Respond to God's voice while His call is inviting you to return.

CLX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The God Who Gave You Your First Name Can Give You Another Name”

God promises:

Another name.

Principle:

Your past identity does not have authority over the new identity God creates through redemption.

CLXI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God's Final Answer to Ruins Is Creation”

Isaiah 64:

Ruins.

Isaiah 65:

“I will create.”

Principle:

When human beings see what cannot be repaired, God can speak the language of creation.

CLXII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Future God Creates Is Greater Than the Trouble We Remember”

Former things:

Fade.

God creates:

New.

Principle:

The believer's future is determined more by God's creative promise than by yesterday's painful history.

CLXIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The God Who Heard ‘Will You Remain Silent?’ Answers ‘Before They Call, I Will Answer’”

Isaiah 64 asked:

Will You remain:

Silent?

Isaiah 65 answers:

Before they call:

I will answer.

Principle:

God's apparent silence in one chapter should never make us forget that another chapter may already contain His answer.

CLXIV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God's Story Ends with Peace, Not Destruction”

Wolf.

Lamb.

Lion.

Ox.

No harm.

No destruction.

Principle:

The final direction of redemption is toward a creation where violence no longer defines life on God's holy mountain.

CLXV. ISAIAH 65 AS A WHOLE

The chapter begins:

“Here I am.”

God reveals:

Himself.

Then:

Outstretched hands.

Yet people:

Rebel.

They follow:

Their own thoughts.

They practice:

False worship.

They become:

Self-righteous.

God says:

Their deeds are:

Recorded.

Judgment will:

Come.

But then:

A cluster.

A blessing.

A remnant.

God says:

“I will not destroy them all.”

Then:

Chosen ones.

Servants.

Seekers.

Pasture.

Rest.

Then another contrast:

Those who forsake God.

And:

Those who serve Him.

One group:

Hunger.

One:

Eats.

One:

Thirsts.

One:

Drinks.

One:

Wails.

One:

Sings.

One name becomes:

A curse.

Another name is:

Given.

Then the horizon opens.

God says:

“I will create new heavens and a new earth.”

From there the chapter becomes increasingly filled with:

Joy.

Delight.

Life.

Homes.

Vineyards.

Fruit.

Work.

Children.

Blessing.

Prayer.

Peace.

And finally:

No harm.

No destruction.

What a journey.

From:

Rebellious people.

To:

A renewed creation.

From:

“I am holier than you.”

To:

God delighting in His people.

From:

False Fortune and Destiny.

To:

The God of truth.

From:

Judgment written before God.

To:

Former troubles forgotten.

From:

Crying.

To:

Joy.

From:

Futility.

To:

Fruitfulness.

From:

Prayer unanswered in appearance.

To:

“Before they call, I will answer.”

From:

Predator and prey.

To:

Wolf and lamb feeding together.

Key Truth

Isaiah 65 reveals the God who patiently reaches toward rebels, righteously judges sin, graciously preserves a remnant, faithfully blesses His servants, powerfully creates a new heaven and new earth, and ultimately establishes a world characterized by joy, meaningful labor, answered prayer, security, and peace.

CLXVI. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 65

1. God Reveals Himself

He says:

“Here I am.”

Grace begins with:

God.

2. God Reaches Toward Rebels

His hands remain extended:

All day.

3. Rebellion Becomes Religious

The people combine:

Idolatry.

Disobedience.

Pride.

4. God Announces Judgment

Their deeds are:

Written.

God will:

Repay.

5. God Preserves a Remnant

A blessing remains:

In the cluster.

6. God's Servants Inherit

His chosen people:

Seek Him.

Dwell.

Receive provision.

7. God Separates Servants from Rebels

Eat versus:

Hunger.

Drink versus:

Thirst.

Joy versus:

Shame.

Singing versus:

Wailing.

8. God Gives His Servants Another Name

Old identity gives way to:

New identity.

9. God Creates New Heavens and a New Earth

Former troubles no longer dominate:

The future.

10. Peace Fills God's Holy Mountain

No harm.

No destruction.

Key Truth

Isaiah 65 moves from God's outstretched hands toward rebellious humanity to God's creation of a world where rebellion, futility, sorrow, violence, and destruction no longer dominate His people.

CLXVII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 65 begins with:

God speaking.

The previous chapter ended with people asking:

“Will You remain silent?”

And now God answers.

His first words reveal:

Grace.

“I revealed Myself.”

“I was found.”

“Here I am.”

Maybe that describes your own testimony.

Before you knew everything about:

God—

He was already:

Working.

Before you understood:

Grace—

He was already:

Calling.

Before you knew how to:

Pray—

He was already:

Near.

Before you fully knew:

What you needed—

God was saying:

“Here I am.”

Salvation is a story of:

Grace.

But then God says something heartbreaking:

“All day long I have held out My hands.”

Picture that.

God's hands:

Extended.

Morning:

Still extended.

Noon:

Still extended.

Evening:

Still extended.

But the people:

Walked another way.

That raises a serious question:

What are you doing with:

God's outstretched hands?

Maybe God has been:

Convicting.

Calling.

Correcting.

Inviting.

Warning.

And you keep saying:

Later.

Not now.

I know better.

I have my own plan.

Isaiah says they followed:

“Their own thoughts.”

That sounds remarkably modern.

People say:

My truth.

My feelings.

My life.

My choice.

My way.

But God's question remains:

What does:

He say?

Your thoughts matter.

But they are not:

Lord.

Then these people become:

Religious.

They offer:

Sacrifices.

Burn:

Incense.

Yet God is:

Angry.

Why?

Because religion did not produce:

Obedience.

You can:

Attend church.

Read Scripture.

Sing songs.

Know theology.

Talk about God.

And still resist:

God.

Religion cannot replace:

Surrender.

Then perhaps the ugliest sentence in the chapter appears:

“I am holier than you.”

What irony.

People openly violating God's Word still thought:

They were superior.

Be careful.

Spiritual pride can make you:

Blind.

You may notice:

Everyone else's sin.

While ignoring:

Your own.

You may compare yourself with:

Someone worse.

And conclude:

I am fine.

But God does not grade holiness:

On a curve.

Then God says:

It is:

Written.

Judgment matters.

Sin matters.

Choices matter.

But just when the chapter becomes:

Dark—

A cluster appears.

Someone looks at it and says:

“Do not destroy it, for a blessing is in it.”

What a statement.

Maybe you look at:

A church.

A family.

A community.

A generation.

A nation.

And think:

Nothing good is left.

God may say:

There is still:

A blessing in the cluster.

There is still:

A remnant.

There are still:

Servants.

There are still:

People seeking Me.

Never confuse:

Majority.

With:

Totality.

God always knows:

His servants.

Then comes:

The Valley of Achor.

The Valley of:

Trouble.

A place associated with:

Judgment.

But God says:

It will become:

A resting place.

God can transform:

The geography of your memories.

The place you remember only as:

Trouble—

can become:

Testimony.

The place associated with:

Failure—

can become:

Grace.

The place associated with:

Judgment—

can become:

Rest.

Then God warns:

“When I called, you did not answer.”

That may be one of the most sobering sentences in Isaiah.

God:

Called.

But they:

Ignored.

God:

Spoke.

But they:

Would not listen.

Never become so accustomed to:

God's voice—

that you stop:

Responding.

Every sermon ignored.

Every conviction postponed.

Every command resisted.

Can gradually teach the heart:

Not to listen.

If God is calling today:

Answer.

Then God describes His servants.

They will:

Eat.

Drink.

Rejoice.

Sing.

And receive:

Another name.

Maybe your old name has been:

Failure.

Addict.

Rejected.

Broken.

Hopeless.

Unwanted.

Sinner.

God specializes in:

New names.

Isaiah 62 already taught us:

Forsaken becomes:

Delighted in.

Desolate becomes:

Married.

Isaiah 65 says:

God will give His servants:

Another name.

Grace changes:

Identity.

Then everything expands.

God says:

“Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth.”

Look at those first words:

“I will create.”

Isaiah 64 had:

Burned temple.

Desolate Jerusalem.

Ruins.

Now God responds:

“I will create.”

Human beings look at:

Ruins.

God talks about:

Creation.

People say:

Impossible.

God says:

“I will create.”

People say:

Too broken.

God says:

“I will create.”

People say:

Too damaged.

God says:

“I will create.”

That is hope.

The God who created the first heaven and earth has not lost:

Creative power.

Then comes:

Joy.

“Be glad and rejoice forever.”

Notice:

Forever.

Not:

Until the next tragedy.

Not:

Until another enemy rises.

Not:

Until another exile.

Forever.

Then God says something beautiful:

“I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in My people.”

God's people are not merely:

Happy with God.

God takes:

Delight in His people.

Then:

No more sound of:

Weeping.

Think of every tear shed through:

History.

War.

Disease.

Death.

Broken families.

Persecution.

Betrayal.

Grief.

Loss.

God promises a future where:

Crying is no longer:

The soundtrack.

Then people:

Build.

And live there.

Plant.

And eat.

Work.

And enjoy.

No enemy steals:

The harvest.

No invader takes:

The house.

No one labors:

In vain.

Maybe you have wondered:

Does anything I do matter?

Paul later says:

Your labor in the Lord is:

Not in vain.

God does not forget:

Faithful work.

Then:

Children.

Descendants.

Generations:

Blessed.

Then comes one of the chapter's most beautiful promises:

“Before they call, I will answer; while they are still speaking, I will hear.”

Isaiah 64 asked:

God—

Are You:

Silent?

Isaiah 65 says:

Before you call:

I answer.

While you speak:

I hear.

Maybe you are praying and wondering:

Does God hear?

Yes.

Maybe your words feel:

Weak.

God hears.

Maybe your prayer seems:

Unpolished.

God hears.

Maybe you cannot find:

The right words.

God already knows.

Before:

You call—

He knows.

While:

You speak—

He hears.

Then the chapter ends:

Wolf.

Lamb.

Lion.

Ox.

Peace.

No harm.

No destruction.

The chapter started with:

Rebellion.

It ends with:

Peace.

It started with:

God reaching toward sinners.

It ends with:

Creation resting beneath God's rule.

That is the direction of:

Redemption.

God is taking His creation from:

Rebellion.

Toward:

Restoration.

From:

Violence.

Toward:

Peace.

From:

Weeping.

Toward:

Joy.

From:

Futility.

Toward:

Meaning.

From:

Brokenness.

Toward:

Wholeness.

From:

Death.

Toward:

Life.

From:

Old creation.

Toward:

New creation.

So Isaiah 65 asks:

Have I responded to:

God's outstretched hands?

Am I listening when:

He speaks?

Am I following:

His thoughts?

Or:

My own?

Have I replaced obedience with:

Religion?

Am I carrying:

Spiritual pride?

Am I among those who:

Forsake Him?

Or:

Seek Him?

Am I serving:

God?

Do I believe there is still:

Blessing in the cluster?

Can I trust God to turn:

A Valley of Trouble.

Into:

A place of rest?

Do I believe:

Former trouble.

Does not determine:

Final reality?

Am I living with the hope of:

New heavens.

And:

A new earth?

Do I believe:

My labor is not in vain?

Do I believe:

God hears prayer?

Do I believe the story ends with:

Peace?

Isaiah 65 begins:

“Here I am.”

And ends:

“They will neither harm nor destroy on all My holy mountain.”

Between those two statements stands:

Grace.

Judgment.

Remnant.

Servants.

New identity.

New creation.

Joy.

Prayer.

Peace.

And at the center of it all:

God.

Final Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who says “Here I am” to those who were not seeking Him, stretches His hands toward rebels, preserves blessing in the remnant, gives His servants another name, creates new heavens and a new earth, answers before His people finish calling, and moves all creation toward the day when nothing will harm or destroy on His holy mountain.

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 66 — The Final Word: Judgment and Glory

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 66 brings the book of Isaiah to its:

Final chapter.

Final warnings.

Final promises.

Final vision.

The chapter contains nearly every major theme that has appeared throughout Isaiah.

God's:

Majesty.

Holiness.

Judgment.

Comfort.

Glory.

Sovereignty.

Mercy.

Worldwide purpose.

New creation.

And final separation between:

The faithful.

And:

The rebellious.

Isaiah 65 ended with:

New heavens.

New earth.

Peace.

No harm.

No destruction.

Isaiah 66 now brings the prophecy to its final conclusion by showing:

Who God accepts.

Who God rejects.

How God comforts His people.

How He judges His enemies.

How the nations are gathered.

How His glory is proclaimed.

And how the new creation leads to universal worship.

The chapter begins with a magnificent declaration:

“Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool.”

No temple can:

Contain God.

No building can:

Impress God.

No structure built by human hands can provide:

God's true dwelling place.

Why?

Because:

His hand made everything.

Yet immediately after declaring His greatness, God tells us whom He notices:

“The one who is humble and contrite in spirit, and who trembles at My word.”

This is one of the great paradoxes of Scripture.

The God whose throne is:

Heaven—

looks toward:

The humble.

The God who created:

Everything—

takes notice of the person who:

Trembles at His Word.

Isaiah 66 therefore begins by separating:

True worship.

From:

Empty religion.

The people may still:

Sacrifice.

Offer gifts.

Burn incense.

Perform religious rituals.

But if their hearts are rebellious, those rituals become:

Offensive.

God says:

They have chosen:

Their own ways.

Their souls delight in:

Abominations.

Therefore God says:

He will choose:

Judgment.

Then the chapter turns toward:

The faithful.

Those who tremble at God's Word may be:

Mocked.

Rejected.

Excluded.

Hated.

But God promises:

Vindication.

Their enemies will experience:

Shame.

Then comes a picture of:

Sudden deliverance.

Zion gives birth:

Before labor.

A nation appears:

In a moment.

God asks:

“Shall I bring to the point of birth and not deliver?”

The implied answer is:

No.

The God who begins the work will:

Complete it.

Then Jerusalem becomes a place of:

Comfort.

Peace flows like:

A river.

God compares His comfort to:

A mother's tenderness.

“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.”

But Isaiah's final chapter is not only:

Comfort.

It is also:

Judgment.

The Lord comes with:

Fire.

Whirlwind.

Sword.

His enemies face:

Recompense.

Those practicing false religion face:

Destruction.

Then the vision expands beyond:

Israel.

God gathers:

All nations.

All languages.

They come to see:

His glory.

Survivors go to distant lands and declare:

His glory among the nations.

The nations then bring people to:

Jerusalem.

God even says He will take some of them as:

Priests.

Levites.

The chapter therefore presents a dramatic expansion of:

God's worshiping people.

Finally Isaiah returns to:

The new heavens.

The new earth.

They endure before:

God.

So will:

The name.

And descendants.

Of His people.

All mankind will come to:

Worship.

But the final verse contains a solemn warning.

There remains an eternal distinction between:

Those who worship.

And:

Those who rebel.

Isaiah therefore ends with both:

Glory.

And:

Judgment.

Joy.

And:

Warning.

Worship.

And:

Separation.

The central truth of Isaiah 66 is:

The Lord who rules heaven and earth looks with favor upon the humble who tremble at His Word, rejects empty religion, vindicates His faithful people, comforts them like a mother, judges rebellion with perfect justice, gathers the nations to behold and proclaim His glory, and establishes an enduring new creation where all mankind worships before Him while rebellion receives its final judgment.

I. HEAVEN IS MY THRONE

Isaiah 66:1 — God Cannot Be Contained

“This is what the Lord says: ‘Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. Where is the house you would build for Me? Where would My resting place be?’”

The chapter begins with:

Majesty.

God declares:

Heaven is:

His throne.

Earth is:

His footstool.

Human beings cannot build:

A house large enough.

A sanctuary impressive enough.

A structure glorious enough.

To contain:

The Creator.

Cross References

Acts 7:49

Stephen quotes Isaiah's words to emphasize that the Most High does not dwell in temples made by human hands as though He could be confined by a building.

Matthew 5:34

Jesus warns against careless swearing by heaven because heaven is God's throne.

1 Kings 8:27

Solomon acknowledges at the dedication of the temple that even the highest heavens cannot contain God, much less the building he had constructed.

Spiritual Principle

God cannot be:

Contained.

Controlled.

Reduced to:

A building.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who uses temples does not need temples, because heaven is His throne and earth is only His footstool.

II. HEAVEN AS THRONE

A throne represents:

Authority.

Kingship.

Rule.

God does not merely occupy:

Heaven.

He reigns from:

Heaven.

Spiritual Principle

God's sovereignty extends over:

Everything.

III. EARTH AS FOOTSTOOL

The earth that seems enormous to us is pictured as:

God's footstool.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What appears immense from our perspective is small beneath the sovereignty of God.

IV. WHERE IS THE HOUSE?

The question exposes:

Human pride.

People may think:

We built something magnificent for God.

God responds:

Everything used to build it already:

Belonged to Him.

Spiritual Principle

We cannot give God anything that did not first come from:

His hand.

V. WHERE WOULD MY RESTING PLACE BE?

God refuses to be reduced to:

Location.

Architecture.

Human control.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may choose to meet His people in a place, but no place becomes greater than the God who meets them there.

VI. MY HAND MADE ALL THESE THINGS

Isaiah 66:2 — The One God Looks Toward

“My hand made all these things, and so they all came into being,” declares the Lord. “But this is the one I will look to: the one who is humble and contrite in spirit, and who trembles at My word.”

Everything exists because:

God made it.

The temple materials?

His.

The earth?

His.

The heavens?

His.

Human beings?

His workmanship.

Yet the Creator tells us who receives:

His attention.

Not merely:

The wealthy.

Powerful.

Famous.

Religious.

Educated.

But:

The humble.

The contrite.

The one who trembles at:

His Word.

Cross References

Psalm 51:17

David declares that the sacrifices God truly desires include a broken and contrite heart, which He will not despise.

James 4:6

God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.

Acts 17:24

Paul declares that the God who made the world and everything in it does not dwell in temples made by human hands.

Spiritual Principle

God is impressed neither by:

Human greatness.

Nor:

Religious display.

He honors:

Humility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who made the universe does not need us to impress Him; He looks for hearts humble enough to tremble at His Word.

VII. “THIS IS THE ONE I WILL LOOK TO”

What an extraordinary promise.

The Creator:

Looks toward.

The humble.

Spiritual Principle

Humility attracts:

Divine favor.

VIII. HUMBLE

Humility recognizes:

God is God.

And:

I am not.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True humility begins when we stop competing with God for the right to define truth, direction, and authority.

IX. CONTRITE IN SPIRIT

Contrition means:

Broken over sin.

Teachable.

Repentant.

Sensitive toward:

God.

Spiritual Principle

God does not despise:

Repentant brokenness.

X. TREMBLES AT MY WORD

This is not:

Paralyzing terror.

It is:

Holy reverence.

Seriousness.

Submission.

The person who trembles at God's Word does not treat Scripture as:

Suggestion.

Opinion.

Background noise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A person who truly trembles at God's Word asks not, “Do I agree with this?” but, “How must I respond to what God has said?”

XI. EMPTY RELIGION CONDEMNED

Isaiah 66:3 — Ritual Without Obedience

“The one who kills an ox is like one who murders a man; the one who sacrifices a lamb is like one who breaks a dog's neck; the one who brings an offering is like one who offers swine's blood; the one who burns incense is like one who blesses an idol. Yes, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in abominations.”

The religious acts themselves were once connected with:

Covenant worship.

Yet because the people's hearts were:

Rebellious—

the acts become compared with:

Murder.

Unclean sacrifice.

Idolatry.

Why?

Because worship without obedience becomes:

Hypocrisy.

Cross References

1 Samuel 15:22

Samuel tells Saul that obedience is better than sacrifice and listening to God is better than offering religious ritual while continuing in rebellion.

Proverbs 15:8

The sacrifice of the wicked is detestable to the Lord, while the prayer of the upright pleases Him.

Amos 5:21

God rejects Israel's religious festivals and assemblies when their worship is disconnected from justice and faithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

Religious activity cannot compensate for:

A rebellious heart.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not accept worship as a substitute for obedience.

XII. SACRIFICE WITHOUT SURRENDER

The people still:

Brought offerings.

But had not brought:

Their hearts.

Spiritual Principle

God wants:

The worshiper.

Not merely:

The worship act.

XIII. THEY CHOSE THEIR OWN WAYS

Here is the heart of the problem.

Not:

God's way.

Their way.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Empty religion often tries to keep God's rituals while rejecting God's rule.

XIV. THEIR SOUL DELIGHTS IN ABOMINATIONS

Sin has progressed from:

Action.

To:

Delight.

Spiritual Principle

Repeated rebellion can change:

What the heart loves.

XV. I WILL ALSO CHOOSE

Isaiah 66:4 — God Responds to Their Choice

“So I also will choose harsh treatment for them, and bring upon them what they dread. For when I called, no one answered; when I spoke, they did not listen. They did what was evil in My sight and chose what displeased Me.”

Notice the repeated word:

Choose.

They chose:

Their ways.

God chooses:

Their judgment.

They chose:

What displeased Him.

God brings:

What they dread.

Cross References

2 Thessalonians 2:11

Paul describes divine judgment falling upon those who reject truth and embrace deception.

Proverbs 1:26

Wisdom warns that those who persistently reject correction eventually face the consequences they refused to take seriously.

Jeremiah 11:11

God warns that judgment can reach a point where disaster arrives because His repeated calls have been ignored.

Spiritual Principle

Choices have:

Consequences.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When people continually choose what displeases God, they should not be surprised when God allows them to experience the fruit of those choices.

XVI. WHEN I CALLED

God's judgment came after:

His call.

His invitation.

His warning.

Spiritual Principle

God's warnings reveal:

Patience.

XVII. NO ONE ANSWERED

The tragedy is not:

Lack of revelation.

It is:

Lack of response.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's voice can become familiar enough to ignore if the heart repeatedly refuses to answer.

XVIII. WHEN I SPOKE

God had:

Communicated.

Spiritual Principle

Accountability increases with:

Revelation.

XIX. THEY DID NOT LISTEN

Hearing sound is not the same as:

Listening obediently.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The purpose of hearing God's Word is not information alone but transformation.

XX. THEY CHOSE WHAT DISPLEASED ME

The rebellion was:

Deliberate.

Spiritual Principle

Sin includes:

Choice.

Responsibility.

XXI. ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE FAITHFUL

Isaiah 66:5 — Vindication for Those Who Tremble at His Word

“Hear the word of the Lord, you who tremble at His word: ‘Your own brothers who hate you, who exclude you because of My name, have said, “Let the Lord be glorified, that we may see your joy.” But they will be put to shame.’”

Now God speaks directly to:

The faithful.

They tremble at:

His Word.

Yet they are:

Hated.

Excluded.

Mocked.

Even by:

Their own brothers.

But God promises:

Vindication.

Cross References

John 15:19

Jesus tells His disciples that the world may hate them because they no longer belong to its rebellious system.

Matthew 5:11

Jesus pronounces blessing upon those who are insulted, persecuted, and falsely accused because of faithfulness to Him.

1 Peter 4:14

Those who are insulted because of Christ are called blessed because God's Spirit rests upon them.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness may result in:

Rejection.

But rejection by people does not mean:

Rejection by God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Being excluded by people because you honor God's Word is painful, but being accepted by God matters more than being accepted by the crowd.

XXII. THOSE WHO TREMBLE AT HIS WORD

Again God identifies:

His faithful people.

Not by:

Prestige.

But by:

Reverence.

Spiritual Principle

God knows:

Those who honor His Word.

XXIII. YOUR OWN BROTHERS HATE YOU

Opposition may come from:

Near.

Not only:

Far.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some of the deepest wounds come when faithfulness to God costs acceptance among people we expected to understand.

XXIV. EXCLUDED BECAUSE OF MY NAME

Their suffering had a:

Spiritual cause.

Spiritual Principle

Loyalty to God can be:

Costly.

XXV. THEY WILL BE PUT TO SHAME

God promises:

Reversal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The people who mock obedience today do not get the final verdict on the faithful.

XXVI. THE VOICE OF THE LORD

Isaiah 66:6 — Recompense from the Temple

“A voice of uproar comes from the city, a voice from the temple—the voice of the Lord, rendering recompense to His enemies.”

A sound rises:

From the city.

From the temple.

Ultimately it is:

The Lord's voice.

He gives:

Recompense.

Cross References

Revelation 16:17

A loud voice comes from the temple and throne at the completion of God's judgment.

Joel 3:16

The Lord roars from Zion and causes heaven and earth to tremble, while remaining a refuge for His people.

Nahum 1:2

The Lord is described as righteous in vengeance against His enemies while maintaining justice.

Spiritual Principle

God's judgment has:

A voice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who seemed silent in times of injustice will not remain silent forever.

XXVII. RECOMPENSE

God repays according to:

Truth.

Spiritual Principle

Divine justice is:

Certain.

XXVIII. ZION'S SUDDEN DELIVERANCE

Isaiah 66:7 — Birth Before Labor

“Before she was in labor, she gave birth; before her pain came, she delivered a son.”

The imagery is deliberately:

Unexpected.

Normally:

Labor.

Pain.

Then:

Birth.

Here:

Birth arrives suddenly.

The picture emphasizes:

Unexpected divine intervention.

Cross References

Revelation 12:5

John's vision pictures a woman giving birth to a male child destined for rule.

Micah 5:3

Micah uses childbirth imagery in connection with God's promised ruler and the restoration of His people.

John 16:21

Jesus compares sorrow turning into joy with a woman who forgets labor pain after the child is born.

Spiritual Principle

God can fulfill His purpose:

Suddenly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may take years preparing what He chooses to reveal in a moment.

XXIX. BEFORE THE PAIN CAME

The order is:

Miraculous.

Unexpected.

Spiritual Principle

God is not bound by:

Ordinary expectation.

XXX. A NATION IN A DAY

Isaiah 66:8 — Who Has Heard Such a Thing?

“Who has heard of such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be delivered in a moment? Yet as soon as Zion was in labor, she brought forth her children.”

Isaiah himself emphasizes:

The extraordinary nature.

Who has heard?

Who has seen?

Can this happen?

Human answer:

Impossible.

God's answer:

Yes.

Cross References

Acts 2:41

At Pentecost thousands responded to the gospel in a single day, showing how rapidly God can expand His people.

Romans 11:26

Paul looks toward God's saving purpose for Israel and speaks of a future work of redemption.

Ezekiel 37:10

In Ezekiel's vision, a lifeless valley becomes a vast living army through God's power.

Spiritual Principle

God can accomplish quickly what seems impossible:

Gradually.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse a long season of waiting with a limitation upon God's ability to act suddenly.

XXXI. WHO HAS SEEN SUCH THINGS?

The event exceeds:

Human precedent.

Spiritual Principle

God's work can exceed:

Past experience.

XXXII. ZION BROUGHT FORTH CHILDREN

Restoration produces:

Life.

Growth.

People.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God breathes life into Zion, barrenness does not get the final word.

XXXIII. SHALL I BRING TO BIRTH AND NOT DELIVER?

Isaiah 66:9 — God Completes What He Begins

“‘Shall I bring to the point of birth and not deliver?’ says the Lord. ‘Shall I, who cause delivery, shut the womb?’ says your God.”

God asks two:

Rhetorical questions.

Would He bring the process to:

Completion's edge—

and then abandon it?

No.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:3

A time of crisis is compared to children reaching the point of birth when there is no strength to deliver.

Hosea 13:13

Ephraim is pictured as foolishly remaining in the birth canal, resisting the moment of necessary deliverance.

Galatians 4:19

Paul uses childbirth imagery to describe spiritual formation until Christ is formed in believers.

Spiritual Principle

God finishes:

His purposes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who brings His promise to the point of birth does not suddenly forget how to deliver it.

XXXIV. GOD COMPLETES

What He begins:

He is able to finish.

Spiritual Principle

Divine purpose is not:

Half-hearted.

XXXV. REJOICING WITH JERUSALEM

Isaiah 66:10 — Mourning Turned to Joy

“Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice greatly with her, all you who mourn over her.”

Those who once:

Mourned.

Will:

Rejoice.

The city associated with:

Grief.

Becomes associated with:

Gladness.

Cross References

Galatians 4:26

Paul speaks of the Jerusalem above as free and as the mother of God's people.

Psalm 122:6

God's people are commanded to pray for Jerusalem's peace.

Romans 12:15

Believers are instructed to rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn.

Spiritual Principle

God can transform:

Shared mourning.

Into:

Shared joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Those who faithfully mourned over Zion's ruins will not be excluded from rejoicing over Zion's restoration.

XXXVI. LOVE FOR JERUSALEM

The people are emotionally connected with:

God's purposes.

Spiritual Principle

Love for God's work includes:

Joy.

And:

Sorrow.

XXXVII. COMFORTING ABUNDANCE

Isaiah 66:11 — Satisfied and Delighted

“For you will nurse and be satisfied at her comforting breast; you will drink deeply and delight in her overflowing abundance.”

The imagery is:

Nurturing.

Comforting.

Abundant.

Restoration is not pictured as:

Bare survival.

But:

Deep satisfaction.

Cross References

1 Peter 2:2

Believers are encouraged to desire pure spiritual nourishment so they may grow.

Isaiah 60:16

Isaiah previously pictured Zion receiving abundance from the nations.

Luke 11:27

A woman uses maternal imagery regarding blessing associated with Jesus' mother.

Spiritual Principle

God's restoration includes:

Nourishment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not restore His people merely enough to keep them alive; He pictures them drinking deeply from His abundant comfort.

XXXVIII. SATISFIED

God's provision answers:

Need.

Spiritual Principle

God is able to:

Satisfy.

XXXIX. PEACE LIKE A RIVER

Isaiah 66:12 — Carried and Comforted

“For this is what the Lord says: ‘I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of nations like a flooding stream. You will nurse and be carried on her arm and bounced on her knees.’”

Peace comes:

Like a river.

Not:

A drop.

Not:

A trickle.

A river.

God's restored people are pictured as:

Children.

Carried.

Held.

Cared for.

Cross References

Isaiah 48:18

God says that obedience would have brought peace flowing like a river.

John 14:27

Jesus promises His disciples a peace unlike the fragile peace offered by the world.

Psalm 131:2

The psalmist pictures his soul quiet and content like a child resting peacefully with its mother.

Spiritual Principle

God's peace can become:

Abundant.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who once judged Jerusalem promises to extend peace to her like a river.

XL. PEACE LIKE A RIVER

Peace moves:

Continuously.

Abundantly.

Spiritual Principle

God's peace is not:

Scarce.

XLI. CARRIED ON HER ARM

The picture is:

Tender.

Secure.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's restoration includes moments when His people are not merely told to walk—they are pictured as being carried.

XLII. AS A MOTHER COMFORTS

Isaiah 66:13 — Divine Comfort

“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; and you will be comforted in Jerusalem.”

God compares His own comfort with:

A mother's tenderness.

This does not redefine:

God's identity.

It reveals:

The tenderness of His care.

Cross References

2 Corinthians 1:4

God comforts His people in their troubles so they may become comforters to others.

John 14:18

Jesus promises not to leave His disciples abandoned or orphaned.

Matthew 5:4

Jesus promises comfort to those who mourn.

Spiritual Principle

God's strength does not eliminate:

Tenderness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who comes with fire against His enemies can still comfort His children with the tenderness of a mother.

XLIII. “SO WILL I COMFORT YOU”

God personally claims the role of:

Comforter.

Spiritual Principle

Divine comfort is:

Personal.

XLIV. HEARTS REJOICE

Isaiah 66:14 — The Hand of the Lord Known

“When you see this, your heart will rejoice, and your bones will flourish like new grass. The hand of the Lord will be known to His servants, but His fury will be against His enemies.”

Two groups appear again:

Servants.

Enemies.

The servants experience:

Joy.

Renewal.

Life.

The enemies experience:

Fury.

Cross References

Proverbs 3:8

Trusting and fearing the Lord is described as bringing healing and strength.

Isaiah 58:11

God promises to satisfy and strengthen His people so they become like a watered garden.

Luke 24:32

The disciples describe their hearts burning within them as Christ opened Scripture to them.

Spiritual Principle

God's hand means:

Blessing to servants.

Judgment to enemies.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The same hand of God can be recognized as comfort by His servants and judgment by His enemies.

XLV. BONES FLOURISH LIKE GRASS

The image represents:

Renewal.

Strength.

Life.

Spiritual Principle

God can revive:

What seemed exhausted.

XLVI. THE HAND OF THE LORD

God's activity becomes:

Visible.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God moves, His servants eventually recognize that the change was more than circumstance—it was His hand.

XLVII. FINAL JUDGMENT

Isaiah 66:15 — The Lord Comes with Fire

“For behold, the Lord will come with fire, and His chariots like a whirlwind, to bring down His anger with fury and His rebuke with flames of fire.”

The imagery becomes:

Terrifying.

Fire.

Whirlwind.

Chariots.

Fury.

Rebuke.

God's judgment is:

Active.

Final.

Powerful.

Cross References

2 Thessalonians 1:8

The Lord Jesus is revealed in flaming fire, bringing righteous judgment upon persistent rebellion.

Psalm 50:3

God comes and does not remain silent; consuming fire and storm surround Him.

Nahum 1:3

The Lord is slow to anger but great in power, and He does not leave guilt unpunished.

Spiritual Principle

God's patience does not eliminate:

Final judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who delays judgment should never be mistaken for a God who has abandoned justice.

XLVIII. FIRE

Fire represents:

Judgment.

Holiness.

Purification.

Spiritual Principle

Sin cannot permanently withstand:

God's holiness.

XLIX. CHARIOTS LIKE A WHIRLWIND

The image communicates:

Speed.

Power.

Overwhelming force.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God's appointed moment of judgment arrives, human resistance cannot slow the whirlwind.

L. JUDGMENT ON ALL FLESH

Isaiah 66:16 — Fire and Sword

“For with fire and with His sword the Lord will execute judgment on all flesh; and the slain of the Lord will be many.”

Judgment extends:

Broadly.

No human category grants:

Automatic exemption.

Cross References

Jeremiah 25:31

The Lord brings judgment against the nations and holds humanity accountable for wickedness.

Ezekiel 38:22

God's judgment is portrayed through overwhelming acts that demonstrate His holiness and authority.

Zephaniah 1:18

Neither wealth nor human resources can protect people from the day of God's righteous judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Every person remains:

Accountable to God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

All flesh may differ in language, nation, wealth, and status, but all flesh remains accountable to the same Lord.

LI. FALSE PURIFICATION

Isaiah 66:17 — Religious Abomination Ends

“Those who consecrate and purify themselves to enter the gardens, following one in the midst, who eat swine's flesh, abominable things, and mice, will come to an end together,” declares the Lord.

They practiced:

Self-consecration.

Self-purification.

Religious ceremonies.

But their worship remained:

Idolatrous.

Disobedient.

Abominable.

Cross References

2 Kings 21:5

Manasseh built altars to heavenly powers in the courts associated with the Lord's temple.

Ezekiel 8:10

Ezekiel sees detestable images and creatures connected with secret idolatrous practices.

1 Kings 14:23

Judah built forbidden places of worship and engaged in idolatrous practices contrary to God's covenant.

Spiritual Principle

Self-made holiness is not:

God's holiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot purify yourself through a religious system that God Himself calls unclean.

LII. THE GARDENS

Again gardens represent:

False worship.

Spiritual Principle

Location does not sanctify:

Rebellion.

LIII. THEY WILL COME TO AN END TOGETHER

Different expressions of rebellion share:

The same final accountability.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

False religion may have many forms, but every form that rejects God's truth ultimately answers to the same Judge.

LIV. THE GATHERING OF THE NATIONS

Isaiah 66:18 — All Nations See His Glory

“For I know their works and their thoughts; the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues, and they will come and see My glory.”

God knows:

Works.

Thoughts.

Actions.

Motives.

Then the vision becomes:

Global.

All nations.

All languages.

Gathered to:

See His glory.

Cross References

Revelation 7:9

John sees an innumerable multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language standing before God.

Matthew 25:32

Jesus describes all nations being gathered before Him for judgment.

Revelation 21:24

The nations walk by the light associated with the glory of the new creation.

Spiritual Principle

God's purposes are:

Global.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah begins with one nation but ends with all nations coming to see the glory of God.

LV. I KNOW THEIR WORKS

God sees:

Actions.

Spiritual Principle

Nothing is:

Hidden.

LVI. I KNOW THEIR THOUGHTS

God sees:

Motives.

Intentions.

Inner reasoning.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

People judge visible behavior; God also knows the thoughts that produced it.

LVII. ALL NATIONS AND TONGUES

God's glory crosses:

Ethnic.

National.

Linguistic.

Boundaries.

Spiritual Principle

God's kingdom is:

Worldwide.

LVIII. THEY WILL SEE MY GLORY

This is the great goal:

God's glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Mission reaches its highest purpose when people who never knew God's fame finally see and proclaim His glory.

LIX. SURVIVORS SENT TO THE NATIONS

Isaiah 66:19 — Declare My Glory

“I will set a sign among them, and I will send survivors to the nations—to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud (archers), to Tubal and Javan, and to the distant islands that have not heard of My fame or seen My glory. They will declare My glory among the nations.”

Those who survive become:

Messengers.

They go to:

Distant peoples.

Unreached places.

People who have not:

Heard.

Seen.

Known.

What do they proclaim?

God's:

Glory.

Cross References

Matthew 24:14

Jesus teaches that the gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the world as a witness to all nations.

Acts 1:8

Christ sends His witnesses outward from Jerusalem to increasingly distant regions and ultimately to the ends of the earth.

Romans 15:21

Paul describes his missionary ambition in terms of bringing the message to those who had not previously heard of Christ.

Spiritual Principle

Those who experience God's deliverance become:

Witnesses.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Survivors are not preserved merely to survive; they are sent to tell people who have never heard of God's glory.

LX. TO DISTANT ISLANDS

The mission goes:

Far.

Spiritual Principle

No place is:

Too remote.

LXI. THEY HAVE NOT HEARD

Ignorance creates:

Mission opportunity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Where God's fame has not been heard, God's people still have work to do.

LXII. THEY WILL DECLARE MY GLORY

The message centers on:

God.

Spiritual Principle

True mission magnifies:

The Lord.

LXIII. THE NATIONS BRING AN OFFERING

Isaiah 66:20 — People Brought to God's Holy Mountain

“And they will bring all your people from all the nations as an offering to the Lord—on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules, and on camels—to My holy mountain Jerusalem,” says the Lord, “just as the Israelites bring their grain offerings in clean vessels to the house of the Lord.”

People themselves are pictured as:

An offering.

The nations participate in:

Gathering.

Return.

Worship.

Cross References

Romans 15:16

Paul describes his ministry among the Gentiles in priestly terms, presenting the Gentiles as an acceptable offering sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Romans 12:1

Believers are called to present their bodies to God as living sacrifices.

1 Peter 2:5

Christians are described as a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.

Spiritual Principle

God desires not merely:

Things.

But:

People.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest offering the nations bring is not silver or gold but people presented to the Lord.

LXIV. CLEAN VESSELS

The offering is connected with:

Holiness.

Spiritual Principle

Worship should honor:

God's holiness.

LXV. PRIESTS AND LEVITES

Isaiah 66:21 — God Expands the Priesthood

“And I will also take some of them to be priests and Levites,” says the Lord.

This is a remarkable statement.

People drawn from the nations become associated with:

Sacred service.

The vision moves beyond:

Old boundaries.

Cross References

1 Peter 2:9

Believers are called a chosen people and royal priesthood who proclaim God's excellencies.

Revelation 5:10

The redeemed are described as a kingdom and priests serving God.

Malachi 3:3

God purifies those who serve Him so that they may present offerings in righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

God's redemptive plan creates:

A worshiping priestly people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's grace not only brings outsiders near; it gives some of those once far away a place of sacred service.

LXVI. THE NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH

Isaiah 66:22 — An Enduring Creation and Enduring People

“For just as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make will endure before Me,” declares the Lord, “so your descendants and your name will endure.”

Isaiah returns to:

The promise of Isaiah 65.

New heavens.

New earth.

But now emphasis falls upon:

Endurance.

They remain.

So will:

God's people.

Their name.

Their future.

Cross References

Revelation 21:1

John sees the promised new heaven and new earth.

2 Peter 3:13

Believers wait for new heavens and a new earth where righteousness dwells.

Isaiah 65:17

God previously promised to create new heavens and a new earth.

Spiritual Principle

God's final restoration is:

Permanent.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God makes new at the end will not need to be replaced again.

LXVII. WILL ENDURE BEFORE ME

The new creation remains:

Before God.

Spiritual Principle

Eternal security rests in:

God's permanence.

LXVIII. YOUR NAME WILL ENDURE

Isaiah has repeatedly emphasized:

Names.

Forsaken.

Hephzibah.

Redeemed.

Another name.

Now:

An enduring name.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's final word over His people is not disappearance but enduring identity.

LXIX. ALL MANKIND WILL WORSHIP

Isaiah 66:23 — Universal Worship

“From one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before Me,” says the Lord.

Isaiah's vision ends in:

Worship.

People come:

Continually.

Universally.

To:

Bow before God.

Cross References

Zechariah 14:16

The nations that remain come to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord Almighty.

Revelation 15:4

All nations are pictured coming before God and worshiping because His righteous acts have been revealed.

Psalm 86:9

All nations God has made will come and worship before Him and glorify His name.

Spiritual Principle

History is moving toward:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The book of Isaiah moves from a rebellious nation refusing God's Word to all mankind bowing before the Lord.

LXX. FROM NEW MOON TO NEW MOON

The imagery suggests:

Continuity.

Regularity.

Ongoing worship.

Spiritual Principle

Worship belongs at the center of:

Life.

LXXI. ALL MANKIND

The scope is:

Universal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's final worshiping community is larger than one tribe, one nation, one language, or one generation.

LXXII. THEY WILL BOW DOWN

Worship includes:

Submission.

Spiritual Principle

True worship recognizes:

God's authority.

LXXIII. THE FINAL WARNING

Isaiah 66:24 — The End of Rebellion

“And they will go out and look on the dead bodies of those who rebelled against Me; for their worm will not die, their fire will not be quenched, and they will be abhorrent to all mankind.”

Isaiah ends with:

A warning.

The final destiny of rebellion is:

Judgment.

The imagery is:

Severe.

Unforgettable.

Jesus later draws upon this language.

Isaiah's final verse refuses to let us imagine:

Everyone receives the same final outcome regardless of response to God.

There is:

Worship.

And:

Rebellion.

Life.

And:

Judgment.

Cross References

Mark 9:44

Jesus uses Isaiah's imagery of the undying worm in His warnings about final judgment.

Mark 9:48

Jesus explicitly echoes Isaiah's language regarding the worm that does not die and fire that is not quenched.

Revelation 14:11

Revelation uses enduring fire and smoke imagery to describe the seriousness and finality of divine judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Rebellion has:

A final consequence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah ends not by allowing us to choose between a God of glory and a God of judgment, but by revealing that the holy God is both.

LXXIV. THEIR WORM WILL NOT DIE

The image emphasizes:

Continuing judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Sin should never be treated:

Lightly.

LXXV. THEIR FIRE WILL NOT BE QUENCHED

Judgment cannot be:

Extinguished by human effort.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A person who repeatedly refuses God's mercy should not assume he will control the terms of God's judgment.

LXXVI. THE BOOK ENDS WITH A CHOICE

Throughout Isaiah, people have been called to:

Trust.

Repent.

Believe.

Return.

Seek.

Listen.

Tremble at God's Word.

The final chapter shows:

Two outcomes.

Spiritual Principle

God's Word demands:

Response.

LXXVII. ISAIAH 66 AS A WORSHIP CHAPTER

Temple.

Sacrifice.

Incense.

Holy mountain.

Priests.

Levites.

All mankind bowing.

Key Truth

Isaiah distinguishes between:

False worship.

And:

True worship.

LXXVIII. ISAIAH 66 AS A HUMILITY CHAPTER

Humble.

Contrite.

Trembling at the Word.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's attention is not captured by spiritual performance but by humble hearts that take Him seriously.

LXXIX. ISAIAH 66 AS A WORD OF GOD CHAPTER

Tremble at My Word.

I called.

I spoke.

They did not listen.

Hear the Word of the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Response to God's Word reveals:

The heart.

LXXX. ISAIAH 66 AS A JUDGMENT CHAPTER

Recompense.

Fury.

Fire.

Sword.

Enemies.

Unquenchable fire.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah's final chapter makes clear that God's holiness requires final accountability.

LXXXI. ISAIAH 66 AS A COMFORT CHAPTER

Rejoice.

Nurse.

Be satisfied.

Peace like a river.

Carried.

Comforted.

Heart rejoices.

Spiritual Principle

God's judgment upon enemies does not erase:

His tenderness toward His people.

LXXXII. ISAIAH 66 AS A MISSION CHAPTER

All nations.

All tongues.

Survivors sent.

Distant islands.

Declare My glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah's vision of God's glory eventually turns survivors into missionaries.

LXXXIII. ISAIAH 66 AS A NEW CREATION CHAPTER

New heavens.

New earth.

Enduring name.

Universal worship.

Spiritual Principle

God's plan moves toward:

Permanent renewal.

LXXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S GREATNESS

Heaven:

Throne.

Earth:

Footstool.

His hand made:

All things.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The universe is not God's house; it is His creation.

LXXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT HUMILITY

God looks toward:

The humble.

The contrite.

Those who tremble at His Word.

Spiritual Principle

Humility places us in:

A teachable position.

LXXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT WORSHIP

Sacrifice without obedience is:

Empty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God would rather have obedient hearts than impressive ceremonies performed by rebellious people.

LXXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S WORD

Some:

Tremble.

Others:

Ignore.

Spiritual Principle

The same Word may produce:

Submission.

Or:

Resistance.

LXXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT PERSECUTION

Faithful people may be:

Hated.

Excluded.

Mocked.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The approval of God can sustain a believer through the rejection of people.

LXXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT DELIVERANCE

Birth can occur:

Suddenly.

Spiritual Principle

God's timing may surprise:

Everyone.

XC. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

He does not bring to:

Birth—

and abandon:

Delivery.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not begin His redemptive purpose only to lose strength before completion.

XCI. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE

Peace like:

A river.

Spiritual Principle

God can provide:

Deep calm.

XCII. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT COMFORT

Like:

A mother.

God comforts:

His people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine comfort is strong enough for judgment and tender enough for tears.

XCIII. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT JUDGMENT

Fire.

Sword.

Whirlwind.

Recompense.

Spiritual Principle

Final judgment is:

Certain.

XCIV. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT THE NATIONS

They are:

Gathered.

They see:

Glory.

They hear:

Proclamation.

They participate in:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God of Israel reveals His glory with a purpose that reaches every nation and language.

XCV. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT MISSION

Survivors become:

Messengers.

Spiritual Principle

Deliverance creates:

Witness.

XCVI. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT PRIESTHOOD

God calls people into:

Sacred service.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace not only rescues people from judgment; it brings them into service.

XCVII. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT ETERNITY

New heavens.

New earth.

Enduring people.

Continual worship.

Final judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Eternity contains:

Finality.

XCVIII. HEAVEN IS MY THRONE

Majesty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not reduce an infinite God to the size of your religious building.

XCIX. EARTH IS MY FOOTSTOOL

Sovereignty.

Spiritual Principle

God rules:

Creation.

C. MY HAND MADE EVERYTHING

Creator.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God cannot be impressed by possessions that came from materials He created.

CI. HUMBLE

Submission.

Spiritual Principle

Humility honors:

God.

CII. CONTRITE

Repentance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A broken heart over sin is more precious to God than polished religion without repentance.

CIII. TREMBLES AT MY WORD

Reverence.

Spiritual Principle

Scripture deserves:

Serious response.

CIV. THEY CHOSE THEIR OWN WAYS

Self-rule.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every false religion eventually becomes a way to preserve self-rule while pretending to honor God.

CV. I CALLED

Grace.

Spiritual Principle

God reaches:

First.

CVI. THEY DID NOT ANSWER

Resistance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Silence toward God's call is itself a response.

CVII. THEY DID NOT LISTEN

Hardness.

Spiritual Principle

Truth ignored becomes:

Accountability.

CVIII. FAITHFUL PEOPLE EXCLUDED

Persecution.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God sees every door closed against someone because that person remained faithful to His name.

CIX. ENEMIES SHAMED

Vindication.

Spiritual Principle

God's verdict becomes:

Final.

CX. NATION BORN SUDDENLY

Power.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not need centuries to accomplish what He appoints for one day.

CXI. SHALL I NOT DELIVER?

Faithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

God finishes:

His purpose.

CXII. REJOICE WITH JERUSALEM

Restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Those who shared the tears of God's people will one day share their joy.

CXIII. PEACE LIKE A RIVER

Abundance.

Spiritual Principle

God supplies:

Peace.

CXIV. CARRIED ON THE ARM

Security.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes restoration is pictured not as running again but as being safely carried.

CXV. MOTHERLY COMFORT

Tenderness.

Spiritual Principle

God comforts:

Personally.

CXVI. HEART REJOICES

Inner renewal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's restoration reaches deeper than circumstances; it reaches the heart.

CXVII. FIRE

Judgment.

Spiritual Principle

God is:

Holy.

CXVIII. WHIRLWIND

Power.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No human defense can stand against the sovereign Judge when His appointed day arrives.

CXIX. SWORD

Justice.

Spiritual Principle

God judges:

Righteously.

CXX. ALL NATIONS

Global purpose.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's final purpose is too large to fit inside one nation's borders.

CXXI. ALL TONGUES

Every language.

Spiritual Principle

God's glory crosses:

Culture.

CXXII. SEE MY GLORY

Revelation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The ultimate missionary goal is not merely that nations know facts about God but that they behold His glory.

CXXIII. SURVIVORS SENT

Mission.

Spiritual Principle

Those delivered become:

Witnesses.

CXXIV. DISTANT ISLANDS

Unreached peoples.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's glory deserves to be declared wherever His fame has not yet been heard.

CXXV. PEOPLE AS OFFERINGS

Consecration.

Spiritual Principle

God desires:

Lives.

CXXVI. PRIESTS AND LEVITES

Service.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The people God gathers become the people God uses.

CXXVII. NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH

Final renewal.

Spiritual Principle

God's future is:

Permanent.

CXXVIII. NAME ENDURES

Identity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God establishes in His final kingdom will not be erased by another exile.

CXXIX. ALL MANKIND WORSHIPS

Universal glory.

Spiritual Principle

History ends at:

God's throne.

CXXX. REBELLION JUDGED

Final separation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The final chapter of Isaiah refuses to remove either half of the truth: eternal worship for the faithful and final judgment for rebellion.

CXXXI. ISAIAH 1 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 1:

God rejects:

Empty sacrifice.

Isaiah 66:

God again rejects:

Empty sacrifice.

Key Truth

The book begins and ends by teaching:

Religion without obedience is unacceptable to God.

CXXXII. ISAIAH 1 AND HUMILITY

Isaiah 1 called the people to:

Repent.

Isaiah 66 identifies the one God honors:

Humble.

Contrite.

Trembling at His Word.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The book of Isaiah begins by confronting pride and ends by honoring humility.

CXXXIII. ISAIAH 6 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 6:

Isaiah sees:

The Lord high and lifted up.

Isaiah 66:

Heaven is:

His throne.

Spiritual Principle

Isaiah begins his ministry with:

A vision of God's holiness.

And ends his prophecy with:

The same majestic God.

CXXXIV. ISAIAH 11 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 11:

The nations seek:

The Messiah.

Isaiah 66:

All nations come to:

See God's glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The global hope introduced earlier in Isaiah reaches its great conclusion in the gathering of the nations.

CXXXV. ISAIAH 40 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 40:

Comfort My people.

Isaiah 66:

As a mother comforts her child:

I will comfort you.

Key Truth

The comfort promised in Isaiah 40 continues to:

The final chapter.

CXXXVI. ISAIAH 53 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 53 reveals:

The suffering Servant.

Isaiah 66 reveals:

The worldwide people gathered to worship.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant's redemptive work opens toward:

Worldwide worship.

CXXXVII. ISAIAH 60 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 60:

Nations come to:

Zion's light.

Isaiah 66:

All nations come to:

See God's glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah's vision consistently moves from restored Zion toward the nations beholding the glory of God.

CXXXVIII. ISAIAH 62 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 62:

God's people receive:

New identity.

Isaiah 66:

Their name:

Endures.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption creates:

Permanent belonging.

CXXXIX. ISAIAH 65 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 65:

New heavens.

New earth.

Isaiah 66:

New heavens.

New earth.

Enduring before:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah closes by repeating the promise that renewal is not temporary—it endures before the Lord.

CXL. TWELVE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 66

1. **Heavenly Throne → Humble Heart**
2. **Temple Building → Trembling at God's Word**
3. **Religious Ritual → True Obedience**
4. **Self-Chosen Ways → God's Judgment**
5. **Human Exclusion → Divine Vindication**
6. **Mourning → Rejoicing**
7. **Labor Pain → Sudden Birth**
8. **Trouble → Comfort**
9. **Enemies → Servants**
10. **Judgment by Fire → Peace Like a River**
11. **Distant Nations → Gathered Worshipers**
12. **Rebellion → Eternal Worship**

Key Truth

Isaiah 66 separates:

True worship from false worship.

Humility from pride.

Servants from enemies.

Worship from rebellion.

Comfort from judgment.

And shows that God's final word includes both:

Glory.

And:

Justice.

CXLI. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 66

1. God Cannot Be Contained

Principle:

Heaven is His throne and earth His footstool.

2. God Honors the Humble

Principle:

He looks toward the contrite person who trembles at His Word.

3. Obedience Matters More Than Ritual

Principle:

Sacrifice without surrender is empty.

4. God's Call Must Be Answered

Principle:

Repeatedly ignoring His voice leads to judgment.

5. God Vindicates the Faithful

Principle:

Those rejected for His name will not remain ashamed.

6. God Can Deliver Suddenly

Principle:

A nation can be born in a moment when God acts.

7. God Completes What He Begins

Principle:

He does not bring to birth and fail to deliver.

8. God Comforts Tenderly

Principle:

His comfort is compared with a mother's care.

9. Final Judgment Is Certain

Principle:

Fire and sword testify to God's holy justice.

10. God's Glory Reaches All Nations

Principle:

His mission extends to peoples who have never heard His fame.

11. The New Creation Will Endure

Principle:

The new heavens and earth will remain before Him.

12. History Ends in Worship and Judgment

Principle:

All mankind bows before God, while rebellion receives its final consequence.

CXLII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What does God call heaven?

His throne.

Question 2

What does He call the earth?

His footstool.

Question 3

Can a human building contain God?

No. Heaven itself cannot contain the fullness of His greatness.

Question 4

Who made all things?

The Lord.

Question 5

To whom does God look with favor?

The humble and contrite person who trembles at His Word.

Question 6

What kind of worship does God reject?

Religious ritual performed by people who deliberately choose rebellion.

Question 7

What had the people chosen?

Their own ways and things that displeased God.

Question 8

What happened when God called?

They did not answer.

Question 9

What happened when God spoke?

They did not listen.

Question 10

Who receives encouragement in verse 5?

Those who tremble at God's Word.

Question 11

What were some faithful people experiencing?

Hatred, exclusion, and mockery because of God's name.

Question 12

What would happen to those who mocked them?

They would be put to shame.

Question 13

What voice comes from the temple?

The voice of the Lord rendering recompense to His enemies.

Question 14

What unusual birth imagery appears in verse 7?

Zion gives birth before labor pains arrive.

Question 15

What astonishing question is asked in verse 8?

Whether a land can be born in one day or a nation delivered in a moment.

Question 16

Will God bring His purpose to the point of birth and fail to deliver?

No.

Question 17

Who is called to rejoice with Jerusalem?

All who love her and those who mourned over her.

Question 18

What does God promise to extend like a river?

Peace.

Question 19

How does God describe His comfort?

Like a mother comforting her child.

Question 20

What happens to the hearts of God's people?

They rejoice.

Question 21

How are their bones described?

Flourishing like new grass.

Question 22

To whom is God's hand revealed?

His servants.

Question 23

Against whom is His fury directed?

His enemies.

Question 24

How does the Lord come in judgment?

With fire and chariots like a whirlwind.

Question 25

What instruments of judgment are mentioned?

Fire and sword.

Question 26

What happens to those practicing idolatrous purification?

They come to an end together.

Question 27

What does God know about humanity?

Their works and their thoughts.

Question 28

Whom will God gather?

All nations and tongues.

Question 29

What will they see?

God's glory.

Question 30

Where will survivors be sent?

To distant nations and lands that have not heard God's fame or seen His glory.

Question 31

What will they declare?

God's glory among the nations.

Question 32

What will the nations bring?

God's people as an offering to the Lord.

Question 33

What roles will God give to some of those gathered?

Priests and Levites.

Question 34

What does God promise to make?

New heavens and a new earth.

Question 35

How long will the new creation endure?

It will endure before God.

Question 36

What else will endure?

The descendants and name of God's people.

Question 37

Who will come to worship God?

All mankind.

Question 38

What happens to those who rebel against God?

They face final judgment.

Question 39

What language describes that judgment?

Their worm does not die and their fire is not quenched.

Question 40

What is the central message of Isaiah 66?

The sovereign Lord honors the humble who tremble at His Word, rejects empty religion, comforts and vindicates His servants, judges persistent rebellion, gathers the nations to behold and proclaim His glory, and establishes an enduring new creation filled with worship while rebellion receives final judgment.

CXLIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 66 asks several serious questions.

Do I truly understand:

Who God is?

Do I sometimes treat God as though He exists merely inside:

My church?

My tradition?

My denomination?

My theological system?

My preferences?

Or do I remember:

Heaven is His throne.

Earth is His footstool.

Do I understand that God does not need:

Anything I possess?

Do I approach worship trying to:

Impress God?

Or:

Honor God?

Would God describe me as:

Humble?

Am I:

Contrite?

When I sin, am I:

Broken over it?

Or:

Defensive?

Do I tremble at:

God's Word?

When Scripture confronts:

My opinion—

which one changes?

When Scripture challenges:

My lifestyle—

do I obey?

When Scripture exposes:

My sin—

do I repent?

Do I treat God's Word like:

Authority?

Or:

Advice?

Am I practicing:

Religion without obedience?

Could I be:

Singing.

Giving.

Serving.

Attending.

Teaching.

Praying.

While still choosing:

My own ways?

Have I kept:

Religious ritual—

while resisting:

God's rule?

When God calls:

Do I answer?

When God speaks:

Do I listen?

Is there something God has told me repeatedly that I continue to:

Ignore?

Have I trained my heart to:

Delay obedience?

Have I ever been:

Rejected.

Mocked.

Excluded.

Because I tried to remain faithful to:

God's Word?

If so, do I remember:

God sees?

Do I believe:

His verdict matters more?

Am I waiting for God to act in an area that seems:

Impossible?

Could God produce:

Sudden change?

Do I believe He can bring a promise to:

Birth?

Do I believe He finishes:

What He begins?

Am I mourning over:

Something broken?

Can I believe mourning may become:

Rejoicing?

Do I know God's:

Comfort?

Can I receive the picture:

“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you”?

Am I trying to be:

Strong enough—

when God is willing to:

Carry me?

Do I need peace:

Like a river?

Am I allowing:

Fear.

Anxiety.

Bitterness.

Uncertainty.

To dominate my heart?

Do I remember:

God's peace is deeper than circumstance?

Do I take final judgment:

Seriously?

Do I treat sin as though:

It does not matter?

Have I mistaken God's patience for:

Approval?

Do I understand that God knows:

My works?

And:

My thoughts?

What would God find:

Inside?

Do I care about:

The nations?

Do I care about people who have:

Never heard?

Do I see myself as:

A witness?

Has God delivered me merely so I can:

Live comfortably?

Or has He preserved me so I can:

Declare His glory?

Do I believe the gospel belongs:

Beyond my own community?

Am I praying for:

People.

Languages.

Nations.

Who have not heard:

God's fame?

Do I understand that worship is where:

History is heading?

Am I living as a:

Worshiper now?

Would God describe my worship as:

True?

Humble?

Obedient?

Do I live with:

Eternity in view?

Do I believe:

The new heavens and new earth will endure?

And finally:

Which side of Isaiah 66 describes me?

Humble?

Or:

Proud?

Trembling at His Word?

Or:

Ignoring His voice?

Servant?

Or:

Enemy?

Worshiper?

Or:

Rebel?

CXLIV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Looks Lower Than We Expect”

God's throne is:

Heaven.

His footstool:

Earth.

Yet where does He look?

Toward:

The humble.

The contrite.

The person trembling at:

His Word.

Principle:

The highest God turns His attention toward the lowest heart.

CXLV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“A Beautiful Temple Cannot Impress the God Who Made the Universe”

Heaven:

His throne.

Earth:

His footstool.

Everything:

Made by His hand.

Principle:

What impresses God is not the size of our building but the humility of our heart.

CXLVI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Obedience Is Better Than Impressive Religion”

They sacrificed.

Brought offerings.

Burned incense.

Yet:

Chose their own ways.

Principle:

God will never allow ritual to become a substitute for surrender.

CXLVII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Trembling at God's Word Means Taking God Seriously”

God honors the one who:

Trembles.

Principle:

The measure of our respect for Scripture is not how often we quote it but how willingly we obey it.

CXLVIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Human Rejection Does Not Cancel Divine Acceptance”

They were:

Hated.

Excluded.

Mocked.

But God addressed them as:

Those who tremble at His Word.

Principle:

You can be rejected in the room and still accepted at the throne.

CXLIX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Can Do in a Day What Humans Could Not Accomplish in Generations”

Can a nation be born:

In a day?

God says:

Watch.

Principle:

Never measure divine possibility by human speed.

CL. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Does Not Bring His Purpose to Birth and Then Abandon It”

The Lord asks:

“Shall I bring to the point of birth and not deliver?”

Principle:

What God truly begins according to His purpose, He has power to complete.

CLI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Peace Can Flow Where Tears Once Fell”

Jerusalem mourned.

Then God says:

Peace like:

A river.

Principle:

God can send rivers of peace through places previously soaked with tears.

CLII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God's Strength Includes Tenderness”

Fire against:

Enemies.

Comfort like:

A mother.

Principle:

God's tenderness does not weaken His holiness, and His holiness does not eliminate His tenderness.

CLIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Survivors Become Witnesses”

God preserves:

Survivors.

Then sends:

Them.

Principle:

Sometimes the reason God brought you through something is so that your survival can become someone else's testimony of His glory.

CLIV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Nations Are Not an Afterthought”

All nations.

All tongues.

Distant islands.

People who never heard.

Principle:

The mission of God has always been larger than one people, one language, or one border.

CLV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Book Ends Where History Is Heading: Worship”

All mankind:

Bows.

Principle:

Every life should be lived now in light of the worship that will one day surround the throne of God.

CLVI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Isaiah's Final Word Is Both Glory and Judgment”

New heavens.

New earth.

Worship.

And:

Unquenchable judgment.

Principle:

Biblical hope is glorious precisely because evil is not ignored forever.

CLVII. ISAIAH 66 AS A WHOLE

Isaiah 66 begins with:

A throne.

“Heaven is My throne.”

Immediately we are reminded:

God is:

Great.

Sovereign.

Uncontainable.

But then something surprising happens.

The God whose throne is:

Heaven—

looks toward:

The humble.

The contrite.

The one trembling at:

His Word.

From there the chapter contrasts:

True worship.

And:

False worship.

People can:

Sacrifice.

Offer.

Burn incense.

And still:

Choose their own ways.

Then God says:

When I called:

You did not answer.

When I spoke:

You did not listen.

But to the faithful He says:

Hear My Word.

You may be:

Hated.

Excluded.

Mocked.

But:

Your enemies will be ashamed.

Then suddenly:

Birth.

A nation.

Deliverance.

God reminds His people:

I do not bring to the point of birth and fail to deliver.

Then:

Jerusalem rejoices.

Those who mourned:

Rejoice.

Peace flows:

Like a river.

God's people are:

Carried.

Comforted.

Their hearts:

Rejoice.

Then:

Fire.

Judgment.

Sword.

False worship ends.

Then the horizon widens:

All nations.

All languages.

Distant islands.

People who have never heard:

God's fame.

Survivors go.

They declare:

His glory.

People are gathered.

Priests arise.

Worship expands.

Then:

New heavens.

New earth.

Enduring people.

Enduring name.

Universal worship.

And finally:

The solemn reminder that rebellion receives:

Final judgment.

The chapter therefore moves:

From:

Heavenly throne.

To:

Humble heart.

From:

Temple ritual.

To:

True obedience.

From:

Human rejection.

To:

Divine vindication.

From:

Labor pain.

To:

Sudden birth.

From:

Mourning.

To:

Rejoicing.

From:

Fear.

To:

Peace.

From:

Tears.

To:

Comfort.

From:

Enemies.

To:

Judgment.

From:

One nation.

To:

All nations.

From:

Local worship.

To:

Universal worship.

From:

Old creation.

To:

New heavens and new earth.

And from:

Rebellion.

To:

Final separation.

Key Truth

Isaiah 66 closes the prophecy by revealing the sovereign God who cannot be contained by heaven or earth, yet looks with favor upon the humble; the holy God who rejects empty religion, comforts His faithful people, judges His enemies, gathers every nation to see His glory, and brings history into an enduring new creation filled with worship.

CLVIII. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 66

1. God Declares His Greatness

Heaven:

His throne.

Earth:

His footstool.

2. God Identifies the Worshiper He Honors

Humble.

Contrite.

Trembling at His Word.

3. God Rejects Empty Religion

Ritual without obedience becomes:

Offensive.

4. God Vindicates the Faithful

Those excluded for His name will:

Rejoice.

5. God Brings Sudden Deliverance

Zion gives birth:

Suddenly.

6. God Comforts Jerusalem

Peace flows:

Like a river.

Comfort comes:

Like a mother's care.

7. God Judges His Enemies

Fire.

Whirlwind.

Sword.

8. God Gathers the Nations

Every nation and language comes to:

See His glory.

9. God Sends Witnesses

Survivors declare His glory to:

Unreached peoples.

10. God Establishes Eternal Worship

New heavens.

New earth.

All mankind bowing.

Final judgment upon rebellion.

Key Truth

Isaiah 66 moves from God's heavenly throne to universal worship, showing that the God who created everything will finally gather, judge, comfort, redeem, and establish His glory throughout the new creation.

CLIX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah ends with:

God.

That is fitting.

The book began with:

A rebellious people.

It ends with:

The sovereign Lord.

God says:

“Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool.”

Think about that.

The earth contains:

Mountains.

Oceans.

Nations.

Cities.

Billions of people.

And God calls it:

His footstool.

How large is your:

Problem?

How strong is your:

Enemy?

How complicated is your:

Situation?

How impossible is your:

Need?

Put it beside:

The God whose throne is heaven.

Then God asks:

What house could you build:

For Me?

People often think God is impressed by:

Buildings.

Money.

Attendance.

Programs.

Religious achievement.

But God says:

I made:

Everything.

Then He tells us what actually catches:

His attention.

“This is the one I will look to.”

Who?

The celebrity?

No.

The wealthy?

No.

The powerful?

No.

The religious performer?

No.

The one who is:

Humble.

Contrite.

And:

Trembles at My Word.

That raises the question:

Do I tremble at:

God's Word?

When Scripture says:

Forgive—

do I forgive?

When Scripture says:

Repent—

do I repent?

When Scripture says:

Flee sin—

do I flee?

When Scripture says:

Love—

do I love?

When Scripture corrects:

My opinion—

do I change my opinion?

Or do I try to:

Change Scripture?

God is looking for people who take:

His Word seriously.

Then Isaiah confronts:

Empty religion.

People were still:

Sacrificing.

Giving.

Burning incense.

But God rejected:

Their worship.

Why?

Because they had chosen:

Their own ways.

That is a frightening possibility.

You can be:

Religious.

And rebellious.

Active in church.

And disobedient.

Singing:

And resisting God.

Giving:

And refusing to repent.

Teaching:

And refusing to obey.

God says:

When I called:

You did not answer.

When I spoke:

You did not listen.

Do not let that describe:

You.

If God calls:

Answer.

If God speaks:

Listen.

If His Word confronts:

Obey.

Then God speaks to people who:

Tremble at His Word.

They have been:

Rejected.

Excluded.

Mocked.

Perhaps you have experienced:

Something similar.

Maybe faithfulness cost you:

Friendships.

Acceptance.

Approval.

God says:

I see.

Human rejection does not mean:

Divine rejection.

Then comes:

Sudden birth.

“Can a nation be born in one day?”

What a reminder.

God may work:

Slowly.

Quietly.

Invisible to you.

Then suddenly:

Everything changes.

Never assume:

Nothing is happening.

Because you cannot yet:

See the birth.

Then God says:

“Shall I bring to the point of birth and not deliver?”

Maybe something in your life feels:

Unfinished.

You have prayed.

Waited.

Hoped.

Trusted.

And wondered:

God—

Will You finish this?

Isaiah reminds us:

God does not lose:

Power halfway through.

Then comes one of Scripture's tenderest promises:

“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.”

Maybe today you do not need:

A theological argument.

Maybe you need:

Comfort.

God knows:

How to comfort.

Maybe you are:

Grieving.

Lonely.

Afraid.

Exhausted.

Broken.

God says:

I will:

Comfort you.

Then He says:

“I will extend peace to her like a river.”

Not:

A cup.

A river.

Maybe your heart is:

Restless.

Anxious.

Troubled.

Ask for:

Peace like a river.

But Isaiah refuses to end with comfort alone.

He reminds us:

Judgment is real.

The Lord comes with:

Fire.

This matters.

God's mercy does not mean:

Sin does not matter.

God's patience does not mean:

Judgment is imaginary.

God's love does not mean:

Rebellion has no consequences.

Then suddenly the chapter expands.

God says:

All nations.

All tongues.

They will see:

My glory.

Survivors go:

Out.

Why?

To tell people who have never:

Heard.

That means if God has:

Saved you—

You have something to:

Tell.

If He has:

Delivered you—

You have something to:

Tell.

If He has:

Forgiven you—

You have something to:

Tell.

If He has:

Carried you—

You have something to:

Tell.

Survivors become:

Witnesses.

Then people from the nations become:

Offerings.

Servants.

Priests.

Worshipers.

God's family expands far beyond:

One nation.

One language.

One location.

Then comes the great promise:

New heavens.

New earth.

They will:

Endure.

No more:

Exile.

No more:

Destruction of the final creation.

No more:

Temporary restoration.

God's new creation:

Endures.

Then the book of Isaiah reaches its final vision of:

Worship.

“All mankind will come and bow down before Me.”

Think about Isaiah's entire journey.

Isaiah 1:

Rebellion.

Isaiah 6:

Holy, holy, holy.

Isaiah 7:

Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:

A Child is born.

Isaiah 11:

The righteous Branch.

Isaiah 40:

Comfort My people.

Isaiah 53:

The suffering Servant.

Isaiah 60:

Arise, shine.

Isaiah 61:

The Spirit of the Lord.

Isaiah 62:

A new name.

Isaiah 63:

Mighty to save.

Isaiah 64:

Come down.

Isaiah 65:

New heavens and new earth.

Isaiah 66:

All mankind bows before God.

What a journey.

The book begins with:

A nation that will not listen.

It ends with:

Nations worshiping.

It begins with:

Sin.

It moves through:

Judgment.

Promise.

Messiah.

Suffering.

Redemption.

Restoration.

And ends with:

Glory.

But Isaiah's final verse gives one last:

Warning.

Rebellion still has:

A consequence.

The final choice is:

Worship.

Or:

Rebellion.

Submission.

Or:

Resistance.

Humility.

Or:

Pride.

Trembling at God's Word.

Or:

Ignoring God's voice.

So Isaiah 66 asks:

Am I humble before:

God?

Am I contrite over:

Sin?

Do I tremble at:

His Word?

Am I practicing:

True worship?

Or merely:

Religious ritual?

When God calls:

Do I answer?

When God speaks:

Do I listen?

Can I remain faithful when:

People reject me?

Do I believe God can bring:

Sudden deliverance?

Do I trust Him to finish:

What He begins?

Do I know His:

Comfort?

Do I receive His:

Peace?

Do I take His:

Judgment seriously?

Am I declaring:

His glory?

Do I care about people who have never:

Heard?

Am I living for:

The new creation?

And above everything:

Am I already doing what all mankind will eventually be summoned to do?

Bow before the Lord.

Isaiah began with a people who would not:

Listen.

Let us end Isaiah by becoming people who:

Tremble at His Word.

Who:

Listen.

Who:

Obey.

Who:

Worship.

Who:

Declare His glory.

And who look forward to:

The new heavens.

The new earth.

And the day when:

All mankind will come and bow down before Him.

Final Crawford Bible Study Principle

The final message of Isaiah is that the God whose throne is heaven still looks toward the humble heart, rejects empty religion, comforts His faithful people, judges rebellion, gathers every nation to see His glory, and moves all history toward the enduring new creation where worship belongs forever to Him.

Epilogue

The Holy One Still Reigns

The book of Isaiah begins with rebellion and ends with worship.

It opens with a nation that has turned away from God.

It closes with a vision of the nations coming before Him.

Between those two points stretches one of the greatest prophetic revelations in all of Scripture.

We have seen judgment.

We have seen mercy.

We have seen kings rise and fall.

We have seen nations shaken.

We have seen idols exposed as powerless.

We have seen human pride brought low.

We have seen the faithful remnant preserved.

We have seen the coming Servant.

We have seen the suffering Messiah.

We have seen the promise of restoration.

And we have seen the hope of a new heavens and a new earth.

Through it all, one truth remains unchanged:

The Holy One of Israel reigns.

That truth is the heartbeat of Isaiah.

The world may appear unstable.

Governments may change.

Empires may collapse.

Human leaders may boast.

False religions may flourish.

Sin may seem to advance.

God’s people may become discouraged.

Yet none of these things alter the throne of God.

Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up.

That throne was not threatened by Assyria.

It was not threatened by Babylon.

It was not threatened by Egypt.

It was not threatened by rebellious Judah.

And it is not threatened by anything in our world today.

God remains sovereign.

He remains holy.

He remains righteous.

He remains faithful.

He remains merciful.

He remains worthy of worship.

The central question of Isaiah is therefore not whether God will accomplish His purposes.

He will.

The question is whether we will trust Him.

That was the struggle of Judah.

Again and again, the people were tempted to trust alliances, armies, wealth, political strategy, idols, and human wisdom.

Again and again, God called them back to Himself.

That same temptation remains.

Human beings still look for security in visible things.

Money.

Government.

Technology.

Power.

Influence.

Institutions.

Relationships.

Yet Isaiah continually reminds us that everything created is temporary.

Only God is eternal.

Human strength fails.

God does not.

Nations change.

God does not.

People break promises.

God does not.

The grass withers.

The flower fades.

But the Word of our God stands forever.

That truth alone gives the believer reason for confidence.

Isaiah also teaches us that God’s holiness must never be separated from His grace.

When Isaiah saw the Lord in the temple, he was overwhelmed by his own sin.

“Woe is me.”

That cry should belong to every person who truly understands the holiness of God.

We cannot stand before Him on the basis of our own goodness.

We cannot cleanse ourselves.

We cannot excuse our sin.

We cannot hide behind religious activity.

But Isaiah’s vision did not end with condemnation.

The coal touched his lips.

His guilt was taken away.

His sin was forgiven.

That moment points toward a greater cleansing.

The book of Isaiah eventually leads us to the Servant.

The One who would suffer.

The One who would be rejected.

The One who would bear our griefs.

The One who would carry our sorrows.

The One who would be wounded for our transgressions.

The One upon whom the Lord would lay the iniquity of us all.

Jesus Christ stands at the center of Isaiah’s hope.

He is the promised Child.

He is Immanuel.

He is the Branch.

He is the Servant.

He is the Light to the nations.

He is the suffering Savior.

He is the coming King.

Through Him, the holiness of God and the grace of God meet.

At the cross, sin is judged.

At the cross, mercy is offered.

At the cross, justice is satisfied.

At the cross, salvation is made possible.

Isaiah looked forward to that day.

We look back upon it.

Yet there are still promises in Isaiah that point us forward.

The story is not finished.

Isaiah speaks of a coming kingdom.

He speaks of righteousness filling the earth.

He speaks of peace.

He speaks of nations coming to the Lord.

He speaks of the restoration of creation.

He speaks of a day when the wolf and the lamb dwell together.

He speaks of a time when the knowledge of the Lord fills the earth.

He speaks of new heavens and a new earth.

Christian hope is therefore not merely hope for a better life now.

It is hope rooted in the future work of God.

History is going somewhere.

God has not abandoned His creation.

He has not surrendered the world to evil.

He has not forgotten His promises.

The King is coming.

The kingdom will come.

Justice will come.

Restoration will come.

Worship will fill the earth.

And the purposes of God will stand.

That future hope should shape the way we live now.

If God is holy, we should pursue holiness.

If God is faithful, we should trust Him.

If God is just, we should live righteously.

If God is merciful, we should show mercy.

If Christ is the Savior, we should proclaim Him.

If the kingdom is coming, we should live as citizens of that kingdom today.

Isaiah was not given his vision merely so that he could admire it.

He was sent.

“Whom shall I send?”

That question still confronts God’s people.

There is still truth to proclaim.

There are still people who need hope.

There are still broken hearts.

There are still captives.

There are still people walking in darkness.

There are still communities that need the light of God’s Word.

There are still generations that need to hear of the Holy One of Israel.

The proper response to revelation is obedience.

The proper response to grace is service.

The proper response to truth is faithfulness.

Isaiah said:

“Here am I. Send me.”

May that become our response as well.

As this commentary comes to a close, my prayer is not simply that you now know more about Isaiah.

I pray that you know God more deeply.

I pray that you have seen His holiness more clearly.

I pray that you have recognized the seriousness of sin.

I pray that you have marveled at the grace of God.

I pray that your confidence in Scripture has grown.

I pray that your understanding of Jesus Christ has deepened.

I pray that the prophetic promises of Isaiah have strengthened your hope.

And I pray that you will live with your eyes fixed upon the throne.

The world may shake.

The church may face opposition.

Nations may rise and fall.

Our own lives may pass through seasons of uncertainty.

But the final message of Isaiah remains secure.

God is still on the throne.

His Word still stands.

His promises are still true.

His salvation is still available.

His kingdom is still coming.

And His glory will fill the earth.

So let the final words of this journey not be words of fear, but of worship.

Let them not be words of despair, but of hope.

Let them not be centered upon man, but upon God.

For from the first page of Isaiah to the last, one name towers above them all:

The Holy One of Israel.

And He still reigns.

Note from the Author

Writing a commentary on the book of Isaiah is both a privilege and a humbling responsibility.

Isaiah is not a book that can be approached casually.

Its pages are filled with the holiness of God, the seriousness of sin, the certainty of judgment, the promise of redemption, and the glory of the coming Messiah.

Again and again, Isaiah brings the reader face to face with the greatness of God.

He is the Creator.

He is the King.

He is the Judge.

He is the Redeemer.

He is the Shepherd.

He is the Savior.

He is the Holy One of Israel.

As I worked through these chapters verse by verse, I was reminded repeatedly that Isaiah is not merely a book of prophecy. It is a book of revelation.

It reveals the character of God.

It reveals the condition of man.

It reveals the danger of pride.

It reveals the emptiness of idolatry.

It reveals the consequences of rebellion.

It reveals the faithfulness of God to His promises.

And most importantly, it reveals the coming of Jesus Christ with remarkable clarity.

Isaiah looked across the centuries and spoke of the virgin-born Son.

He spoke of the Child who would rule.

He spoke of the Branch from Jesse.

He spoke of the Servant who would bring light to the nations.

He spoke of the One who would be despised and rejected.

He spoke of the One who would be wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities.

He spoke of the One who would bear the sins of many.

Those prophecies find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

That truth is one of the great reasons Isaiah remains so important for believers today.

My purpose in writing *The Holy One of Israel* was not simply to produce another academic commentary.

My desire was to create a resource that could be used by pastors, teachers, Bible students, Sunday school classes, small groups, and anyone who wants to understand Scripture more deeply.

I have tried to explain the text clearly while still respecting the depth and richness of the prophecy.

Where historical background is important, I have included it.

Where a passage points toward Christ, I have emphasized it.

Where prophecy reaches beyond Isaiah’s immediate generation, I have attempted to show its broader significance.

Where practical truth speaks directly to the believer today, I have tried to bring that application forward.

But throughout this commentary, one theme must remain above all others:

God is holy.

That truth changes the way we understand everything else.

It changes how we view sin.

It changes how we view worship.

It changes how we view salvation.

It changes how we view the cross.

It changes how we view the future.

It changes how we view our own lives.

Isaiah's vision in the sixth chapter remains one of the most powerful scenes in all of Scripture.

The seraphim cried:

"Holy, holy, holy."

Isaiah responded:

"Woe is me."

God provided cleansing.

Then came the call:

"Whom shall I send?"

Isaiah answered:

"Here am I. Send me."

That progression should still mark the life of every believer.

We see God.

We recognize our sin.

We receive His grace.

We respond in obedience.

My prayer is that this commentary will lead you through that same progression.

I pray that you will see the Lord more clearly.

I pray that you will understand His Word more deeply.

I pray that you will trust His promises more confidently.

I pray that you will see Jesus Christ throughout the pages of Isaiah.

I pray that your faith will be strengthened.

And I pray that your heart will be moved to worship.

Thank you for taking this journey through Isaiah with me.

May every chapter remind us that kingdoms rise and fall, generations come and go, and human strength eventually fails.

But the Word of God endures.

The promises of God remain sure.

And the Holy One of Israel still reigns.

Dr. Paul Crawford

A Closing Prayer

“Father, I thank You for every reader who has walked through these pages. For the one who does not yet know You, I pray they would hear Your voice and receive Your Son, Jesus, as Lord and Savior. For the one who already believes, I pray You would set their heart ablaze with urgency—to speak, to share, to love, and to never be silent. May we all live as faithful watchmen, sounding the trumpet until the day You call us home. In Jesus’ mighty name, Amen.”

THE BIBLE WAY TO HEAVEN

1. Admit you are a sinner.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

No one is good enough to go to Heaven on his own merit.

No matter how much good we do, we still come short.

2. Realize the penalty for sin.

"For the wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6:23a)

Just as there are wages for good, there is punishment for wrong.

The penalty for our sin is eternal death in a place called Hell.

3. Believe that Jesus Christ died, was buried, and rose again for you.

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Romans 10:9)

4. Trust Christ alone as your Saviour.

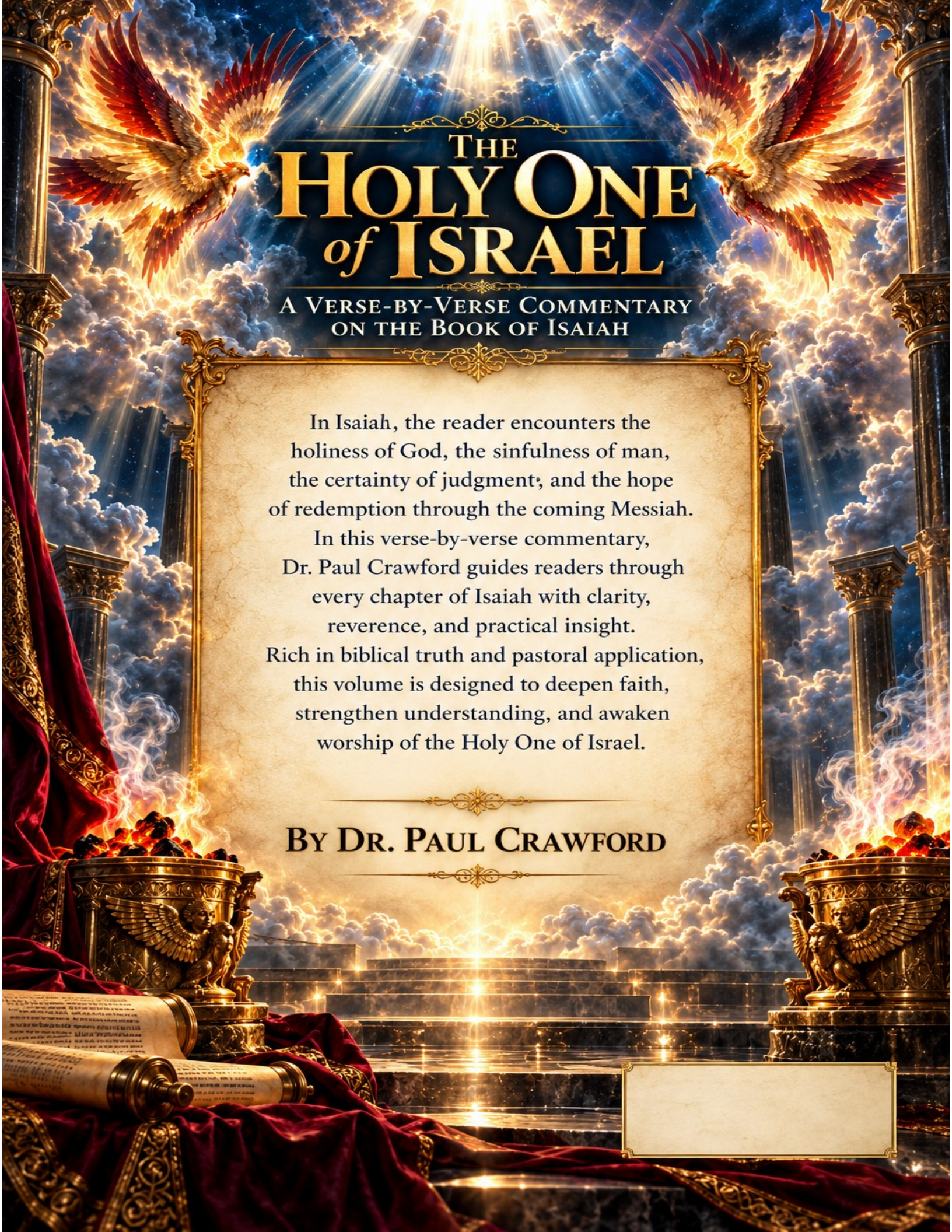
"...But the gift of God is eternal life though Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23b)

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10:13)

Eternal life is a gift purchased by the blood of Jesus and offered freely to those who call upon Him by faith.

Anyone who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved forever. Being saved is a one-time event.

Dr. Paul Crawford is more than just a Christian Author; His books are a source of inspiration and guidance on your spiritual journey. His books are created with a deep sense of faith and a desire to uplift and inspire all who read.


THE
HOLY ONE
of ISRAEL
A VERSE-BY-VERSE COMMENTARY
ON THE BOOK OF ISAIAH
In Isaiah, the reader encounters the
holiness of God, the sinfulness of man,
the certainty of judgment, and the hope
of redemption through the coming Messiah.
In this verse-by-verse commentary,
Dr. Paul Crawford guides readers through
every chapter of Isaiah with clarity,
reverence, and practical insight.
Rich in biblical truth and pastoral application,
this volume is designed to deepen faith,
strengthen understanding, and awaken
worship of the Holy One of Israel.
BY DR. PAUL CRAWFORD