

ISAIAH, PART 2 (COMFORT FOR HIS PEOPLE)
PROGRAM 42 (#911157)
WEEK 9 (#911332) (Guest Teacher David Arthur)
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The following is an actual transcript of the PRECEPTS FOR LIFE Broadcast. For the purpose of filling transcript requests quickly, they have received only light editing. If you have questions concerning the material covered in this broadcast, Kay has published a number of books explaining the Scripture in depth. These books may be ordered by contacting the telephone number or address printed above.

SERIES: Isaiah, Part 2 (Comfort For His People)
TITLE: Program 42 – Desperate For Him
(Guest Teacher David Arthur)

TUESDAY

INTRO

Kay: It's always good, Beloved, isn't it to get a return on your investment. I know that you've invested in your children and you want to see that pay off. Well Jack and I invested in David Arthur. He got his Masters in Theological Studies and today he's going to be your teacher. Once again he's stepped in for me while I had to be away ministering in another part of this world. But I know that you're going to be blessed because this man is gifted by God.

OPEN

David: Do you ever feel like God is not listening? Like in some way He has hidden Himself from you? Do you ever sense that God is not on the other end of the conversation? Perhaps you feel like your prayers don't get past the ceiling in your bedroom? God is not like that, My Friend. God is a God who wants to react and respond to you and to your prayers. Study with us today and understand a God who wants to hear from you.

PART ONE

David: Hello there! My name is David Arthur, and today we are studying the book of Isaiah and we're picking up on our study in chapter 64. We're gonna back up a bit in 63 to get a running head start at this text. But I want you to see this prayer that is described in Isaiah chapter 63, beginning in verse 15. Here's the prayer: **"Look down from heaven and see from Your holy and glorious habitation; where are Your zeal and Your mighty deeds? The stirrings of Your heart and Your compassion are restrained toward me. For You are our Father, though Abraham does not know us and Israel does not recognize us. You, O LORD, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is Your name. Why, O LORD, do You cause us to stray from Your ways and harden our heart from fearing You? Return for the sake of Your servants, the tribes of Your heritage. Your holy people possessed Your sanctuary for a little while, our adversaries have trodden it down. We have become like those over whom You have never ruled, like those who were not called by Your name. (Isaiah 63:15-19)**

Here we have the beginning of a prayer that will flow its way all the way through chapter 64. I want to break this prayer down a bit. I want you to see the situation. So the first thing we're gonna look at in this prayer is: What is the situation of the people? We look back at chapter 63, verse 18, we actually see it says, **"Your holy people possessed Your sanctuary for a little while, [but in a sense] our adversaries have trodden it down."**

(Isaiah 63:18) How did that affect the people of God when their "adversaries have trodden down" their sanctuary? It says in verse 19: **"We have become like those over whom You have never ruled, like those who were not called by Your name."** **(Isaiah 63:19)** Now if you think about the covenants, the arrangement that God Himself has designed to deal—to be with His people. You'll find this throughout the Old Testament. Some places would be like Genesis 15 and Genesis 17. But there's a key phrase that shows up in all the covenants and it's this: "I will be your God and you will

be My people.” “I’ll be your God and you’ll be My people.” (See Genesis 17:7-11) You know, it doesn’t matter what else you put into the mix that alone tells us of the dynamic relationship that God wants to have with His people. You don’t have to talk about the land, you don’t have to talk about the provision or the protection, or the many other things that are listed throughout the covenant. If you simply know that God says, “Listen, I’m gonna be your God and you will be Mine. You will be My people.” Look what they say though, here in verse 19. Their situation is so desperate. It is so rough that they say in verse 19: **“We have become like those over whom You have never ruled, like those who were not called by Your name.” (Isaiah 63:19)** So the situation is really desperate. The situation is rough. “It is in a sense, that we no longer feel like we are Yours. It seems as if our enemies have been given a free reign of control over our nation and over our future and our destiny. We feel like we’ve been cut out of the family.” Well this prayer goes on in chapter 64, verse 1. Here comes their request: **“Oh, that You would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at Your presence— as fire kindles the brushwood, as fire causes water to boil— to make Your name known to Your adversaries, that the nations may tremble at Your presence! When You did awesome things which we did not expect, You came down, [and] the mountains quaked at Your presence. For from days of old they have not heard or perceived by ear, nor has the eye seen a God besides You, who acts in behalf of the one who waits for Him.” (Isaiah 64:1-4)** Here’s the second thing I want you to see about this prayer is the second thing is: the request. The situation is: “We feel like we’re no longer yours. And so our request, then,” beginning in chapter 64, is found in verse 1, he says, “Would You come down?” Now look at the way God is asked. He says, **“...[Would You] rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at Your presence—” (Isaiah 64:1)** There’s a visual here I want you to see. They’re asking that the Almighty God would grab the

heavens and rip them apart, and present Himself in all of His glory. So much so that the very mountains, the very immoveable things in their, in their view would begin to shake and to move. This happened when the people of Israel were talking with God— actually it was just Moses. And they were talking with God at Sinai, and God said, “I want Moses to come on up the mountain.” (See Exodus 19:20) “I don’t want anybody else; nobody else come up the mountain.” (See Exodus 24:1-2) So they said, “All right, we’ll send Moses up.” So Moses goes up and for 40 days he’s gone; 40 days he is on top of this mountain. (See Exodus 24:18) But then it said that “The glory of the Lord” as represented in this enormous cosmic cloud, “sat down on top of the mountain.” (See Exodus 24:16) And it said, “God spoke.” But it sounded like thunder, like thunder they had never heard. (See Exodus 20:18) They were so afraid when they heard God speaking to Moses, that when Moses eventually came down the mountain, they begged Moses, “Do not let Him speak again, for surely we will die.” (See Exodus 20:18-19) That’s how terrifying his voice was. Moses himself changed. It said when he came down his face glowed; the molecules were somehow rearranged in his face and he had this glowing appearance, and it really bothered the people. (See Exodus 34:29) Eventually he began to wear a veil over his face. (See Exodus 34:33) This is their request. They’re not saying, “Lord, when you get a spare moment could you stop by and give us some counsel, some advice?” You know, “Could you come along and pat us on the back, perhaps?” We have this request: [Would you come and rend the heavens?] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 64:1) [“Would You, yourself come down? The mountains would quake.”] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 64:1) It says, **“As fire kindles the brushwood, as fire causes water to boil—[would You] make Your name known to Your adversaries....?” (Isaiah 64:2)** The result they’re looking for is there at the end of verse 2. “[Would You make these] **nations...tremble at Your presence....?” (Isaiah 64:2)** You know, there’s something about having a God that you know is powerful. There’s

something about the fact that you know that God, when He says, “I’ve got your back,” can really keep your back safe. There’s something about knowing a God who is much bigger than you, who is much more powerful. I don’t know about you, Friend, but I’m concerned with the church today. The church today seems to want a God that’s their buddy. They want a God who kind of relates to them. You know they want to call Him “Friend,” and “Pal,” and some of the songs I hear, they want to touch His face. I don’t think this is good. I don’t think this is a good perspective on who God is. They say, “Our situation is rough. Our request is, basically, ‘Lord, would You show up? Would You show up in all of Your power; in all of Your might?’” So then what is their condition? The third thing that I want you to see comes out of verses 5 and 6. It says: **“You meet him who rejoices in doing righteousness, who remembers You in Your ways. [And] behold, You were angry, for we sinned, we continued in them a long time; and shall we be saved? For all of us...,”** in verse 6, **“... have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on Your name, who arouses himself to take hold of You; for You have hidden Your face from us and have delivered us into the power of our iniquities.”** (Isaiah 64:5-7) The third thing that we note then about this prayer is their condition. When it’s all said and done, they state their condition as one whom God has hidden His face from. Have you ever been in a situation where you feel like God has abandoned you? Maybe it happens when your prayers seem to just bounce off the ceiling—that you send up. As if maybe, perhaps, He’s too busy. He’s a God that somehow has abandoned you and left you to deal with your own situation. Perhaps you weren’t “good enough,” you might tell yourself. This is a prayer that they have. They say, “Listen, our situation is so bad. The enemy’s triumph over us is so bad that we feel as if we’re no longer Your children.” And their condition is so desperate that they feel as if God

has abandoned them and has hidden His face from them and left them to soak in the mire of their iniquities. So what should we do when we're in this situation and this condition? The requests that we see described here in Isaiah chapter 64 is a great answer to this kind of situation. When you feel desperate, you're to call out to your God, knowing who He is and how powerful He is. And you're to ask Him, "Oh, Lord, would you rend the heavens? Would you tear apart my reality and would You show up and demonstrate Your power and Your glory and Your might in my life? For surely, Lord, You are Almighty God and I submit myself to You and I ask You to come to my life."

PART TWO

David: Welcome back, we're studying the book of Isaiah and we're in chapter 64. And we are going to see a relationship that God describes between Himself and His people. It's a question I've often wrestled with. Do I really have control of my life? Or is God in complete control. Am I simply a puppet attached by strings to His fingers up above? Or do I have a free will? We're gonna look at that dynamic. And by the way, if you want to join us with a free downloadable study guide, please go to preceptsforlife.com>, and you can download this study, so that you can study along with us for yourself. Let's look at Isaiah chapter 64. Now you remember we left Isaiah 64. We saw that there was a prayer being presented, and this prayer was basically saying, "Look God, we're in such bad trouble we need You to show up and rend the heavens—pull them apart and show up in all Your power and Your glory. (See Isaiah 64:1) Now in chapter 64, picking up in verse 8, we read a bit more about this: **"But now, O LORD, You are our Father, we are the clay, and You [are] our potter; and all of us are the work of Your hand."** (Isaiah 64:8) You hear that dynamic? That description: He says, we are like clay in the hands of a potter. Let me show you this in a couple of different places. First I want to show you in Jeremiah

chapter 18, beginning in verse 1: **“The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD saying, ‘Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will announce My words to you.’ Then I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something on the wheel. But the vessel that he was making of clay was spoiled in the hand of the potter; so he remade it into another vessel, as it pleased the potter to make. Then the word of the LORD came to me saying, ‘Can I not, O house of Israel, deal with you as this potter does?’ declares the LORD. ‘Behold, like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel.’” (Jeremiah 18:1-6)** Now beginning in verse 7 of Jeremiah 18, we have God describing what that’s gonna look like. If we are literally clay in the hands of a great potter, what does that mean? How does that apply to the lives of God’s people? Look at verse 7: **“At one moment...,”** this is God speaking, **“I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot, to pull down, or to destroy it; if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it.” (Jeremiah 18:7-8)** Okay the first thing described here is: If God has said I will bring judgment against this nation, He has foretold it, He has prophesied it through His prophets, “I’m bringing judgment against this nation”, but if that nation then turns and repents, then God says, “I can pull back that prophecy. I can pull back that judgment that I have prophesied toward them. And He says, **“...I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it.” (Jeremiah 18:8)** So let me ask you, who’s in control in that scenario? Well you could say, “Yes, it’s the people,” because the people will determine what will happen to them whether they obey or disobey God. But you could make another argument to say, “Well no, it’s not the people, it’s God. He’s the potter. He’s the One who’s shaping the clay and He is the One that says, ‘I can change My mind.’” What you have, My Friend, is one of those biblical mysteries where God is completely sovereign and yet man has free will. It’s one of those things that doesn’t

seem to fit together in our little tiny logic, but when you look at it from the Word of God, it flows together like a beautiful mosaic. It fits nicely together. He then goes on in Jeremiah 18, verse 9, let me show you the other side:

“Or at another moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to build up or to plant it; if it does evil in My sight by not obeying My voice, then I will think better...,” or could be translated “I will relent,” **“...of the the good with which I had promised to bless it.” (Jeremiah 18:9-10)** Okay, so here’s the question: If God says, “Listen, either I can bring good or I can bring bad to a nation, or let’s say, clay, what is going to determine whether or not it is good or bad coming? He makes it clear to Jeremiah that it is the obedience or the disobedience of the people. Look at verse 11: **“So now then, speak to the men of Judah and against the inhabitants of Jerusalem saying, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Behold, I am fashioning calamity against you and devising a plan against you. Oh turn back, each of you from his evil way, and reform your ways and your deeds.”” (Jeremiah 18:11)** That’s what we have here. We have ah a description of God saying, “Listen, I’m the One in charge, but I’m holding you accountable,” much like a potter and uh, clay. A potter; he decides what to make with the clay. But he looks at the clay that it is in his hand and as he’s shaping it, he shapes according to its purpose and its model. Now Paul brings this up in the book of Romans. In Romans chapter 9, Paul talks about this. Beginning in verse 14, **“What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! For He says to Moses, ‘I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.’” (Romans 9:14-15)** Now verse 16 explains it: **“So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.” (Romans 9:16)** Paul is making a statement about salvation. He is making a statement about justification, and he says it is not man who determines it, but it is God. Now how does that relate to what we’ve been looking at in Isaiah 64? Look with

me again at Isaiah 64. We pick up in verse 9 and he says this: **“Do not be angry beyond measure, O LORD, nor remember iniquity forever; Behold, look now, all of us are Your people. Your holy cities have become a wilderness, Zion has become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised You, has been burned by fire; and all our precious things have become a ruin. Will You restrain Yourself at these things, O LORD? Will You keep silent and afflict us beyond measure?”** (Isaiah 64:9-12) Now Isaiah and the people of God understand what Romans chapter 9 is talking about. They’re saying that God is completely sovereign. And so in this prayer, they finish off the prayer in Isaiah 64 by reminding God that He’s the Potter and that they are the clay, and so they submit themselves to His agenda. They say, **“Will You restrain Yourself at these things...?”** (Isaiah 64:12) In other words, “Lord, are you gonna let this happen? Are you gonna allow the enemies to trample over Your people to the point to where their condition is so desperate that they no longer feel as if they are Yours?” That’s the question that is at stake. And so the prayer ends with these words: **“...Will You keep silent and afflict us beyond measure?”** (Isaiah 64:12) You see they understand: Even the bad things in life are inside the domain and the control of God. Now you might say, “I don’t want a God that’s like that.” Oh, My Friend, let me make it very clear. It is important that you understand who God really is and how you relate to this God. He’s a God whom you don’t control, but rather, in whom controls you and your destiny. He’s a God you can trust.