

ISAIAH, PART 2 (COMFORT FOR HIS PEOPLE)
PROGRAM 39 (#911154)
WEEK 8 (#911331) (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 39 – Give Him No Rest
(Guest Teacher David Arthur)

THURSDAY

INTRO

Kay: I bet as you're studying Isaiah that you are enjoying David Arthur as much as I enjoy listening to him. It's been so wonderful to have him step in and help teach Isaiah Part 2. You know this is what it's all about. It doesn't focus on an individual. It focuses on the Word of God. And you're going to be so blessed today to hear from David Arthur, the Vice President of Teaching and Training at Precept.

OPEN

David: Is it okay to bug God in prayer? Is it okay to keep on asking Him the same thing over and over and over again until He finally says okay, okay, I'll answer your prayer? Is that somehow disrespectful or forbidden in Christian prayer? Actually we're gonna see today that it is not only not forbidden but it is actually anticipated by God and expected of us to be diligent and persistent in our prayer. It's okay to bug God.

PART ONE

David: Our text today is Isaiah chapter 62. We pick up in verse 6. Let's read it together. **"On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen; all day and all night they will never keep silent. You who remind the LORD, take no rest for yourselves; and give Him no rest until He establishes and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. The LORD has sworn by His right hand and by His strong arm, 'I will never again give your grain as food for your enemies; nor will foreigners drink your new wine for which you have labored.' But those who garner it will eat it and praise the LORD; and those who gather it will drink it in the courts of My sanctuary."** (Isaiah 62:6-9) All right so we look at verse 6 and we see it a description here of watchmen sitting up on the wall. Now a watchman's job was very simple. What they were to do was they were to sit on the highest point of a city wall and they worked in shifts. They couldn't sleep. They couldn't read their books. They couldn't ah, play checkers with one another. They had to continually be looking out on the horizon. Now they're not looking for sunsets or for deer or pretty bunnies walking along the field, but rather they were looking for enemies. And a watchman was to be intent on his job. He was to be focused on his piece of the horizon that was designated for him. And sitting up on the top of this wall, the watchman's job was to shout if he saw trouble. And as soon as a watchman would voice— would cry out and shout "danger" or "enemy," or "stranger," the city would go onto alert. In other words, it was the watchman's job to alert the city to action. Here we have a similar description. Isaiah says your watchmen will never be silent. Let's look at it again. Isaiah chapter 62, verse 6, **"On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen...."** How long do they work for? Well it says, **"...All day and all night they will never keep silent...."** He goes on to say, **"...You who remind the LORD, take no rest for yourselves; and give Him no rest until He....,"** in a sense answers your request. **"...He establishes and makes Jerusalem a**

praise....” (Isaiah 62:6-7) What do we have here? In desperate times, desperate situations, there are actions that are required that are not normal. In other words, in a desperate time you will call for desperate actions. I heard of a story recently of an airplane crash in the Potomac River in Washington, D.C. The river was nearly frozen over. A plane comes crashing into the river. A man was walking along and saw this horrible tragedy. The man saw that people had come out of the plane and were still alive, but yet were swimming in the icy Potomac. Without even thinking about it, this man jumped into the river. The story goes on that he retrieved several people and brought them back to the shore in order that they may live. But he himself died. Desperate situations call for brave and bold and persistent and diligent acts. In Isaiah he says, “I placed them on the wall and their job is to not give Me, God Almighty, rest until I establish.” (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 62:6-7) There’s a parable in Luke chapter 18 that describes this, beginning in verse 1. In Luke 18 it says this, **“Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and [to] not to lose heart, saying, ‘In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man. There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, “Give me legal protection from my opponent.” For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, “Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.””’ (Luke 18:1-5)** Okay when you’re studying a parable, it’s always important to look for the point. What is the point? And usually they will tell you in a parable. This time it comes at the very beginning. Verse 1, Jesus is telling them a parable it says **“...to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart.” (Luke 18:1)** Just recently I had a friend whose father-in-law was dying of terminal cancer, a very successful businessman. This man was, had the whole world wrapped up. He had achieved every financial success. He had multiple homes and had a beautiful, healthy family

that loved him, and yet there on his death bed being stricken with cancer, he was going to hell. He was going to lose it all. And for months and months my friend prayed for his father-in-law. And he prayed “God, would You get his attention?” And even though he was, he was struck with cancer and he was dying, he was granting wishes. He said to all his family. “You can ask me for anything, any kind of wish and I will grant it before I go.” And so some would ask for a fishing trip. Some would ask, you know, for a vehicle, or, or some kind of gift. But my friend said to his father-in-law, “This is what I want. I want a chance to sit down with you and tell you why I have hope for eternity, tell you about my relationship with Jesus Christ.” Before this he had snuffed him off and would never let him discuss this topic of salvation with him. But because he offered this wish-granting deal, he said okay, I’ll do it. And there on his death bed he heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. He heard how God can save you and he had been praying and praying and praying. And he had said before this day, “Lord, am I to continue to pray? It seems as if You are not answering our prayers.” But he kept on praying. He had me and some other friends praying for him. And there on his death bed in the oxygen mask, he cried out to God for salvation. My friend’s father-in-law went from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. This parable tells us that we are to not lose heart in praying; we are not to give up, but that at all times that we should pray. He says the watchman’s role, the watchman’s job up on the wall is to not give Me rest, but rather to be persistent in their calling out to Him. You know this is a, a sense in which we get this idea of preservation, of persevering, of sticking to it, of not saying “Okay, I’ve already tried. He’s not gonna answer me, so I’m gonna move on.” I want to show you another one in 1 Timothy chapter 4, 1 Timothy chapter 4. We’ll look at verses 15 and 16. Here Paul’s writing to Timothy and he’s reminding him of the gifts and the calling that God has placed upon his life. And he tells him I want you to **“Prescribe and [I want you to] teach these things.” (1 Timothy 4:11)** In verse 11, and

don't give up and don't let those **"...look down on your youthfulness...."** (1 Timothy 4:12) But, **"Until I come [I want you to] give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and [to] teaching."** (1 Timothy 4:13) He then says this in verse 15, **"Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, [as] for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you."** (1 Timothy 4:15-16) "Take pains with these things," what's implied in that? It means that there's going to be struggle. It's going to take time for some things, that God is not a slot machine that we simply, place a coin in and pull a lever and we get what we want. But for some reason, God has designed our relationship with Him that we are to connect with Him in the sense of a begging and a pleading. And it's not as if God has got His arms folded back and He enjoys somehow watching us struggle, but that He wants us to engage Him in our requests. He's calling us in a relationship to seek Him. Look what it says. **"Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them...."** (1 Timothy 4:15) It's interesting He goes on to say that as you pay close attention to these things, as you take pains, as you immerse and be absorbed and soak in these truths, he says this is what you will achieve. It's a promise. Verse 16: **"...For as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you."** (1 Timothy 4:16) Paul ended his life as a martyr. The apostle Paul was supposedly crucified, much in the way that Jesus was. Paul ended his life following Jesus and he turned to Timothy in his final statements and says "Follow me. Do the same thing." My friend, is your relationship with God more like a grocery list where you simply list down the things you want and then you hand it to Him? Or is your relationship one that is dynamic? Is it one in which you are like the watchman on the wall, crying out, not giving God rest? Is it really okay to bug Him like that? Is it some sign of disrespect when we persistently ask Him? Absolutely not. Jesus tells us in Luke 18 that

we are to not lose heart, that we're to not give up, that we are to pursue Him in persistent prayer, and that we are to give Him our hearts in prayer. We are to beg Him and to not give Him rest until He answers us. My friend, it's okay to bug God in prayer. (See Luke 18:7-8)

PART TWO

David: We continue our study in Isaiah 62 and we're now beginning to pick up in verse 10 and we're gonna see this idea of a highway. Let's look at verse 10. **"Go through, go through the gates, clear the way for the people; build up, build up the highway, remove the stones, lift up a standard over the peoples. Behold, the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth, say to the daughter of Zion, 'Lo, your salvation comes; behold His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him.' And they will call them, 'The holy people, the redeemed of the LORD'; and you will be called, 'Sought out, a city not forsaken.'"** (Isaiah 62:10-12)

Here we have some more ideas about how God renames them. But there's an image brought up in verse 10 that I want to draw your attention to. Look at verse 10. **"Go through, go through the gates..."** he says, **"...clear the way for the people..."** Then here comes the image. **"...Build up, build the [ah] highway..."** (Isaiah 62:10) Now I've actually been in this part of the world a couple of times and there's not much flat smooth spaces until you get way out into the dessert. But most of it is kind of cut through with these things called wadis. They're like river beds that are etched their way through the rock and so the road that the terrain in Israel is this rough up and down, filled with cracks and crevices and such. And so when we see this **"...Build up a highway..."** you literally get the idea of making a smooth way. I want to show a couple of places Isaiah uses it. The first one I want, I want to show you is in Isaiah chapter 11. I want you to look at verse 16. Here is described a return from exile. **"And there will be a highway from Assyria for the remnant of His people who will be left, just as there was**

for Israel in the day [when] they came up out of the land of Egypt.”

(Isaiah 11:16) Here we have a description of a return from exile. A return from exile is an indication for the people of God that forgiveness has been granted. God had made it very clear in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 that His punishment would be ultimately to send His people into exile. But with every punishment that He gave there was always a way out. Grace. He said if you will return to Me I will bring you back out of exile and put you back in your land. In verse 16 that return from exile is actually the ones for Israel cause look what it says in 16, “**...There will be a highway from Assyria....**” **(Isaiah 11:16)** Assyria is the nation that has taken Israel into captivity, the northern part of Israel into captivity. He says this highway will be for the remnant, those who are faithful. Those who are still there will be brought out of exile. And it gives us a comparison. Look at that comparison at the end of verse 16. “**...Just as there was for Israel in the day that they came up out of the land of Egypt.**” **(Isaiah 11:16)** Do you remember that imagery, that picture that was described in Exodus as they came out? God had told Moses I want you to go toe to toe with Pharaoh. This is the most powerful man in the earth at this time and I want you to tell him, “**...Let My people go....**” **(Exodus 8:1)** Do you remember this? There was plagues He gave. There were signs that God used to soften Pharaoh’s heart to this request. And Pharaoh eventually let them go. And as the people of God left Egypt the Bible tells us that Egyptians began to give them gifts on the way out. These gifts of gold and, and silver and of jewelry were eventually what God would use to build and to pay for His temple, to decorate His temple. It was a great event. It was one of the most significant events in the life of Israel was the exodus out of Egypt. And God describes a return from exile in 11, verse 16. Let’s look at another one. Go with me to chapter 19. We’ll look at verse 23, Isaiah 19, verse 23. It says this, “**In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrians will come into Egypt and the Egyptians into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the**

Assyrians. In that day Israel will be the third party with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, whom the LORD of hosts has blessed, saying, ‘Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance.’” (Isaiah 19:23-25) A couple of other references we could look at in chapter 35, verse 5 or in chapter 49, verse 11. But the imagery is the same and consistent throughout Isaiah. This highway, when God says build a highway it includes, of it pervades the idea that God is going to bring His people back. He’s gonna restore them from exile. It’s a great picture. It’s a great picture of salvation. It’s a great picture of God ah, restoring His people. But let’s go back to Isaiah chapter 62. We pick up again in Isaiah 62 in verse 11. It says, **“Behold, the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth, say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Lo, your salvation comes; behold His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him.’”** They are given a new name. They’re called **“...The holy people, the redeemed of the LORD....”** They’re called, **“...a city [sought out, that is] not forsaken.” (Isaiah 62:11-12)** What is this reward that we see in verse 11? **“...Behold His reward is with Him....” (Isaiah 62:11)** I want to take you to the New Testament. Let’s go to Hebrews chapter 11. Hebrews chapter 11 is the hall of faith. It describes the men and women who came before us who lived by faith. In Hebrews 11, verse 6 we read this: **“And without faith it is impossible to please [God], for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6)** In other words, if we are going to trust God we must not just simply yes, I believe in God. Yes, I believe there’s a higher power. Yes, I believe there’s something bigger and better than me out there. That is not what brings salvation. The Bible says it requires faith. And **“...faith is the assurance of things hoped for, [but not yet] seen.” (Hebrews 11:1)** And he says part of that faith, in verse 6 is we must **“...believe that [God] is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6)** In other words, God is One who will bring a

reward. Then finally I want to show you at the end of the Bible in Revelation chapter 22, verse 12. This is prophecy much like Isaiah is except for us this is in our future as New Testament believers. Revelation chapter 22, verse 12. Jesus says, **“Behold, I am coming quickly...,”** and then look what He says next. **“...And My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” (Revelation 22:12-13)** Here we have God described in our future. When He comes back, when Jesus comes back, when Jesus comes back for His second coming He will come and He will bring with Him His reward. He brings a reward and it’s according to the things that we have done. We’re told in Isaiah 62 that this is what God is like, that when He comes He will be One who brings His reward with Him. **“...Say to the daughter of Zion...,”** it says in verse 11, that, **“...Lo, your salvation comes; behold His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him.” (Isaiah 62:11)** Let me ask you are you ready for His return? What reward will He bring you for the deeds that you have done in His name and by His power? Will you be on that highway that takes you from the exile of this world into the heavens of heavens to be with Him?