

***PRECEPTS FOR LIFE***  
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**SERIES: Isaiah, Part 1 (Judgment – But Hope)**

**TITLE: Program 48 – Persevering Through Trials**

**WEDNESDAY**

**OPEN**

You're running. You're doing great and you're excited. But all of a sudden it hits you: There is a mountain in front of you. There is a huge hill in front of you. So you stop. You stop. You say, "I can't do it." Oh, why did you stop? Don't you know, Beloved, that any obstacle, any hill, any mountain can be made level by Almighty God? We'll talk about it today.

**PART ONE**

I love you and I love teaching you the Word of God, and I'm so glad that you're hungry. And I want you just to keep on running. I want you to be able to look at any mountain and say, "Hey, with my God I can leap over a wall. With my God I can remove the mountains because I am a righteous woman, I am a righteous man, and God makes the path of the righteous level." This is what we're looking at as we look at Isaiah chapter 26 and Isaiah chapter 27. We're looking at the peace of the righteous. We're looking at the path of the righteous. And in Isaiah chapter 26 we have come to the segment in

verse 7 through 10 where he talks about **“The way of the righteous [being] smooth...,”** and how we cry, **“...O Upright One...,”** because God is righteous. **“...O Upright One, make the path of the righteous level.”** (Isaiah 26:7) In other words, bring down that mountain. Now God is able to bring down that mountain. The problem is many times we don’t realize it. Well, as we looked at Isaiah 26, in the first six verses we have seen that we have a strong city. (See Isaiah 26:5) We compared that with Hebrews, the book of Hebrews, that talks about looking for that city that is to come, whose builder and maker is God, and remembering that that is the city that we are headed. (See Hebrews 11:10) That is the New Jerusalem. Well, when we come to verses 7 to 10 we see **“...the path of the righteous [is made] level.”** (Isaiah 26:7) So what I want to do is, I want to take you to Hebrews, chapter 10 again and I want to show you what happens when these people hit a mountain, so to speak, when they hit a hard place. Now Hebrews chapter 10; when you get to Hebrews chapter 10 what he does in verse 32 is, he gives us insight into what is happening with these people in this day. These are Jews, Jews who have come to know and believe that Jesus is “Yeshua,” that He is God our Savior, that He is the Messiah, that He is the Christ, that He is the Promised One. They’re being persecuted by their own people. They are being persecuted by the world. And so he says to them, **“...Remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings.”** There was a mountain before you. **“Partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations....”** I mean they were put, so to speak, on trial and in difficulties. And it says, **“...And partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated,”** (Hebrews 10:32-33) because in that case what happened is, when I saw a brother being persecuted, instead of turning away and pretending I didn’t know that brother, I went to embrace that brother, embracing that brother that’s being persecuted by others. Have you done that in an office? Have you watched them lay low a Christian? Have you watched them get them in a corner and back them down and you just stood

off and you didn't say anything and you didn't come to their defense? Maybe it was a geeky Christian. Maybe it was someone, so to speak, that was not eloquent and well dressed and you just looked at them and you didn't want to be associated with them. Shame on you! Shame on you. If you see a brother that is having a difficulty you suffer with that brother, you rejoice with that brother. You're members of Christ's body. You have one head and that's Jesus Christ. And so what these people did was they **"...[became] sharers with those who were so treated."** He says, **"...You showed sympathy to the prisoners and [you] accepted joyfully the [seizing] of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one."** (Hebrews 10:33-34) What is it? It's that city, that strong city that God has built. It's the New Jerusalem. So then he goes on to say, **"Therefore, [don't] throw away your confidence, which has...great reward."** (Hebrews 10:35) In other words, "Okay, here you are running. You're running well. What is stopping you? What is hindering you? You look at the mountain. You say, 'I can't do that.'" Listen, God levels the path of the righteous. You stay righteous. You stay trusting God and you watch what God can do. So what happened with these is, he's saying to them, **"...[Don't] throw away your confidence, which has...great reward....you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised."** Now listen to what he's says. **"For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come....,"** and that's what Isaiah keeps doing. Isaiah keeps pointing to the Messiah, to the One that's going to sit on the throne of David, to the One who's going to have the government of the whole world upon His shoulders, to the One who is the Branch, to the One who is the root of Jesse. So he says, **"...Yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and...not delay. But [if] My righteous one [My righteous one] shall live by faith; but if he shrinks back....,"** it says, **"...My soul has no pleasure in him."** (Hebrews 10:35-38) In other words: if you live righteously, if you trust God, then as you run God will make your path, level. **"...O Upright One, make the path of the**

righteous level,” (Isaiah 26:7) and that’s what I’m praying for you. I’m praying that you will persevere. I’m praying that you’ll see that mountain go down. I’m praying that you will be able to say in faith, “Be cast into the sea.” Let’s look at it. I want you to go to Matthew chapter 17, verse 19. Now in Matthew chapter 17 they have tried to cast out a demon and they can’t do it. And so Jesus is speaking to them, Matthew chapter 17. This is what He says in verse 17. **“And Jesus answered and said, ‘You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me.’ And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out...and the boy was cured at once. [And] the disciples came to Jesus privately and [they] said, ‘Why could we not drive it out?’ And He said to them, ‘Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a [grain of a] mustard seed...,”** That’s all the faith that you need. He says. **“...You will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.” (Matthew 17:17-20)** You can make the hill. You can make the mountain. You can go over it because the way of the righteous is made level. (See Isaiah 26:7) Upright One, Righteous One, Righteous God; He does that. So don’t quit, don’t throw up your hands. You say, “But, you know, I, I, I can’t do it.” Yes you can. Yes you can. By your God you can leap over a wall. Now if you think you can’t, it’s probably because you’re not spending enough time in the Word of God, because you’re not learning about God. He’s going to talk about how God makes the path of the righteous level, but how— when God brings His judgments upon the earth, then the wicked are supposed to learn righteousness, those mountains, those obstacles are to bring the wicked to their knees. And this is what he says. He says, **“...When the earth...,”** verse 9 and I want you to get this. In fact, I have written across the top of my Bible, across the top of the page, ’cause I can’t remember addresses of Scriptures all the time, but I know what book they’re in. And so I wrote, **“...When the earth experiences [His] judgments the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.” (Isaiah**

**26:9)** In other words, when calamities come God has done it. So you want to write down Amos chapter 5, verse 6. A calamity does not occur in a city without the Lord being behind it. (See Amos 3:6) Then Jeremiah chapter 14, another prophet that is going to prophesy and be God's messenger right up into the Babylonian captivity. In Jeremiah chapter 14, verse 1 this is what it says. **"That which came as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah in regard to the drought." (Jeremiah 14:1)** A drought had come in the land. Where did this drought come from? Well, you want to look at verse 22. It says, **"Are there any among the idols of the nations who give rain? Or can the heavens grant showers...?"** Now listen. **"...Is it not You, O LORD our God...?"** You're the only one that can give rain. You're the only one that can bring showers. So when there's a drought where ought you to be? You ought to be down here on your knees. You ought to be crying out to God. You ought to be beseeching Him. It says, **"...Therefore..."** because You're the One that gives rain, **"...Therefore we hope in You, for You are the one who has done all these things." (Jeremiah 14:22)** In Psalm 148, verse 8, Psalm 148 and it's right near the back of the book of Psalms, in verse 8 it says this. **"Fire and hail, snow and clouds; stormy wind..."** and catch this, **"...fulfilling His word." (Psalm 148:8)** Why do those fires come? Why does the hail come? It's fulfilling the word of God. In Job chapter 36, verse 30, and I want you to see this. Well, I tell you what. Why don't you take a break and I'll do it when you get back.

## **PART TWO**

Welcome back, Beloved. I had you turning to Job 36, verse 30. And I was just reading it on the break again and I thought, "God, You are so awesome. Of course You're able to make the path of the righteous level. You're able to do that God because You're God." And in Job chapter 36, in verse 30 it says, **"Behold, He spreads His lightning..."** **"...about Him..."** The next time there's lightning in the sky, look up and say, "Hey, it's His lightning

that He is spreading about Him.” And what it says is, “**...And He covers the depths of the sea....By these He judges peoples; He gives food in abundance. He covers His hands with the lightning, and commands it to strike the mark.**” (Job 36:30-32) In other words, even where lightning comes, wherever it strikes, it is not an accident, Precious One. God has a purpose in it. “**...When the earth experiences [His] judgments the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.**” (Isaiah 26:9) I don’t know if you have ever rented the old movie, “Sergeant York,” but if you have not seen that movie, you need to rent it. It is a true story about Alvin York who was a reluctant sergeant in World War I and the exploits that that man did. But that man was just a renegade and one day, and this is true, God took the lightning, and came down and killed his horse, or knocked him from his horse and got his attention. His rifle was absolutely melted by God. God accomplishes His purposes. Well, you could read on and I would suggest you do after the program. But listen to Job 37, verse 10. “**From the breath of God ice is made, and the expanse of the waters is frozen.**” And God freezes it. And then it says, “**Also with moisture He loads the thick cloud; He disperses the cloud of His lightning. It changes direction, turning [about] by His guidance, that it may do whatever He commands it....**” (Job 37:10-12) This is your God—O Righteous one. He will make your path level. He will make it smooth. He will stir up the world. He will cause calamities to come and judgments to come so that these people might turn from their wickedness. But you can know this, there are some that God can strike with lightning; there are some that He can put in a hurricane; there are some that can experience a flood and they will still be wicked. Look at Isaiah again, Isaiah chapter 26, verse 10. It says, “**Though the wicked is shown favor...,**” and the Bible says in Romans, that the goodness of God is to lead you to repentance. (See Romans 2:4) So, “**Though the wicked is shown favor, he does not learn righteousness; he deals unjustly in the land of [the] uprightness, and [he] does not perceive the majesty of the LORD.**” (Isaiah 26:10) He is just playing hard-hearted, mean as a snake,

and it will never get across to him. And what God wants you to know is, that when He brings righteous judgments it is to turn you around. But listen, it turns some around and the others all it does is simply harden them. Now you may be living with someone that is just getting harder and harder. But you can know this, that you can continue to please God because you call out to God and you say, “God, O Upright One, make my path level.” Well now we come to the next segment of chapter 26. And in chapter 26 what we see is this, that God is the One that does it all. We see that if I am going to be righteous, it is the work of God. We see a righteousness that comes by faith. Listen to what he says in verse 11. And this is verse 11 through 19. **“O LORD, Your hand is lifted up yet they do not see it....”** They’re just blind to the fact that it is Your hand that is lifted up. **“...They see Your zeal for the people and [they] are put to shame....”** Now a better way to translate that is in the margin. It says, “Let them see Your zeal for the people and let them be put to shame.” **“...Indeed, fire will devour Your enemies.” (Isaiah 26:11)** Now remember we have seen that in chapter 24 and in chapter 25. He says, **“[O] LORD, You...establish peace for us....” (Isaiah 26:12)** “You’re the One who establishes peace for me.” Now what are we looking at all this week? We’re looking at the peace of the righteous, how **“The steadfast of mind [God] will keep in perfect peace, because [we] trust in [Him.]” (Isaiah 26:3)** So now watch what he says. **“LORD, You will establish peace for us, since You...,”** and this is very important, **“...have also performed for us all our works.” (Isaiah 26:12)** In other words, “God, it is not even me that does anything good. It is Christ in me that does it good. And so Christ in me is the power.” And so what he’s saying here, now watch; God has done for them because listen to me very carefully; God can do the same for you. You may have been living unrighteously. You may have not been walking with the Lord, and God may have brought lightning, so to speak, into your life. He may have brought tragedy. He may have brought calamity. He may have brought sickness. He may have brought a need into your life. But the psalmist says, **“It’s [been]**

good for me that I've been afflicted...." **"Before I was afflicted I went astray...."** (Psalm 119:67) **"[It's been] good for me that [I've been] afflicted...."** This is in Psalm 119, **"[So] that I might learn Your statutes."** (Psalm 119:71) So watch what he says. He says, **"Lord, You will establish peace for us, since You have also performed for us all our works. O Lord our God, other masters...have ruled [over] us; but through You alone we confess Your name."** (Isaiah 26:12-13) God, it's You, it's You that even enabled me to confess Your name. It is You that is at work in me. It says, **"The dead will not live, the departed spirits will not rise; therefore You have punished and destroyed them...You have wiped out [the] remembrance of them."** In other words, there are some that are eternally doomed. He says, **"You have increased the nation, O LORD, You have increased the nation, You are glorified...."** What is he saying? You have built up Israel. You have built us up. He says, **"...You have extended all the borders of the land."** (Isaiah 26:14-15) And if you look at the map that we have in the Inductive Study Bible, at the back you'll see how God is going to extend the borders of the Promised Land and what He's going to give to Israel. I mean they're fighting right now and they, they're arguing over the West Bank and they're arguing over Jericho and everything. My goodness, it is going to be far more than that. God extends the borders of the land. He says, **"O LORD, they sought You in distress...."** Your people sought You in distress. **"...They could only whisper a prayer...."** They were so desperate. **"...Your chastening was upon them."** (Isaiah 26:16) And yet you know what? God heard because they turned to Him. That's your lesson for today.