



Sermon Discussion Questions
November 12, 2023,
The Gospel According to Isaiah
THE LORD HAS COME DOWN TO US
Isaiah 64:1-9

1. Opening Discussion Questions

Do you recall the 1960's song "Silence is Golden"? Do you agree with the title's premises? Have you ever been in a situation when someone asked a question, perhaps in a class, and nothing but silence followed? If so, describe the experience and the eventual outcome? How did you feel during the silence?

2. Sermon Outline/Key Points

- a. Truth - God Has Already Torn the Heavens and Come Down! (Isaiah 64:1)
 - i. The prayer of verse 1 was fulfilled by Jesus.
 - ii. Jesus came to accomplish the rest of chapter 64.
- b. Prayer #1 - Revive Us (Isaiah 64:4-9)
 - i. This passage recognizes the need for God to move and bring revival to His people.
 - ii. We easily become lukewarm and legalistic - we need revival today.
- c. Prayer #2 - Spread Revival Across the World (Isaiah 64:2-3)

3. Study/Discussion Points:

- a. *Sunday Afternoon* – As soon as possible after listening to the sermon set aside some time to prayerfully ponder these questions:
 - i. What one thing most stood out to you in this sermon?
 - ii. What new truth did you learn or of what truth were you reminded?
 - iii. After listening to the sermon, is there a Scripture passage you feel led to meditate on or commit to memory this week?
 - iv. What is one specific thing you feel God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
 - v. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?
- b. *Monday – Isaiah's Intercessory Prayer*
 - i. While Sunday's sermon focused on Isaiah 64:1-9, this week's study/discussion questions will consider Isaiah's entire prayer which starts with verse 7 of chapter 63 and continues through the end of chapter 64.
 - ii. This beautiful prayer comes immediately after the terrible word picture describing God's judgement of His enemies that is painted in Isaiah 63:1-

6. You may want to read these verses to set the context for the prayer that follows. If you were in Isaiah's shoes, how would you respond to what God says He is going to do?

- iii. Isaiah's prayer is described as both a lament and an intercession. How would you define both of these terms? How do they differ?
- iv. Read Isaiah 63:7 – 64:12. As you read it try to identify major sections or themes. Based just on this reading what would your reaction be to the prayer?

c. **Tuesday** – *God's Love; Our Failure*

- i. Read Isaiah 63:7-9 again.
 - 1. Where (with what topic) does Isaiah begin his prayer?
 - 2. The term translated "steadfast love" ("kindness" in the NIV) occurs almost 250 times in the Old Testament. You may get a better understanding of it's significance by reading Psalm 136. How do you think it would affect our prayers if they all started with a focus on God's "steadfast love" instead of, as so often, on our own needs and wants?
 - 3. The Lord's model prayer (Matthew 6:9) begins with "Our Father". How do you see this thought included in Isaiah's opening (verses 6-9)?
- ii. Read Isaiah 63:10 and 64:5b-7.
 - 1. What is Isaiah doing in these verses? How is this action included in the Lord's model prayer?
 - 2. According to Isaiah 63:10a what two things was the nation of Israel guilty of doing?
 - a. How do you see rebellion and "grieving the Holy Spirit" to be related?
 - b. Was this just an Old Testament issue for Israel or is it a concern we have as Christians? Read Ephesians 4:30.
 - c. What does it mean to you to know that our sin causes God pain (grief)?
 - 3. Often when sharing the Gospel, we emphasize that sin has severed our relationship with God.
 - a. What does Isaiah 63:10b suggest is the true result of our rebellion?
 - b. Compare this with Romans 5:10 and Colossians 1:21. How does Paul's description compare?

d. **Wednesday** – *God's Grace; Isaiah's Lament*

- i. Reread Isaiah 63:10b-14.
 - 1. How would you describe what Isaiah is doing in these verses?

2. Why do you think Isaiah felt it necessary to remind God of what He had done? Did Isaiah think God had forgotten?
 3. One of the prayer techniques Brian has taught is to “pray the scriptures”. How is praying the scriptures like what Isaiah is doing?
- ii. Verse 14 ends with a very important explanation of why God does what He does.
1. What is the ultimate explanation for all of God’s decisions and actions?
 2. If we truly understand and accept this as His motive, how would it affect our prayers?
 3. How is this thought reflected in the Lord’s model prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)?
- iii. Read Isaiah 63:15-19
1. How would you characterize Isaiah’s prayer in this section?
 2. What two questions does Isaiah ask that we also tend to ask when life is particularly difficult?
 3. Is it right for us to question God? To complain?
 - a. How do Psalms 6:1-3, 10:1, and 38:9-11 affect your answer? What about Matthew 27:46?
 - b. When everything seems to be going terribly wrong in life do you think it is better to complain to God or to suffer in silence? Why?
- e. **Thursday** – *God Has Already Torn the Heavens and Come Down! (Isaiah 64:1)*
- i. After lamenting the current situation Isaiah presents his petition. The nature and force of his plea is best seen if Isaiah 64:1 read with 63:19.
 1. What is Isaiah asking God to do for Israel?
 2. In Isaiah 63:15 Isaiah asked God to “look down” – now he goes further and asks God to “come down”. How does Israel’s history support (justify) Isaiah making such a bold request (see Exodus 19:16-19, Judges 5:5, and Psalms 18:19, 144:5)
 - ii. How do Mark 1:9-11, John 1:9-11 & 14, and Hebrews 1:1-3 show us that God has accomplished what Isaiah prayed for?
 1. How was Jesus’s coming different from what Isaiah requested (John 1:9-11)?
 2. Isaiah wanted a highly visible sign of power to thwart Israel’s enemies. Instead, what enemy did Christ defeat (Matthew 27:50-54 & 28:5-6, 1 Corinthians 15:25-26, and 1 Timothy 1:10)?
- f. **Friday** – Prayer #1 - Revive Us (*Isaiah 64:4-9*)

- i. Read Isaiah 64:4-9 thoughtfully and prayerfully.
- ii. It is often said that “revival must begin with me.” What does Isaiah show us is a necessary first step if God is going to revive us?
 - 1. Even though as Christian our sins have been forgiven why do we still need to confess sin?
 - 2. How do 1 John 1:9 and James 5:16 address this question?
- iii. Of the seven churches Christ addresses in Revelation 2 & 3 perhaps the saddest is Laodicea. Read what Jesus says in Revelation 3:14-20. How does the church in America today resemble that of Laodicea?
- g. **Saturday** – Prayer #2 - Spread Revival Across the World (*Isaiah 64:2-3*)
 - i. Finally, read Isaiah 64:2-3, Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8. How do you see the three passages relating?
 - ii. With his Intercessory Prayer, Isaiah stands with Moses and Paul in demonstrating true concern for their people. Read Romans 9:1-3. How might things change if we had the same concern for the lost of our day that Paul had for his kinsmen?
- 4. **Application:** There is much talk and concern about the decaying state of the church in America today and that God seems to be silent. However, the Scriptures tell us, and history has confirmed repeatedly, that God is not going to abandon His Church but that when God’s people pray, He will respond. And He is certainly not silent – He has sent His Word. Consider this week how Isaiah’s prayer can be a model for your own intercessory prayer for the church in America. You may also want to consider Daniel’s prayer which echoes what Isaiah has said - see Daniel 9:1-19.

5. Prayer Points:

- a. **A**doration – 1 Peter 4:16
- b. **C**onfession – James 5:16
- c. **T**hanksgiving – Philippians 4:6
- d. **S**upplications – James 4:2-3
 - i. Pray for revival in our community, country and world!
 - ii. Pray for the shoe boxes that are being collected – that they will be used as instruments to share the Gospel with many children.
 - iii. Pray for those in our community who have insufficient food – that as we approach Thanksgiving the bags of food we have donated will be used by God to bless those most in need.
 - iv. Pray for our church to show love and wisdom as we finalize the 2024 budget.
 - v. Pray that we each will take advantage of every opportunity God gives to share His Good News.