

Wednesday, October 11, 2023 ▫ Read Isaiah 26:1–19

Questions from the Scripture text: When and where will this be song (v1a)? What do they have (v1b)? What is it made of (v1c)? Who are permitted into it (v2)? How did they come to be righteous, and what does the Lord do for them (v3)? What do those who trust Him have (v4)? What does He do to whom (v5)? Who else enters into this victory (v6)? In what path does the Upright One lead those who are right with Him (v7)? So, what do they wait for, desire, and desire the remembrance of (v8)? In what ways do v9a–b express the intensity of this desire? What truth makes believers sure that the Lord is worth waiting on (v9c–d)? What doesn't common grace do for the wicked (v10)? What does he refuse to do toward men (v10c) and toward God (v10d)? What problem do the wicked have in v11a? What will it be like when they finally do see (v11b–d)? What, then, makes the difference in God's people (v12)? Whom do they acknowledge as sovereign over lesser magistrates (v13)? What will the Lord do to wicked ones (v14)? But what will the Lord Himself do (v15)? How did the Lord drive His people to Himself (v16)? How intense was the trouble/chastening (v17–18a)? But what did had the chastening accomplished (v18b–d)? To Whom did these dead belong (v19a–b, n.b. 19b reads "My corpses shall arise")? What do they arise to do (v19c–e)?

From where does strength come? Isaiah 26:1–19 looks forward to the first serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these nineteen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **strength comes from the Lord alone.**

The strong city: the city that has God, v1. The cities of the northern kingdom had hoped in alliances with men, and the cities of the southern kingdom had hoped in their own wit and in pacifying the Assyrians themselves. But true strength is found in neither relationships with others nor our own wits. The remnant from ch24–25 are the ones with the strong city (v1b). Strength comes from God (v1c).

Those who enter: the righteous, v2–4. It's the righteous who enter (v2). They came to be righteous by way of trusting in YHWH (v3–4).

How God delivers them: His strength in men's weakness, v5–6. The city that was against God's people—the lofty city (v5b)—the Lord brings down (v5). Those who win victory are not the wealthy and able, but the poor and the needy (v6).

What the godly experience: longing for the completion/fullness of blessing, v7–9. Even though they have the Lord and are strong in Him (v7), the righteous still has to wait upon the Lord (v8), with longing for the glorious end (v9).

What the wicked cannot experience: the knowledge of God, v10–11. The wicked are unable to learn righteousness (v10b). Even when the Lord lifts His mighty hand (either in blessing or in curse), they cannot see (v11a) what they shall see in the last day (v11b–d).

How the righteous got that way: by grace, v12–19. The Lord Himself establishes a believer's peace and his works (v12). Other rulers or helps are too small to compare (v13–14). The final glory of the remnant nation comes only from Him Who gave it its life (v15). It is the Lord Who hears prayer (v16) and brings life out of death (v19). Our own pains (v17), though useful by His providential mercy and power, do not themselves bring forth salvation (v18).

God alone gives righteous standing. God alone gives life. God alone brings us into the way. God alone keeps us in the way. The great error of Israel and Judah would end in declaration of the great truth: to our God belongs salvation! This is what they who are saved will sing forever and ever.

In what part of life do you need strength? From where can it come? How can we experience the knowledge of God? How can we be fruitful in our lives?

Sample prayer: Lord, forgive us for how quickly we are forgetful of grace. Apart from grace, we would not learn righteousness or see Your glory, even when You address us plainly. But You establish peace for us and do all our good works in us. Forgive us our pride and presumption, and grant unto us to remember and sing Your grace forever, through Jesus Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP32AB "What Blessedness" or TPH434 "A Debtor to Mercy Alone" For more Hopewell @Home devotionals, please visit hpwl.org/hah

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Isaiah 26 verse 1, through 19. These are God's words. And that day, this song will be song in the land of judah. We have a strong city. God will appoint salvation for walls and bulwarks. Open the gates. That the righteous nation, which keeps the truth may enter in, You will keep him in perfect, peace.

Whose mind is stayed on you.

Because he trusts in you, Trust in your way forever for yah. Yahweh is everlasting strength. He brings down those who dwell on high. The lofty city. He lays it low. He

lays it load of the ground, he brings it down to the dust. The foot shall tread it down the feet of the pore and the steps of the needy.

The way of the unjuste uprightness. Almost upright to you weigh the path of the just yes, and the way of your judgments. Oh yeah, we have waited for you. The desire of our soul is for your name. And for the remembrance of you, With my soul. I have desired you in the night.

Yes, by my spirit within me. I will seek you early. For, when your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world. Will learn righteousness. Let grace be shown to the wicked yet. He will not learn righteousness. And the land of uprightness, he will deal unjustly. And will not behold the majesty of yahweh.

Go away when your hand is lifted up, they will not see. But they will see and be ashamed for their envy of people. Yes, the fire of your enemies shall devour them. Yahweh, you will establish, peace for us. For you've also done all our works in us. Oh yeah, we are.

God masters besides you have had dominion over us? But by you only, we make mention of your name. They're dead. They will not live, they are deceased. They will not rise. Therefore, you have punished and destroyed them and made all their memory to perish. You have increased the nation of yahweh.

You have increased the nation. You are glorified. You have expanded all the borders of the land. Yahwe in trouble. They have visited you. They poured out a prayer when you're chasing with upon them. As a woman with child, is in pain and cries out in her pains When she draws near the time of her delivery.

So have we been in your site? Oh yahweh we have been with child, we have been in pain. We have as it were brought forth, wind. We have not accomplished any deliverance in the earth. Nor have the inhabitants of the world fallen. You are dead, shall live? Together with my dead body, they shall arise awaken saying you who dwell in the dust, For your do is like to do a verbs.

And the earth shall cast out. The dead. Amen. So far the reading of god's. Inspired engineered word. For the last, several chapters isaiah has been using the Metaphor or image of a city. Actually, the first one wasn't metaphorical tire is an actual city. Uh, it was A city of great wealth, the city of great worldliness.

The admiration and desirable of all the world. And then the world is a whole and it's Rebellion against god and indulgence of itself was viewed as a sort of world city. But now we have the strong city, the city that does not get destroyed well. The city that does not stay destroyed.

Um, Those cities thought they were strong, but they were Hurling towards destruction. The city of god appeared to be weak. And yet it is god's city. And therefore it is strong. Now, this goes directly against the sins of israel and judah. That We've been hearing the lord. Uh, treat and attack.

In the book of isaiah. Israel trusting in their alliance with Syria. Judah. Trusting in their own weapons, their own location. And, Perhaps, even their own craftiness. And trying to forge an alliance with Assyria itself. Um, But they, they're weak in themselves. We are weak. In our self. And so, the Song of salvation is the song of this.

Remnant that is left over. That we heard about. When the world is destroyed and yet, it is like The olive tree or the grapevine where Uh, god takes the remnant, that is left and makes a glorious. City. The glorious new world. Out of them. That's the strong city. Here.

And so, the, the strong city is the City that has got. Not the city that has allies or weapons, or location or money. And, This needs to be not, just the strength of the church corporately. Oh, the the churches would know that the church generally would know. That the lord is her strength.

But each of us need to be reminded of that. Regularly daily more often than that. So there's a strong city. Those who enter it. Then are the righteous. Open the gates verse 2. That the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in. How did they come to be righteous?

Verse three and four. The lord brings them to trust in himself trust in your way forever for in y'all. The hallway is everlasting strength. And not only does the lord. Bring us. Bring them in. Who trust in him. Bring us in, trust Him. But then he keeps in perfect, peace.

The one whose mind is stayed. Upon him. So By grace, through faith. Through faith from start to finish. So, the strong city is the city that has god and those who enter are the righteous through faith to are kept in. Perfect. Peace through. That same faith. That delivers them, of course, by his strength and man's weakness.

The city that appeared to be strong the The lofty city versus Five, the city of the world. And it's rebellion against god, think of Babylon with the whole world actually gathered as a city. The lofty city. He lays low to the ground. And look, who trample on them, not mighty warriors.

Not egyptians and syrians or Assyrians, or Chaldeans Babylonians. It's the feet of the poor, the steps of the needy. And this again. Um, Is the holy spirit. Reminding us. That. The lord helps the weak.

So, It is all by grace. God, strength and man's weakness. What to the godly experience? Well, the godly experience and knowledge that this is coming the experience righteousness, with God, already and belonging to him, and knowing that is enough and so forth. But they also experience, waiting and groaning.

And so the, the lord Um, Puts the The righteous one and the way of uprightness because he is upright. Verse 7. But even in the way of his judgments, verse 8, we wait for him. The desire of our soul is for his name. And for his remembrance with our soul.

Verse 9 with my soul. I have desired you. In the night. Longing for that time. The earth would be full full of righteousness. When the lord himself would be judged. In the earth. And so the godly do experience, having the lord as our strength, but We ought to receive.

We ought to take talk to the heart. The instruction throughout the level that the life of the believer in this world is still one of longing. One of groaning, one of waiting. Uh, we have real life now but we have our best life. Later.

The wicked. Cannot experience. Either of those things. Even if the lord works. Verse 10. Even if he's gracious to them, even if They're in a land in which there is some uprightness. Still there not upright, they don't learn righteousness, they don't deal. Uh, justly. And then diverse 10, they don't even behold the majesty of yahweh.

And so, the wicked has Blind and dull, and Helpless. He has no ability to. Be righteous, in fact. Uh, you have a lifts. His hand up, verse 11. That's a way of describing him doing something, extraordinary weather, in terms of extraordinary, blessing or extraordinary curse. He lived his hand up.

He extends his hand, he does something unusual, And yet the wicked does not see it as the lord's doing something. He does not attribute it properly to god so he's neither thankful for the extraordinary blessing or Um, Or properly. Sobered by the extraordinary curse. Uh, they refuse to see god.

They will at the last sea, but there will be Ashamed.

Of the fire that. They had. Expressed against god, all of their enmity towards god. And more, of course. So I'll devour them. And verse 11. So, how did the righteous come to be righteous? How do they come to trust in the lord? If the wicked. Don't even respond when god makes display of his grace.

If they're so blind and hard-hearted, Well, it's because the lord himself. Changes the righteous he establishes. Piece for us first part of verse 12, the second part of verse 12, for you have also done all our works in us. And so it is the grace of god, that Changes the righteous.

If you are concerned that, After all the lord does. He just don't see it and your heart does not respond to him. Well, he's the one who gives the responding to him. And you can ask him for it. Indeed, you can ask those. Whom, you are fairly sure, know him and they will.

Ask him for it for you. As well. So the lord himself establishes, the believer's peace and the believer's works. Verse 12. There are other rulers who Whether they be for us or as in the case of Verse 13 against us. You know, there's rulers with a little r there under the sovereign.

Sovereign rule and majesty of god. And so even if they have dominion over us for a time even if we live a life, Of. Um, being persecuted and depressed and in bondage. Uh, still Uh, we do not. Uh, we do not make mention of them, but by you only, we make mention of your name.

Verse 13. Because god will destroy them verse 14. But you will restore the life. And the prosperity of his people. Until he brings us into the Final fullness of the blessing. That he has planned for his people. Remembering that the expanding of the borders of the land, there is not just Geography and geopolitics, but it is Tied to god's covenant with his people.

So, the righteous get to be the righteous by a grace that will Find its final and full object. Something that god. Himself must do. Nothing good comes from us at all. Verse 16 yahweh in trouble. They have visited you. They poured out a prayer. And praise god. That they prayed to the lord to do something because Verse 17 and 18.

The idea that we can produce something good out of our trials or Or out of our pains. I literally is blown away by verse 18. A woman in labor, rejoices When a baby is born. But that, which comes from A sinner. It's not something to rejoice over. And so he says, we have been with child, we had been in pain.

And then, we gave birth to the wind. We have not accomplished any salvation, any deliverance in the earth. Because it's not, we who do it. That's not we who birth it. The lord is the one. Who does it? In fact, he gives life even To the dead and verse 19.

And Clear, hope of Of the resurrection. Praise god. So, Almost come by god's grace, it comes only through faith that comes only to those. Her. All good comes only to those who have him. Even the good of being brought to faith. Is from him. And that's the song that they will sing.

In jerusalem and all that is done. Uh, verse or sorry. Yeah, verse One, and that day this song, Will be sung in the land of judah. Another reason not to stick to the 150. Of one of the song books in The bible, there is another song called the song of songs.

And here is a song that belongs. Especially to The consummation. Of the work of god's grace and his people and it would be marvelous. If we had, Good metrical translation of it to sing. But for now, We can read it and understand it. And abandon the idea that we have any strength or goodness in ourselves, But embrace the wonderful reality.

That god has all strength and all goodness in himself and he graciously Works. It In his people. Let's pray. Our father in heaven, how we thank you for. The book of isaiah as a whole so far and the blessing that it has been to us and it's season of life.

To go through it again, we pray. Oh lord, that you would help us. Not to trust in princes who will return to dust and their efforts and plans will perish with them. Grant. Oh lord. That we would not be proud of ourselves. Who cannot? Uh birth anything good but wind you don't contribute it all to our own salvation but grant to lord by your spirit.

That we would trust entirely in you. And particularly In you as you have revealed and displayed yourself in our lord, jesus christ. He has risen from the dead with. The resurrection life, by which we Lord look to you to make us walk into oneness of life. To help us by your spirit.

We pray in jesus name. Amen.