

Isaiah 64**2-8-06***“How do you think of God, & yourself?”***1. Intro:**1.1. **Read:** How do you think of God?**2. How do you think of God, & yourself? (1-12)**2.1. **How can we be Saved?** (1-5)

2.2. (1) Pick up context in 63:18 – Enemies broke down Jerusalem.

2.2.1. And God DIDN'T intervene on their behalf! He held His peace! (12)

2.2.2. The Jews were **defeated & disgraced** before their foes!2.2.2.1. **Q:** Sound a little like the church today???

2.2.3. They petition God to come down like He did on Sinai, so the Nations would tremble.

2.3. It's as easy **for God** to rend the heavens as **for us** to tear a piece of cloth.

2.3.1. Great mountains of difficulty dissolve before Him.

2.4. Maybe we can pray for God to “*come down*” again in *reviving, revitalizing, energizing, enlivening power!*2.5. (2) **When Jesus rode** into Jerusalem, it was on a **donkey, & in peace. When He rides in the next time, it will be on a white horse, in majesty!**2.5.1. **The nations** will learn that the **Prince of Peace** is also a **Man of War**, judging sin & delivering His people!2.6. (3) Remembrance of **the past** will always give hope for the future!2.6.1. God intervened in the Exodus when the people of God were **desperate.**2.6.2. **Man's extremity is God's opportunity!**¹

2.7. (1-3) Exodus 19

2.7.1. No lesson could have been more impressively taught!

2.7.1.1. And it is for **all time.**2.7.2. **We learn:**2.7.3. [1] **The personal relationship** God desires (4)2.7.4. [2] **The special affection** God has for us (5,6)

¹ Philip Hacking; pg.203

- 2.7.5. [3] **Hearing is believing, not seeing** (9,21)
 2.7.5.1. “Many want a **Peek** at God yet not the **Perfection** of God; A **Glance**, but not **Grace!** - A **Peep** at God, ye not **Pardon** of God; Some want a **Glimpse**, others want to **Glow!**”
 2.7.5.2. **Q:** Are you content for now to hear & not see?
- 2.7.6. [4] **Here was the awful contrast between God & man** (16-20)
 2.7.6.1. The immeasurable chasm between the divine & human!
 2.7.6.2. “From ancient times the **Thunder** was spoken of by the Hebrews as the voice of Jehovah, & the **Lightening** as His messenger, or as His flaming Dart!”
 2.7.6.3. It was worse than facing “OZ”! (Scary as a kid/ “I need courage!”)
- 2.7.7. [5] **Here was God’s ultimate purpose “so you would not sin”** (20:20).
- 2.8. We must face the OZ of **Sinai**, before we enjoy the beauties of **Zion!**
 2.8.1. **1st** we face our sinfulness {Peter in boat w/Jesus – Lk.5:8 “**Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O lord**”; Tax collector, “**God be merciful to me a sinner!**”}
 2.8.2. Then we can enjoy Zion.
 2.8.2.1. Picture where you feel most at home most comfortable: favorite couch, recliner, vacation spot.
- 2.9. (4) God is unequalled, transcendent.
 2.9.1. He has no peer, yet seeks fellowship w/those who trust Him.
 2.9.2. But sin presents a problem!
- 2.10. **See** 1 Cor.2:9 as Paul uses it.
 2.10.1. No referring to heaven but to the Christian life here & now! (vs.10)
 2.10.2. Read the Word & let the Spirit teach you, you will find out wonderful things God **has done** for you, & **will do** for you, as you *trust & obey*.
- 2.11. **God works, as we wait!**
 2.11.1. So while we are waiting God is moving...oh!!! (Is.40:31)
- 2.12. (5) The plea for salvation!
 2.12.1. Here are the sore needs of his people! (*and people today!*)
 2.12.2. **Q:** How then can we be saved?
- 2.13. **Our Problem!** (6,7)
- 2.14. (6) (NIV) All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

- 2.15. **Mans 2 greatest problems are:**
 2.15.1. [1] How he views **God!**
 2.15.2. [2] How he views **himself!**
- 2.16. **Unclean** – Like a Leper in scripture. Like an unclean animal.
- 2.17. **Dirty Rag** – menstrual rag ☹️
 2.17.1. If our righteousness is black, what must our sins be!
 2.17.2. Even **righteous acts** done w/**wrong motivation** are seen in God's sight as **filthy rags**.
- 2.18. **Leaf** – fade, wither, shrivel up.
- 2.19. **Wind** – our sins sweep us away like the wind does leaves.
- 2.20. **Q: Is this how man views himself today?**
 2.20.1. Man today is more intent with developing a “**healthy self-image**” rather than a “**biblical view of ourselves**”!
 2.20.2. Verse 6 is **not a pretty verse**, but it is **biblical!**
 2.20.3. We need to be reminded of “who we are” apart from his **intervening Grace!**
- 2.21. **The Parable of Speedo man, & Trench Coat man.**
 2 men worship together & both were brought under conviction by the same sermon. **Speedo man** was led to rejoice in pardoning mercy immediately. **Trench coat man**, for a long time, was in anguish, and at times depressed; but he was at last brought also to a comfortable experience of forgiving love.
 Some time after, meeting his brother, he addressed him, “*How is it that I should be so long under conviction, when you found comfort so soon?*”
 “O brother!” replied the **Speedo man**, “There came along a rich Prince. He proposed to give you His Royal Coat. You looked at your coat, and said, “*I don't know: my coat is pretty good. I think it will do a little longer.*”
 He then offered me a new coat. I look on my old Speedo & thought, *This is good for nothing*, and accepted the new coat on the spot.
 Just so, brother you tried to keep your own righteousness for some time; you loath to give it up; but I, **naked & cold**, had none: therefore I gladly at once received the offer of **His new coat!**”
- 2.22. (7) No one to **pray!** - No one to **get stirred up** about confessing sin & seeking God's face!
- 2.23. **Our Solution!** (8-12)
- 2.24. (8) **Potter & clay** – The hand at work is still the hand of our Father.
 2.24.1. Remember a potter can fashion his work even using **distress**.
 2.24.1.1. Like with **blows** from the mallet to get out all air bubbles.
 2.24.2. Suffering can be a very powerful weapon in fashioning beauty!

- 2.24.3. Working with clay there is: trimming/cutting off excess; digging/out the gunk in the middle; bumping/wobble or off center.
- 2.24.4. Q: Are you as submissive as clay? Q: Ever seen clay talk back?
- 2.25. (9) Here is where prayer ought to begin...w/asking for **forgiveness**.
- 2.26. (10) **God's judgment**: Jerusalem & even Mnt. Zion are deserted cities; the temple was burnt down; & treasured hopes have been dashed.
- 2.27. (11) **Our pleasant things** – we are reminded His blessings are **never deserved** but only **humbly claimed!**
- 2.28. (12) Ends with a question.
2.28.1. Will you hold yourself back, or rescue us?
- 2.29. The goal is to build a **new city out of** the **ruins** of the **old**.
2.29.1. Q: Isn't that God's goal for you **personally**?
2.29.2. Q: Isn't that God's goal for our **church**?
- 2.30. If God is going to "**come down**" w/His power, we must **fall down** in surrender to Him.