

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

You told Isaiah, “I was ready to respond, but no one asked for help. I was ready to be found, but no one was looking for me. I said, ‘Here I am, here I am!’ to a nation that did not call on my name” (Isa 65:1 NLT). What an amazing picture of your longsuffering grace! I praise you today for your mercy. Hallelujah!

Today in Your Word

Today you shared with me the stirring conclusion of Isaiah’s prophecy to Judah. He began by describing the glory that would characterize millennial Jerusalem (Isa 60–62). Your light would shine on Israel, and the nations of the world would be drawn to that light. They would bring the Jews of the diaspora back to the land, and they would shower your people with great wealth. You had called Israel to be a light to the nations, and in the Millennium, they would at last fulfill your great purpose. This inspires me to be a Jerusalem-in-miniature: a shining light in a world of darkness and perversion. When I spread your gospel and bring people to Christ, I am preparing their hearts for the coming of your glorious Kingdom! Before Israel’s new day could dawn, your Servant had to come and fulfill His ministry. Hundreds of years after Isaiah prophesied, Jesus stood in a synagogue in Nazareth and read Isaiah 61:1–2a. He omitted any reference to “the day of vengeance of our God,” (second coming) and instead proclaimed “the year of the LORD’s favor” (first coming). Your Spirit was upon Him and anointed Him to “bring good news to the poor...to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.” When Jesus sat down and said, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (Luke 4:21), he was saying that the day of salvation had come! How wonderful to live in this time, a time when Christ is calling the nations of the world to be his disciples. I need to be working as hard as I can right now, for the night is coming when no man can work. Isaiah was moved by the contrast between the wicked Jerusalem of his day and the righteous Zion of the future, and he offered a prayer of lament and intercession (Isa 63:7–64:12). He remembered your former mercies and pleaded for your help: “Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down” (Isa 64:1). Then he confessed the sins of his people and asked for your pardon. His prayer teaches me how to intercede on behalf of a sinful nation and shows me that the prophecies of your future Kingdom are intended to encourage godly living today. God answered: “I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people...a people who provoke me to my face continually” (Isa 65:2–3). Nothing could save Judah from your wrath in the near future, but you would not destroy everyone. You would honor the humble and strike down the wicked. In the distant future, you would establish the Kingdom of your Son, and all the nations would come and worship you in Jerusalem. As it was with Judah, so it is with me—will I choose life or death? I choose life!

Reflection

When Isaiah said, “all our righteous acts are like filthy rags” (Isa 64:6 NIV), he was referring to the sacrifices and offerings that were given by a people whose hearts were sinful and corrupt (cf. Isa 1:10–15). Does my outward piety flow from a heart that is right with you?

Request

Father, help me to walk in the footsteps of your suffering Servant and labor faithfully for you. May it be said of me, ‘He followed God with all his heart’!

Thanksgiving

I look forward to the “new heavens” and the “new earth” with thanksgiving! Praise the LORD!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[Like a River Glorious](#)” – Frances R. Havergal.

Meditation Verse: Isaiah 66:12.