

Prayer that Moves God to Act (Part Two)

Isaiah 64:1-12

A Danger

It's not that we have to say the exact right words in the right order with the right flow to have God hear us. The moment we turn to God in Jesus' name we have His joyful, undivided attention.

But it's also true that there's more — more of God's presence to experience in prayer, and more of God's power to receive in prayer.

That's why Isaiah gives us help for how to grow in prayer.

Pray big prayers (1-2)

It's crucial to pray about every concern we have, no matter how small. But it's also crucial to pray big prayers — for God's power to tear open the heavens and come down with salvation.

Appeal to God's passion for His name (vv.1-2)

God's highest passion is to uphold and display the glory of His name. This is good news for us, because our highest joy is beholding the glory of His name. One of the most powerful reasons we can pray is that God will work for the glory of His name.

Plead with God on the basis of His promise (vv.3-5a)

Lament your tragedy before God (vv.5b-7)

We should not rage against God — or pretend with God. God's Word gives us an alternative — to lament before God — to grieve and sorrow and mourn before Him. This will bring us great comfort, and it will stir His Father's heart even more.

Plead with God using powerful reasons (vv.8-12)

What happened

Israel had turned from God, Jerusalem had been destroyed, God's people were slaves in Babylon.

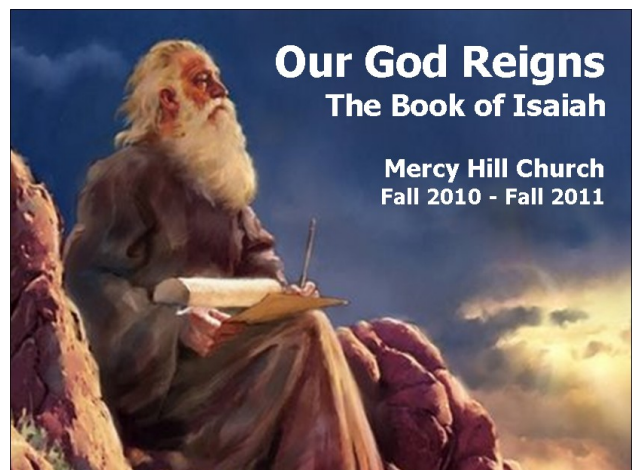
But Isaiah, and the remnant prayed.

And God worked —

Changed Cyrus' heart to free Israel

Put into Cyrus' heart to fund Israel

Brought national repentance under Nehemiah



HOME GROUP DISCUSSION OF SUNDAY'S TEACHING

(Sometimes in our home groups we talk about Sunday's teaching, so we can work together on responding to God's Word — asking questions, sharing insights, talking together.)

What was the Holy Spirit saying to you Sunday through this passage?

What questions, ideas, objections, encouragements did you come away with?

Which of these approaches to prayer are you strongest in? Which weakest? Why?

Do you tend to pray more for you individual concerns, or for global concerns? Why is that?

Does it make sense to you that the most loving thing God can do is display the glory of His name? Why or why not?

How often do you appeal to God's passion for His name?

What's your take-away from this message? What are you going to do differently? When? How?

Share prayer requests that come up in the discussion, jot them down below, and pray for each other.

