

Is. 64:1 Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence,

Is. 64:2 As *when* the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, *that* the nations may tremble at thy presence!

Is. 64:3 When thou didst terrible things *which* we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.

Boy, do I identify with Isaiah in verse 1! I am so eager for the LORD to return. Of course, I am expecting Him to come and get me at least seven years before the time that this verse is referencing. This verse is referencing His second coming to rule as King for 1000 years on planet earth before *eternity* begins. This return is described in more detail in Revelation 19 as referenced in the previous chapter.

The Hebrew for *mountains* is a word that specifically references “a mountain that is majestic and impressive in its rugged power” (according to the “New International Encyclopedia of Bible Words”). The scripture sometimes references kingdoms as mountains as used by the prophet Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 51:24-25 And I will render unto **Babylon** and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the LORD. Behold, I am against thee, **O destroying mountain**, saith the LORD, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain.

I believe the prophet is painting a word picture in these verses. The mountains represent great power. Fire has the power to cause water to boil. The returning LORD Jesus in great power will be able to destroy earthly kingdoms, as represented by their armies, merely by speaking the word as stated in Revelation.

Revelation 19:15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations....

I believe the last phrases in verse one and verse three allude to God’s descending upon Mount Sinai before giving the law to Moses as described in Exodus 19. The Hebrew for “flowed down” states “to shake, to quake.”

Exodus 19:16-18 And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

Just as surely as the Lord has caused mountains to quake in the past and fire can bring water to a boil, the returning Jesus will completely devastate the armies of Antichrist.

Is. 64:4 For since the beginning of the world *men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.*

Most often I have heard this verse used in reference to what is in store for us in heaven, and I am sure that is a valid statement. In context, however, the prophet is speaking of the conditions on planet earth that will accompany the return of the Messiah as King.

Paul quotes this verse in 1Corinthians.

1Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

An excerpt from that journal might be appropriate here.

Notice that as Paul quotes the prophet Isaiah, he changes the word “waiteth” to “love.” That tells me that the two are interconnected since the same Spirit breathed the words to both men. Love involves waiting and endurance. The root word for *waiteth* includes the idea of carving and entrenchment. That seems to be referencing a strong commitment, fortifying oneself to stay the course no matter what. This ties in with the truth of love presented in *1Corinthians 13:4*—*Charity suffereth long....* The words *charity* and *love* are the same in the Greek—*agape* / *agapao*. It takes unconditional love, a love of choice, to patiently endure even when the going gets really tough and we don’t understand why God is allowing certain things to happen in our life.

The Hebrew for *heard* states “to hear intelligently, understand.” “Perceived by the ear” is a reference only to listening. Every teacher knows that a student can hear without understanding. The point seems to be that only God knows what He has prepared for those that wait on Him. Everything that God does is good; every provision He makes is abundant. Those who choose to be faithful and wait on the LORD, even when circumstances are bad, will be blessed beyond imagination.

Is. 64:5 Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, *those that remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.*

I think the CJB came closer to the meaning than most of the other translations: “*You favored those who were glad to do justice, those who remembered you in your ways. When you were angry, we kept sinning; but if we keep your ancient ways, we will be saved.*”

The prophet is stating truth. God always intercedes (from the Hebrew for *meetest*) for those who are rejoicing in obedience to Him. When we choose to sin in rebellion against God, it invokes His anger. At this point the prophet acknowledges the sin of Judah, his own people; he includes himself as one of

those sinners. It is following God's ways, being obedient to His law and His revealed will that results in salvation. In the church today that will is accepting in faith His Son Jesus as the sacrifice for our sin.

I think there is also a note of expectation in the last part of this verse, since Isaiah knows from God's prophetic revelation to Him that Israel as a nation will one day turn in faith and repentance to God.

Is. 64:6 *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*

Now the prophet again addresses the present condition of the nation. They are unclean (foul, polluted). Whatever righteousness (justice, moral virtue) might be found in the nation is comparable only to "filthy rags" (menstrual cloths according to the Hebrew).

"fade as a leaf" – The key truth here is that our life on earth is temporary. We need to make wise choices and make every minute count.

I think the key truth from the last part of the verse is that sins (plural) gather strength as they are multiplied. The more we choose to sin, the more likely we are to choose to sin more. Isaiah compares it to the effects of a whirlwind (from the Hebrew), a powerful wind that destroys all in its path as it gains speed and strength.

Is. 64:7 *And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.*

As the prophet considers the plight of his people, he is pretty discouraged. He feels like a lone light in the darkness. There doesn't seem to be anyone else who wants to follow God in faith and obedience. Why does he feel that way? Because he sees God's protective hand being lifted and judgment beginning to fall. He knows that the revelation God has given him of coming judgment is true. He knows this judgment is deserved because of their sin.

This is a feeling that is normal, I think, when people of faith are in the small minority. I get that same feeling when I look at what is happening in our own nation and consider how we have basically denied and rejected God as a nation. The future continues to look bleak as to chances of true revival breaking out in light of what scripture reveals about the future. Although we do not know the LORD's timing, we should never give in to the thought that anything is impossible (even revival in America) for the LORD. It just seems as though everything is falling into place prophetically, and that presents a bleak picture for America's future in my opinion. I continue to ask the LORD to increase my faith and to do whatever it takes in my life to make me a vessel of honor that might be able to impact our future for good.

Is. 64:8 But now, O LORD, thou *art* our father; we *are* the clay, and thou our potter; and we all *are* the work of thy hand.

The truth stated by the prophet in this verse is both beautiful and terrible. In context regarding the nation of Israel, YHWH is their father; He brought them into being as a nation.

Just as a potter creates a piece of pottery from clay, God creates each person with a divine purpose. The person that yields to God in obedience and faith becomes a beautiful, useful vessel in the hand of His maker. The person that refuses to follow God in faith and obedience and continues to reject Him will find himself an ugly, wicked vessel that will in no way thwart God's purposes and may even find him an unwilling vessel in the hand of God, as was Pharaoh.

Is. 64:9 Be not wroth very sore, O LORD, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech thee, we *are* all thy people.

Isaiah continues to intercede on behalf of his nation. He is asking for mercy in the midst of coming judgment. The beautiful truth of scripture states that when God forgives, He remembers our sins no more. He removes those sins "as far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12). Isaiah is interceding for his people as God's unique chosen possession. The prophets all were attuned to the fact that God is jealous for His name and His glory; they are ever quick to remind Him that the people of the nations will characterize Him according to His workings with His people. That truth includes the body of true believers today just as surely as it did the Jewish people to whom Isaiah prophesied.

Is. 64:10 Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation.

Is. 64:11 Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste.

Little did Isaiah know that he was speaking a prophecy that would apply more than once to the nation of Israel. I believe the holy cities are a reference to the nation in general, holy because the nation as a whole had been specifically chosen by God as His unique possession and the land designated as theirs by His decree.

The "holy and beautiful house" is a reference to the temple. The armies of Nebuchadnezzar burned the temple when they conquered the city in 588 BC as did the legions of Titus in 70 AD. At both times the city was ransacked and destroyed and the people driven out. I believe scripture reveals that there is further destruction that will come upon Jerusalem and Israel, especially during the last half of the tribulation; and it would not surprise me for the temple that will exist in the tribulation period to be destroyed in the same way. Ezekiel was given the revelation of the specifics concerning the building and furnishing of the millennial temple (chapters 40-47), and it would seem that Messiah will personally oversee its construction. Zechariah seems to affirm this.

Zechariah 6:12-13 “And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”

Is. 64:12 **Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O LORD? wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?**

The reference to these questions appears to be the two preceding verses. The prophet is asking the Lord to consider how the conquering nations have treated **His** people, **His** city, **His** temple and **His** land. As He considers these things, will He not have mercy and temper the judgment of His people—not because the people deserve it, but in regard for His glorious name?