

Isaiah 18 - 19 – June 3, 2021

God Won't give Up

Pastor JD Farag

Good evening and welcome to our midweek Bible study. We're so very glad that you're joining us tonight. On Thursday nights, we're going through the Bible book-by-book, chapter-by-chapter, and verse-by-verse. Tonight, we're really looking forward to what we have here in the book of Isaiah. We finished a couple of weeks ago, actually, chapter 17. Tonight, Lord willing, we are going to complete chapters 18 and 19. We'll invite you to turn there at this time.

At the end of the Bible study, we're going to partake together at the Lord's table, so we would also encourage you if you'd like to join us to have the elements ready as well. Before we get started, if you would please join with me in a word of prayer, and we'll ask God to bless our time together in His Word.

Loving Heavenly Father, we're just so, so very grateful to You. It's really impossible to thank You enough for this special time that we have as a church body and for those that are joining us online. We put everything aside at this time and focus our attention on You, Your Word, put aside all the busyness of our lives, all the distractions, the cares, the affairs, and just open up our bibles and open up our hearts, and open up our eyes and ears so that we can hear from You and be ministered to by You. That's why we're here tonight, Lord. We're here because we want to hear You speak into our lives, in and through Your Word as You always do and as only You can. Lord, for the many that are here or joining with us that are hurting, Lord, I just pray that You'll encourage, strengthen, bless, renew, again as only You can. We just commit our Bible study to You tonight and ask Your blessing on it in Jesus' name. Amen and amen. All right.

Again, I have to confess I've been really looking forward to tonight's study, these two chapters, particularly chapter 19 as we're about to see. Actually, both chapters have woven into the fabric of these prophecies concerning God's plan, yet future, in the end.

What's so encouraging about these particular prophecies in these two chapters is at the end, as we're about to see, God is so good, so merciful, so gracious. God never gives upon us. God loves us so much. We're about to read where we're told that the Ethiopians will worship the Lord, the Egyptians, my people, are blessed by the Lord. The Lord actually calls Egypt His people. Egypt, not Israel, the Egyptians. He calls them His people. The Assyrians are the area we would know today as modern-day Iraq, in that area in the Middle East, the Assyrians.

The Lord says they will be the work of His hands, and of course, Israel His inheritance. That's going to be the takeaway as we're going to see tonight from these two chapters. It's that God loves us. It's not God's will that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. God won't give up on us. God never gives upon us. He has a plan for us. God is merciful to us. His hand is upon us, and His blessing is upon us as well.

Before we jump into chapter 18, I need to preface it because it's going to be germane to our understanding of what's here. First, a very short chapter, only seven verses; however, it is the most difficult of the prophecies in the entirety of the book of Isaiah. How's that for an introduction? One commentator said it this way, "Although the prophecy is a short one, it probably ranks as the most obscure chapter of all 66 chapters in the book of Isaiah.

Something else I want to point out before we get started in this chapter, it's that in Isaiah's day, Ethiopia, it's not like as we know it today. It was a world power, and at this time, it was ruling over Egypt as an enemy of Assyria. We've been learning about the Assyrians and the prophecies concerning how the Assyrians would come and invade from the North, and this was a prophecy that would be fulfilled.

But as we get into now what is referred to as the "book of burdens," until we get to chapter 23, "the burden of the Lord," really the prophecy of the Lord, a weighty, heavy, burdensome prophecy that Isaiah was commanded to proclaim and prophecy. These are dual prophecies, meaning that they

Isaiah 18 - 19 – June 3, 2021

God Won't give Up

Pastor JD Farag

would have their fulfillment then, but they would also have their fulfillment - yet future. We saw that particularly in chapter 17 as it relates to Damascus, Syria.

Now pictured here is a map that shows Ethiopia as much larger than the modern-day country of Ethiopia as we know it today. It actually encompassed an area of Sudan and also Somalia. This was a major world ruler at the time, and that's what this prophecy is going to be about here in Isaiah 18.

Now, why is this important? Because Ethiopia is seeking an alliance with Judah against Assyria, the mighty Assyrians, which is the first part of this prophecy. Now, we're going to see God's response to this invitation to form this alliance between Judah and Ethiopia against the Assyrians. Spoiler alert: God says, no need. That's a very loose paraphrase, but basically no need for the alliance. That's your plan, but listen to My plan, and that's where it gets interesting.

Let's jump in, verse 1. "Woe to the land shadowed with buzzing wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, which [verse 2] sends ambassadors by sea, even in vessels of reed on the waters, saying, "Go, swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth of skin, to a people terrible from their beginning onward, a nation powerful and treading down, whose land the rivers divide. All inhabitants [verse 3] of the world and dwellers on the earth: When He lifts up a banner on the mountains, you see it. And when He blows a trumpet, you hear it. For so the Lord said to me [verse 4], I will take my rest, and I will look from my dwelling place like clear heat in the sunshine, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest. For before the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, He will both cut off the sprigs [which are the shoots] with pruning hooks and take away and cut down the branches. They will be left together for the mountain birds of prey and for the beasts of the earth. The birds of prey will summer on them, and all the beasts of the earth will winter on them."

Now, verse 7, we turn this corner, and we're told, "In that time [yet future] a present will be brought to the Lord of hosts from a people tall and smooth of skin, and from a people terrible from their beginning onward, a nation powerful and treading down whose land the rivers divide [listen] to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, to Mount Zion." Did you catch that?

In other words, the Ethiopians will yet future according to this prophecy, come to worship the Lord at Mount Zion. How about I say it like this for lack of a better way of saying it. God loves the Ethiopian people. God has a plan for the Ethiopian people. It is believed that this prophecy will be fulfilled possibly during the Kingdom Age, the Millennial Reign, that 1000-year reign here on earth as it was pre-sin entering the earth.

I mean, no eye has seen, no ear has heard. I mean, we at best, as Paul says, see through a glass darkly. There's no way we can possibly comprehend what that's going to be like. Maybe since I opened up that can, I might as well just spread a little bit more of the spread on the bread, so to speak, because the Millennium is amongst the most stunning of all of the truths and prophecies in all of Scripture.

Do you realize that we are going to be ruling and reigning with Christ during that 1000-year period? Some have suggested that it will be this enforced righteousness where we rule and reign – and there will be those in the Millennium that will have bodies like did Adam and Eve. That's why they're going to live for 1000 years. They're going to have children, and their children are going to have children, and their children are going to have children, ad infinitum. Some mathematicians, bless their hearts, those that can do this; I have great respect for them. They've actually calculated the number of people that would be born during the Millennium, and it is an astronomical number.

Then at the end of the 1000 years, Satan, who has been sent with a chain to the bottomless pit for those 1000 years, unable to tempt, will be loosed one last time. Can you believe that there will be those born during the Millennium who have their bodies like Adam and Eve - we're going to have our glorified bodies.

Isaiah 18 - 19 – June 3, 2021

God Won't give Up

Pastor JD Farag

These are people that will make it through the tribulation, having neither accepted Christ nor accepting the mark of the Antichrist because it's appointed unto men once to die and then the judgment. Somehow, they're going to live outside this one-world economic system, the beast system, the Antichrist system. They will somehow survive and make it through to the end of the tribulation, and they will enter the Millennium. These are people that have not come to Christ.

I really am pouring out the spread, aren't I? It's a gift or a curse; I don't know which one. So, they will have neither accepted Christ nor the Antichrist. They will enter the Millennium, and they will be prolific. They will have bodies as Adam and Eve did. They will have children and grandchildren and great-great-great-great-great-great-great grandchildren. Now at the end of the Millennium, they have to choose, and Satan will be loosed and living during those 1000 years. Some will choose Satan, and then that's the judgment. The others will choose Christ, and then after the Millennium, after those 1000 years, then begins eternity future, the new heavens, and the new earth for all eternity.

You know we talk about heaven, we talk about the rapture, we talk about the 7-year tribulation, we talk about the Second Coming, but we kind of skip over - we got another 1000 years to go, baby, another 1000 years. It's just going to be incredible! And the earth is going to be like it was in the Garden of Eden. We have no idea really what Earth will look like, but this is when chapters like this, prophecies like this, are believed to find their ultimate fulfillment.

Now, let's get into chapter 19. I have to preface this chapter as well. I hope I didn't jam your gears on the whole Millennium thing. Maybe I need to do a study on it. It's actually throughout Scripture, many places you'll find. I would really encourage you to do a study in your own time in God's Word of the Millennium. Revelation Chapter 20; you'll find references to it in the Old Testament. We've seen references throughout our study of the Old Testament, but for tonight I'll end it there. Let's close in prayer. Sorry about that.

Chapter 19; this is a prophecy concerning Egypt, and here's the thing: This is in play currently. Chapter 19 of Isaiah is in play currently and will be fulfilled yet future ultimately. Now, we're going to begin in verse 1. We're going to take just the first couple of verses to start with "The burden against Egypt" [or the prophecy concerning Egypt]. "Behold, the Lord rides on a swift cloud and will come into Egypt. The idols of Egypt will totter at His presence, and the heart of Egypt will melt in its midst." I really want to draw your attention to verse 2. "I will set Egyptians against Egyptians. Everyone will fight against his brother and every one against his neighbor, city against city, kingdom against kingdom."

Now stop right there. Right out of the chute, we see the beginning of this prophecy being fulfilled in our day, present day. Actually, it's believed that it started ten years ago with the Arab Spring back in January of 2011. Pictured here is Tahrir Square in Cairo, which, as some of you doubtless remember, was the scene of graphic violence with Egyptian fighting and rising up against Egyptian. Interesting, brother against brother.

This was when the Muslim Brotherhood was now fighting against the regime at the time. What is his name – It escapes me. I know that it was Mohamed Morsi of the - what was the president - Mubarak, right? Mubarak was the president at the time, and he was removed. This was a bloody battle that would last long enough to change the complexion and the landscape geopolitically and prophetically of Egypt from that day forward, never has been the same since.

We're going to see now as we get further into this prophecy., verse 3, "The spirit of Egypt will fail in its midst. I will destroy their counsel, and they will consult the idols and the charmers, the mediums, and the sorcerers. And [verse 4] the Egyptians I will give into the hand of a cruel master, and a fierce king will rule over them, says the Lord, the Lord of hosts."

Isaiah 18 - 19 – June 3, 2021

God Won't give Up

Pastor JD Farag

Now there's a lot of debate and speculation amongst Bible commentators as to who this fierce king will be. Some suggested that it was actually the Muslim Brotherhood at the time. Others suggest this will be during the 7-year tribulation, and this will be the fierce rule of the Antichrist. Others suggest, no, this will come at some other time - yet future. Verse 5, "The waters [speaking of the Nile River, by the way] will fail from the sea, and the river will be wasted and dried up. The rivers will turn foul. The brooks of defense will be emptied and dried up. The reeds and rushes will wither. The papyrus reeds by the river, by the mouth of the river, and every thing sown by the river will wither, be driven away, and be no more."

I would suggest that this too is being fulfilled present day. My wife and I - it was 1997, so 14 years before the Arab Spring in 2011. We went to Egypt and stayed with my aunt. She lives in Giza, which is where the pyramids are. We went around the country, and of course, I've shared the famous actually infamous taxi ride. I don't want to go there tonight, but when we took this taxi from Cairo to Alexandria - that was my father's birthplace. We wanted to spend some time in Alexandria, a beautiful place, by the way, you know right there on the coast of the Mediterranean. My wife and I are walking on the beach. The water is the same color as Kahlua beach, that bright teal color.

But there's only one difference; well, there's actually more than one difference, but the biggest difference was there wasn't anybody on the beach. We did see a couple of people on the beach, but they were all, of course as Muslims, covered up. Nobody was sunbathing; I can assure you of that. But here's this beautiful, I mean breathtaking place.

Then you look there at the city and here's the description. It's not what it once was, what it used to be. It has withered away. So, on this ride, we had missed the train because of traffic in Cairo. Listen, you haven't lived until you've driven - actually, I wouldn't recommend it until you've tried to drive in Cairo. Unbelievable. But we missed the train, and so we had to take this cab. It's about a 2, 2.5-hour drive, and some of the places that we were going were along the Nile River. There's no AC in the car. It's 195° with the wind chill. I got to tell you, I don't know how to describe this, and I don't mean to be gross, but the stench from the dried-up Nile was something that you would never want to smell in your life. It was horrific. There are no words to describe how foul it was.

Then I read here in verse 6 the rivers will turn foul. We're going to see next that the Nile River is like their primary source. That's how they make their living, the fishing industry, the food; it's the water source. Yet you look around where the Nile is today, and everything is dried up, withered up, wasted away. The Nile River, because of the Aswan Dam, by the way, has actually dried up, exactly as it says here, present day.

Verse 8, "The fishermen also will mourn. All those will lament who cast hooks into the river. And they will languish who spread nets on the waters. Moreover, those who work in fine flax and those who weave fine fabric will be ashamed, and its foundations will be broken. All who make wages will be troubled of soul. Surely the princes of Zoan are fools. Pharaoh's wise counselors give foolish counsel. How do you say to Pharaoh, "I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?" Where are they? Where are your wise men? Let them tell you now, and let them know what the Lord of hosts has purposed against Egypt."

In other words, the economy in Egypt will be decimated. There was one night there in the hotel where there was a wedding. My wife and I happened to be in the lobby, and I talked with one of the guys working at the hotel. My Arabic is not very good, especially the Egyptian dialect, very different from the Arabic that I learned, but I could carry on a conversation with him. I was just kind of talking story with him a little bit, and he's so excited about the wedding. And I asked him, I said, so you work here at the hotel? He said yes, and he made a comment. It was really - I don't know how we got there, but basically, when he found out I'm from America, it was kind of like, you are from America? Yeah. Oh, they would do anything to come to America.

Isaiah 18 - 19 – June 3, 2021

God Won't give Up

Pastor JD Farag

In fact - why not? At the hotel we were staying at, I'm there at the counter, and the guy behind the counter, unbeknownst to me, I'm so, you know, innocent in this regard. He was actually trying to figure out how to get a bribe from me, and I didn't catch it. I'm like, what is the matter with you, in Arabic. We actually kind of got into a - you know how Arabs are anyway. They're just having a conversation; you'd think they're arguing just because of how harsh the language is. So, we're going back and forth, and it's getting a little bit heated and then come to find out that what he really wanted was my information because he wanted to immigrate to America.

He needed a sponsor, and he wanted to get his family out of Egypt. Do you want to know why? Because the average Egyptian lives in a place with a dirt floor. This employee of the hotel - and he's doing pretty good. He makes, get this: This is 1997. He told me he makes in US dollars every month, the equivalent of \$30 US. I'm like, wow, and I just gave that guy a \$5 tip. No wonder he loves me. I'm thinking, you know, we ain't in Kansas anymore. It's a whole different world over there, total poverty, total poverty.

This is exactly what Isaiah said would happen. They've never recovered, I guess, for lack of a better word. Egypt was the most powerful nation on earth, and now nothing. We stayed in this hotel in Alexandria. It was just a beautiful place. I could just imagine what it was like back in the day. And we're sitting there; we got an ocean view. We're looking at this beautiful ocean, and all you had to do was just turn about 45°, and you would see just abject poverty, and it was just heartbreaking.

This is the prophecy that we have here in Isaiah 19. Verse 13, "The princes of Zoan have become fools. The princes of Noph are deceived. They have also deluded Egypt, those who are the mainstay of its tribes. The Lord [verse 14] has mingled a perverse spirit in her midst. And they have caused Egypt to err in all her work, as a drunken man staggers in his vomit." That's TMI right there; that's quite the imagery, isn't it? "Neither [verse 15] will there be any work for Egypt, which the head or tail, palm branch or bulrush, may do. In that day [here we go again now, verse 16] Egypt will be like a woman and will be afraid and fear because of the waving of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which He waves over it, and [verse 17] the land of Judah will be a terror to Egypt. Everyone who makes mention of it will be afraid in himself because of the counsel of the Lord of hosts, which He has determined against it." Wow!

Again, present-day Israel is the terror of Egypt. Who would have ever believed? This is a present-day fulfillment of this prophecy. Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, who we were privileged to have here when he spoke back in March of 2015, had this to say in his book, "Footsteps of the Messiah."

"Never in ancient history has this been true, only since 1948, and especially since the Six-Day War have the Egyptian forces evidenced the fear portrayed in this passage. There has been fear and dread of Israel ever since. With Egypt having lost four wars against Israel with heavy casualties [and heavy casualties] the fear is deeply rooted. Prophetically [still quoting] today is still the period of Isaiah 19:16-17."

It's happening now exactly as the Prophet Isaiah recorded some 2500 plus years ago, and now it's coming to pass exactly as we were told it would. Now it gets better. We got another "in that day." Every time we read "and in that day," we're talking about a yet-future day when this happens.

Listen to this. "In that day, five cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear by the Lord of hosts. One will be called the City of Destruction. In that day [verse 19] there will be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt." Yes, I read that right. Did you hear that? Okay, I'm going to read it again. Just indulge me.

"In that day [verse 19] there will be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the Lord at its border. And it will be for a sign and for a witness to the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt, for they will cry to the Lord because of the oppressors [hang on to that]. And He will send

Isaiah 18 - 19 – June 3, 2021

God Won't give Up

Pastor JD Farag

them a Savior [That's capitalized, that's Jesus] and a Mighty One [that's capitalized]. That's the Savior of the world that God is going to send to Egypt. And Egypt is calling out, crying out to Him because of their oppression. Sadly, that's what it takes sometimes, doesn't it, in order for us to call upon the name of the Lord, to cry out to the Lord. There has to be adversity, a trial, adversity strikes. There's oppression; there's depression, there's a struggle, there's a difficulty. Hey, whatever it takes; if that's what it takes for Egypt, then so be it. And God sends them the Savior, a Mighty One, and He will deliver them.

Verse 21, "Then the Lord will be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the Lord in that day, and will make sacrifice and offering; yes, they will make a vow to the Lord and perform it." Wait, when is this going to happen? Again, it's believed this will be fulfilled during the Millennial Reign, which would be an indication that there will be areas that will be known. Perhaps there will be an area known as Egypt. They will have an altar to the Lord in Egypt. They will call upon the Lord in Egypt. And it even gets better.

"And the Lord will strike Egypt [verse 22]. He will strike and heal it. They will return to the Lord, and He will be entreated by them and heal them. In that day [verse 23], there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria." What? Wait, I thought Assyria were the bad guys. No, not so fast. Wait till you hear what God says about the Assyrians here. "And the Assyrians will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will serve with the Assyrians."

And it even gets better; I'm sorry if that sounds like an infomercial where they - that's not all, there's more! Verse 24, "In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria – a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying," Now listen to this and I want to spend just a little bit of time on this. "Blessed is Egypt My people [My people, Egypt] and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance."

Bear with me if you would, please. In recent months I have sensed from the Lord, and this is a work that God is doing in my own life as it relates to how I see other people. Because truth be known everything and everyone wants to get everyone fighting with everyone. Would you agree with me? The TV; now it didn't use to be as bad. It's always been bad, but it's never been this bad. It's all programmed. It's all propaganda to get you and me to hate them, despise them, and make them the enemy. They're not the enemy. They're the mission field.

Let me say that again. I'm not trying to be - I don't have to try; it comes very easy. I'm not trying to be snarky here, okay? Did Jesus die for them too? Yes. Yeah, but they don't share my political views. Oh, really? Did you know - I know this might be a shock to you. I know it was to me! I mean, it was an epiphany when God just got a hold of me, got me all to Himself, He got my undivided attention, sat me down - sit down, boy, we need to talk. Jesus was of no political affiliation. That's going to mess some people up, and I make no apologies because it's the truth.

Here's my struggle if I could be so candid. We are living in a day now where being a Republican is synonymous with being an Evangelical. I'm sorry, you're going to have to forgive me on this one, but I can't find that anywhere in Scripture. I see nowhere in Scripture where the Savior had a particular political affiliation. In fact, the argument could be made - again, just bear with me - the argument could be made, and I'm speaking more in terms of America for those of you online that are in other countries, the argument could be made that when Jesus was here and were Jesus to be here now in this political climate that we're in, He would probably have dinner with Democrats. Are you okay with that? Hmm.

I often wonder if Jesus were here - let's say He was here on Oahu. Where do you think He would go? What do you think His first stop would be? I mean after he came here, of course, to Calvary Chapel Kaneohe. But I mean after that, where do you think He would go? He would go and seek out the least and the last. He came for the sick. In the Gospels, I am convicted because I see how Jesus was

Isaiah 18 - 19 – June 3, 2021

God Won't give Up

Pastor JD Farag

attracted to the outcasts. He was attracted to the prostitutes, the drug dealers, the drug addicts, the homeless, the demon-possessed, the mentally ill. In fact, if I'm not mistaken, and I know I'm not, but if I understand the Gospel accounts, the harshest words that ever came out of the Savior's mouth were reserved for the religious leaders of the day.

Here's where I'm going with this. The Arab people: God loves them. God has a plan for them; it's right here. They're not the enemy. Yeah, but they're Muslims. Jesus loves them, and by the way, did you know that today as we speak, Muslims in the Middle East are coming to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ by the multitudes? The Iranians, the Persian people in Iran; you have no idea. You want to talk about China? Let's talk about China. Do you know in China right now, the underground church is growing, and multitudes of Chinese people are coming to a saving knowledge of Christ? We're not going to hear about it. We'll know soon enough. I think we're going to be astonished.

But here in America, I'm sorry. You know there was a day not long ago when the United States was sending missionaries to these countries with the Gospel and now do you know the hardest place to evangelize? It's the United States of America. Go to Japan. Talking with JB when she was here. People are hungry; people are coming to the Lord, people are calling upon the name of the Lord.

Let me end this way, and then we'll partake together of the Lord's table. Maybe this is a word for somebody tonight. Never, ever, ever, ever, ever give up on anybody. I mean, I know you're looking at them. Maybe somebody's coming to mind right now as I'm saying this, and you're thinking to yourself, there is no way. No - way. There is a way. Jesus is The Way, The Truth, and The Life. Never ever give up on them. God doesn't give up on them. Never give up praying for them. I mean, I know it may even seem like the more you pray for them, the worse it gets. The more you try to share with them, they block you on social media. I get it, been there; I know what that's like, but never give up on them. You never, ever know.

One real quick story. So I got saved; I was living with two friends as roommates, and it was horrible. I mean, I was horrible; I was just horrible. I was the last person you would have ever thought of. I mean, even my classmates; in fact, we had our 10-year reunion. This is on the mainland, and it was at the first church that I had planted on the mainland. My small class, but my 10-year reunion was at the church that I was the pastor of. I'm convinced that they came to the reunion just because they had to see it for themselves. Are you a pastor? Yeah. Wow, if God could do that with you, if you can get saved, oh my goodness, anybody can get saved! That's not an insult, by the way, don't take it as such. I just say praise the Lord. God chooses the foolish to confound the wise, the weak to shame the strong. You're the last; you're the least.

God who never gives up on us - we call upon Him, and He rushes in. He sends us a Savior, and He delivers us, and He saves us. As one said, "From the gutter-most to the uttermost." And I was pretty gutter-most. I was there all the way down. I was just a horrible person, a horrible person. I wouldn't - if I was in heaven close in proximity to God when I called upon the name of the Lord, and I was maybe one of the angelic hosts, I would have said to the Lord, this is not a good deal, do not accept this one. This guy is trouble with a capital T, and it's like God's saying, I know. Watch Me now. Watch what I'm going to do. Oh, it sounds like you've given up on him; I haven't.

So anyway, I'm praying for my roommates. They kicked me out because they just got tired of it. I had come out there drinking, doing drugs, getting drunk, getting high, and I'm coming out with my Bible, and I'm - you know how when you first come to the Lord. You're so on fire for the Lord. My theology, the extent of my theology, was like this, Jesus is real! Jesus is really real, really real! Jesus is real; you need Jesus; He's real! That was it; that was the only thing I knew. I hadn't got, you know, through the Bible yet. They're like, get out of here! In fact, move out of here, and so I did. I never stopped praying for them.

Isaiah 18 - 19 – June 3, 2021

God Won't give Up

Pastor JD Farag

15 years go by, and I get a call from one of my roommates. And he says to me, Wa - that was my name, Wa, Wahid, Wa for short. Never mind; I'm still scarred from that. He said, Wa, I did it. I said, what'd you do? He said I gave my life to the Lord. You would think that I would just be rejoicing. I wasn't. I was like, dude, what do you think, 15 years, really? What took you so long? I had to repent after that, 15 years. I have to admit; I gave up. I gave up; I thought, man, he's never going to get saved. He was one of my best friends. He's never going to get saved. Then he gets saved!

It's kind of like, wow, Lord, thank You for not giving up on him because I did. God is not going to give up on you. God is not going to give up on them. It is not God's will that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. God loves you so much, and He will never give up on you.

One last thing, and this will be the last, last thing. I know there are many because we get prayer requests all the time that have wayward daughters and prodigal sons. That's got to be the hardest. That's just got to be so hard, and I understand it. I've actually tasted from that cup. I really want to encourage you to never, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever give up. Yeah, but Pastor, you don't understand; it's getting worse. This is getting really bad. Don't give up.

Here's why. God loves them more than you ever could. You have a finite love for them as your child, as their parent, but God has an infinite love for them. Here's the thing: God wants them right with Him more than even you do. Think about that. Never, ever give up on them. God's not going to give up on them. You keep praying for them. Maybe it's 15 years; it better not be 15 years. I don't think we have 15 more years, but God knows. God knows.

I always look forward to Communion on the first Thursday of the month. Luke's Gospel Chapter 22 is my favorite account of what we affectionately refer to as the Last Supper. Luke by the Holy Spirit writes, "That when the hour had come, he [speaking of Jesus] sat down and the 12 apostles with Him. Then He said to them, "With fervent desire, I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." He's about to go to the cross, and He's told him as much. "For I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God." "Then He took the cup and gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves. For I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the Kingdom of God comes."

This is the second time now that He said that. When He says that what He means by that is what they're about to do there in that upper room celebrating the Passover, the last time they will celebrate the Passover together, Jesus is saying this is the last time, that's why we called the Last Supper. But there is coming a time when we will do what we're about to do again, and it's going to be when what we're doing here tonight finds its ultimate fulfillment in My kingdom. Do you know what that is? That's the Wedding Feast of the Lamb. In other words, what we're about to do tonight, we are going to do with Him as His bride, by His side at the wedding feast, the Wedding Supper of the Lamb. We are going to partake together with Him. Is that chicken skin?

Verse 19, Luke writes, "And He took bread, He gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." If you take the packaging, those of you that are here, those of you online, if you just take the bread. Hold onto it for a moment before we partake.

We hold in our hands a symbol of the body of Jesus Christ that was broken. Brokenness always precedes the blessing. Notice He broke it, then blessed it. When He fed the multitudes, He broke the bread before He blessed it, and then He multiplied it miraculously and fed the multitudes. The brokenness always precedes the blessing. I think of Jacob. I can't wait to meet this guy in heaven—very strong personality.

Do you know he wrestled with the Lord all night? That's the Lord, that's a Christophany, a pre-Bethlehem appearance of Christ. And he's demanding that the Lord bless, and the Lord's like I can't

Isaiah 18 - 19 – June 3, 2021

God Won't give Up

Pastor JD Farag

bless you until I break you first. So, they wrestle all night, and then finally, I'm sure he is so exhausted. The Lord touches his hip; many believe his hip socket and breaks it, and then He blesses him. We devalue broken things, not in God's economy. We discard broken things. We look down on brokenness. It's a sign of failure, and we devalue brokenness.

But brokenness in the eyes of the Lord is beautiful, for He himself was broken. His body is broken in seven places, by the way. Not His bones; no bones could be broken according to the Passover prophecy. But His body, His skin was broken, and He bled from seven places, seven, the number of completion. We'll talk about that when we partake together of the cup.

But would you partake of the bread with me? Thank you, Lord. Lord, thank You for giving us this to do in remembrance of You as often as we do. Truly we need this reminder of what You did for us, that You purchased us. We are purchased with a price. We are not our own. You purchased us, and it cost You everything. Your body broken; Your blood shed to pay in full.

We're that pearl of great price, and it cost You everything just so You could get that pearl. We're the pearl! Oh, how you must love us, Lord. Greater love hath no man that he laid down his life for another. Lord, I pray if there's anybody here tonight who are watching online that has allowed the enemy to start planting those seeds of doubt about Your love for them, I pray that it would stop right here and right now.

That Lord, You would remind them of what the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 8 about just how much You love us. That there's nothing that could separate us from the love that You have for us; neither height, nor depth, nor angels, nor principalities, nor power, nor any created thing. No thing, no one could ever separate us from the love that You have for us. P

lease Lord, just a much-needed reminder, and that's what this is for us tonight. A remembrance, a reminder of just how much You love us. You love us so much. Thank You, Lord. Luke goes on to write, "Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."

Again, if you'll peel back the top part, and for those of you online if you'll just take the cup and hold onto it again for a moment. You know again a symbol: These are symbols that we hold in our hands that we're partaking of together tonight. But this cup symbolizes the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The Bible says there is no remission of sin without the shedding of blood. You know we sing it, we say it, we post it, pastors preach it: There's power in the blood. That preaches, yeah? Did you like that? Can I do it again? I'm going to. There's power in the blood. That felt good. There is, you know?

Do you know how powerful the blood of Jesus Christ is? This symbol that we hold in our hand is a reminder that the blood of Jesus Christ is so powerful that it removes our sin though it be as scarlet; He makes it white as snow. That's powerful. He removes it as far as the East is from the West. Aren't you glad that it's not the North from the South because eventually going to come back around but East to West? Never. That's powerful and even more powerful. How's this one? He remembers them no more. Now that's tough, right? Because we remember them and if we forget, isn't the enemy right there going? Oh, you forgot about that, didn't you? He reminds you, and what do you do when that happens? Don't go back to the Lord and ask for forgiveness because you're reminding Him because He remembers no more. He forgot. I forgot all about that. I remember your sin no more. Why do you have to remind me of it? I've removed it as far as the East is from the West because it's already been paid for. It's already been paid for; it's already been taken care of.

I think I need to share this, and I know I'm going a little bit over; just bear with me. This is important; maybe this is for somebody here tonight or watching, maybe more than one. When we read in Romans 8:1 that "There is therefore now no condemnation [or guilt] for those that are in Christ Jesus." Do you know what the implications of that are? When we sin, we need not allow the enemy

Isaiah 18 - 19 – June 3, 2021

God Won't give Up

Pastor JD Farag

to build an infrastructure of guilt and condemnation. If we are experiencing guilt and condemnation when, not if we sin, and we sin, we only need to experience that guilt for as long as it takes us to get to the cross to confess it. That's why Satan tries to keep you from doing that because, you see, condemnation distances you from God. Whereas conviction draws you nearer to God. That's how you can tell the difference.

Here's what it sounds like. I know this is similar to you like it is for me. So, I mess up. There's the enemy right there going; you call yourself a pastor? What are you preaching on this week, preacher? You're a hypocrite. I don't know, man, maybe if I were you, I'd lay low. Maybe you ought to have Pastor Mac fill in for you. I shouldn't have said that because now when Pastor Mac fills in for me, which he's going to, you're going to think, oh, what did he do? No, no, no, no, no. I'm telling you it's a gift and a curse, maybe. For you, it maybe sounds something like this. I don't know; if I were you, I wouldn't pray. You'd better give God a few days on this one. I sure wouldn't go to church, my goodness. After what you did, again?

That's the enemy building an infrastructure of guilt to keep you away from the one who paid in full for that guilt and removes it because of the power of His blood shed in our stead. And when you partake with me, will you just allow the Holy Spirit, that still, small voice of the Holy Spirit, unfettered access to that deep recess in your heart? And there's something there that doesn't belong there that you've allowed to take up residence there, and the Lord wants it out. He wants to cleanse. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us of all unrighteousness. It is all paid for. Would you partake with me?

Then please stand after you do, and we'll have the worship team come up and close us in song? I appreciate your patience. I know I went a little bit over. I never like to rush Communion, though, you know? Thank you, Lord. Loving Heavenly Father, we've just done that which You gave us to do in remembrance of You. I've got to believe that tonight, we've communed with You and You with us, supped with You and You with us. Lord, as we now bring the Bible study to an end and go our separate ways, I pray that there will just be this sense that something happened here tonight between You and us. Perhaps a reconciliation, a restoration, a forgiveness, a cleansing, a new beginning, a fresh start, a new hope. Lord, thank You that You never give up on us. Thank You that You love us so much in Jesus' name. Amen.