

# Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



## Lord, I Don't Deserve You. But I NEED You!

Rabbi Cosmo Panzetta

### Devotion and Discussion Questions

**Key Texts (TLV):** Isa 64:1-7; Is. 40:31; Ps. 18:5-19; 1 Cor. 2:7-9

There are moments in life when we realize that our greatest need is not simply for circumstances to change, but for God Himself to break into our situation. Isaiah 64 is the cry of a people who know they have wandered far from the Lord and cannot rescue themselves. This is not the prayer of people demanding their rights or insisting that God owes them something. It is the desperate cry of those who know the distance between themselves and God is self-inflicted, yet who also know that His mercy is their only hope. The intercessor cries out, *"Oh, that You would rend the heavens and come down!"* (Is. 63:19b). He remembers that God has intervened before, and he longs for the Presence of the Lord to break in once again.

What makes this prayer so powerful is its honesty. Isaiah is not trying to sound polished or composed. The language is abrupt, emotional, and full of heartache because the speaker is pouring out his soul before God. He remembers the mighty deeds of the Lord in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and throughout Israel's history, and he wonders why the Lord seems silent now. Yet even in confusion, he keeps praying. He keeps crying out. Deep down, he knows there is no other God like the God of Israel—the God who acts on behalf of those who wait for Him. This chapter reminds us that when we have nothing left to stand on, we can still fall upon the mercy and character of God.

#### 1. CRY OUT FOR GOD'S PRESENCE AGAIN

Isaiah's prayer begins with a longing for God to come down in power and holiness. *"As fire kindles brushwood, as fire causes water to boil, make Your Name known to Your foes"* (Is. 64:1). Throughout Scripture, fire is associated with the Presence of a holy God. Isaiah remembers how the Lord revealed Himself in awe-inspiring ways in the past—parting seas, shaking mountains, defeating enemies, and rescuing His people in ways no one could have imagined. The intercessor believes that if God would reveal His Presence again, everything could change. Hardened hearts could soften. Cold souls could begin to burn again. The nations themselves would see the greatness of God.

There is something deeply personal in this cry. Isaiah is not merely asking for outward change; he is asking for God to consume the brushwood of sin and complacency within His people. Sometimes our hearts become lukewarm, distracted, or spiritually numb. We know the right words, but the fire has faded. Isaiah reminds us that what we truly need is not better circumstances, but the nearness of God Himself. We need His Presence to awaken us, refine us, and transform us. The Lord is still able to do what seems impossible. He is still able to shake mountains and intervene in ways we never expected.

#### 2. WAIT ON THE GOD WHO ACTS

Isaiah declares, *"No eye has seen a God except You, who acts on behalf of the one waiting for Him"* (Is. 64:3). This is one of the great themes of Isaiah: waiting on the Lord. Biblically, waiting is not passive resignation. It is patient, confident trust in the character of God even when we

cannot yet see what He is doing. Israel had seen God intervene before in impossible situations, and those memories became the foundation for continued hope. The God who acted in the past was still able to act again. He remained the God who moves on behalf of those who continue to trust Him.

Waiting can feel painful because we often want immediate answers. We want God to explain His timing and remove our struggles quickly. Yet Isaiah teaches us that waiting forms something within us. It teaches dependence, endurance, and deeper trust. *“They who wait for ADONAI will renew their strength”* (Is. 40:31). Waiting means continuing to believe when the situation feels hopeless. It means praying when heaven feels silent. It means clinging to God’s character when our emotions are overwhelmed. The world has many false saviors and temporary solutions, but there is no God like the One who faithfully acts for those who wait upon Him.

### **3. ADMIT YOUR NEED AND RETURN TO THE FATHER**

The prayer becomes painfully honest in Isaiah 64:5–7. The people confess that all their righteousness is like a filthy garment and that their sin has carried them away like the wind. They admit that no one is truly stirring himself up to seek the Lord. This is the tragedy of sin—it dulls our hearts, drains our strength, and slowly pulls us away from living fellowship with God. Isaiah recognizes that the people are not suffering because God is weak or unwilling to save. The problem is their own rebellion and persistent resistance to Him. Yet even here, the prayer does not end in despair.

Instead, Isaiah turns back to hope with the words, *“But now, ADONAI, You are our Father. We are the clay and You are our potter”* (Is. 64:7). This is the heart of repentance. The people acknowledge that they cannot fix themselves. They need the Potter to reshape them. They need the Father to restore them. This is the same pattern we see in the story of the prodigal son. The Father allows the son to experience the emptiness of rebellion, but He remains ready to receive him the moment he turns homeward. God is not looking for perfect people; He is looking for hearts that will call upon Him again. Even when we do not deserve Him, He invites us to return.

### **CONCLUSION**

Isaiah 64 reminds us that desperation can become the doorway to restoration. The people finally realize that their hope is not in their own righteousness, their own strength, or even their religious activity. Their hope is in the mercy of God alone. The Lord had every reason to turn away, yet the intercessor still cries out because he knows the character of God. He knows that the Father’s heart is full of compassion and lovingkindness. Even when sin has left everything barren and desolate, the Lord is still able to reshape what has been ruined.

Perhaps today you feel distant from God. Maybe you recognize areas of compromise, spiritual numbness, or exhaustion in your own life. Isaiah’s prayer gives us permission to be honest before the Lord. Recognizing that we don’t deserve the Lord’s favor, we need to turn back to Him in brokenness and humility and cry out for mercy. The Father is still listening for the voice of His children. He is still the Potter, and we are still the clay. Today, call upon His Name again. Ask Him to soften what has grown hard, awaken what has grown cold, and reshape what has become broken. He is mighty to save.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Why do you think Isaiah's prayer is so emotional and unpolished rather than calm and carefully structured?
2. What does it mean practically to "wait on the Lord" in seasons where God seems silent?
3. Isaiah says that God's Presence could consume the "brushwood" of our lives. What areas of your life might need the refining fire of God right now?
4. Have you ever experienced a season where you realized the distance between you and God was self-inflicted? What helped draw you back to Him?
5. Isaiah calls God the Potter and us the clay. In what ways might God be trying to reshape your heart, priorities, or habits in this season?

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

*Avinu Malkhenu*, Our Father, Our King, we come before You honestly today, recognizing how deeply we need You. We confess that we cannot rescue ourselves, heal ourselves, or sustain ourselves apart from Your Presence. Too often we drift, grow cold, and try to carry burdens in our own strength. Yet You remain compassionate, merciful, and faithful. Thank You for being the God who acts on behalf of those who wait for You.

Lord, rend the heavens and come down into our lives again. Burn away what is unclean, soften what has grown hard, and awaken what has fallen asleep within us. Teach us to wait on You with patient and expectant faith. Shape us as the Potter shapes the clay, and restore us by Your mercy. May our lives reveal Your character and bring glory to Your Name.

*B'Shem Yeshua*, In the name of Yeshua, amen.