



ShalomAZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

“Dwelling in the Presence of the King”

Rabbi Cosmo Panzetta

Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Is 33:13-24; 33:1-12; 37:36; Psalms 15; 24; 45:2-3; 96:1-10; 98:1-3

Isaiah 33 invites us to lift our eyes beyond the devastation right in front of us and to look toward the day when all of it will be a faint memory. Judah is staring down the consequences of trusting human strength, human plans, and human wisdom. The destroyer has come, the traitor has betrayed, and everything they leaned on has failed them. And yet, in the middle of that wreckage, there is a prayer rising up—a prayer that sounds like Hezekiah's prayer later in Is 37: “*Be gracious to us. We wait for You. Be our strength every morning, our salvation in times of trouble*” (Isa. 33:2). This is not a prayer of strategy; it's a prayer of surrender.

What Isaiah shows us is that when human solutions collapse, God does not disappear—He arises. The Lord allows the fruit of our own ways to run its course, not because He is cruel, but because He is faithful. He waits for His people to stop leaning on Egypt, horses, alliances, and clever plans, and to finally look up. And when He stands up, when He is exalted, everything changes. Is. 33 is not only about Assyria's defeat; it is about who can dwell in the presence of a holy King—and what life looks like when the King reigns in beauty.

1. WHEN GOD ARISES, HUMAN STRENGTH IS EXPOSED

The prayer of Judah is answered not with more options, but with God's intervention. The Lord says, “*Now I will arise... now I will be exalted*” (Isa. 33:10). Everything that humanity produces apart from Him is described as grass, hay, and stubble—temporary, fragile, and combustible. Isaiah's language is strong: *your breath*, the spirit of man, becomes the fire that consumes what you've built. This is the picture of being given over to our own ways, reaping exactly what we've sown. Human power, human diplomacy, and human wisdom all collapse under their own weight.

This moment shakes everyone—those far away and those near. The nations are summoned to hear what the Lord has done, and sinners in Zion tremble. The question rises from within God's own people: “*Who among us can live with the consuming fire?*” (Isa. 33:14). This isn't just fear of judgment; it's the realization that God's holiness is not temporary or negotiable. His fire is the fire of His presence. It consumes what does not belong. When the angel of Adonai strikes down the Assyrian army in a single night (Isa. 37:36), the mightiest force on earth is rendered powerless. The Lord alone prevails, and every false confidence is stripped away.

2. WHO CAN DWELL WITH A HOLY KING

The question “*Who can dwell?*” is not about survival—it's about belonging. The word for “live” here carries the sense of sojourning, of dwelling as a guest in a place that is not naturally your home. Who can dwell in the presence of everlasting burnings—the altar fire, the undying holiness of God? Isaiah's answer echoes the entrance liturgies of Psalms 15 and 24. It is not about ritual performance; it is about a life aligned with God's character. “*One who walks righteously, and speaks uprightly... who shakes his hands free from bribes... who stops his ears from hearing bloodshed and shuts his eyes from looking at evil*” (Isa. 33:15).

This is comprehensive—how we walk, how we speak, how we handle power, how we respond to injustice, and what we allow our eyes and ears to dwell on. God has never wanted religious activity without transformed lives. From Isaiah 1 onward, He has been clear: stop doing wrong, learn to do good. The one who makes God’s character the goal of life is the one who can dwell where God dwells.

3. THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY AND THE SECURITY OF HIS REIGN

For the one who walks in God’s ways, Isaiah gives a breathtaking promise: *“He will dwell on the heights... his bread will be given, his water assured”* (Isa. 33:16). The same God who dwells on high invites His people to dwell with Him there. Circumstances no longer dominate because refuge is found in the presence of the King. Then comes the vision: *“Your eyes will see the King in His beauty”* (Isa. 33:17). This is not a passage pointing to Hezekiah. This is the ideal King—the Messiah—whose beauty is described in Psalm 45 as unmatched, eternal, and filled with grace.

Everything that once inspired terror becomes a memory. The invading overlords, those choosing people to go into captivity, the destroyers of cities—all gone. Jerusalem becomes a quiet home, a secure dwelling, a tent that will never be packed up again (Isa. 33:20). The Lord Himself is the river that protects and nourishes His people—life-giving, untouchable by enemy ships. *“Adonai is our Judge... our Lawgiver... our King—He will save us”* (Isa. 33:22). The battle was not won by strength, but by surrender. Even the lame carry off the spoil, because the victory belongs to the Lord. And in the end, no one will say, *“I am sick,”* for their iniquity—their burden—has been lifted away (Isa. 33:24).

CONCLUSION

The invitation to dwell is an invitation to surrender false strength, release compromised ways, and realign your life with the character of the King. If you’ve been limping, weary, or overwhelmed, hear this: the victory was not yours to win. The King has already won it. Come and dwell in His presence. Lay down your plans. Receive forgiveness. Let the burden be lifted. And choose today to walk in His ways, so you may dwell with Him forever.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What “human strengths”/plans do you most often rely on instead of waiting on the Lord?
2. How does Isaiah’s description of God’s holiness challenge casual or complacent faith?
3. What does it practically look like to “walk righteously” in everyday life?
4. How does seeing the King “in His beauty” reshape our understanding of hope and security?
5. Where do you need to stop fighting and trust that the Lord has already won the battle?

CLOSING PRAYER:

ADONAI, we acknowledge that You alone are our Judge, our Lawgiver, and our King. Forgive us for trusting in our own strength, our own wisdom, and our own ways. Lift the burden of our iniquity and teach us to dwell in Your presence. Shape our walk, our words, and our hearts to reflect Your character. Help us wait on You, trust You fully, and rest in the victory You have already won. May our eyes behold the King in His beauty, now and forever.

B’Shem Yeshua, In Yeshua’s Name, Amen.