



# ShalomAZ Ministries

*In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption*

**The Sustenance, Security and Glory this World Offers Won't Last Long**

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## **Devotion and Discussion Questions**

**Key Texts:** Isaiah 21:11-17; Isaiah 16:2-3; Ezek 27:20; 38:13; Matt 6:33

The message of Isaiah 21 is simple but sobering: *the sustenance, the security, and the glory that this world offers won't last long*. You may get occasional sustenance. You may feel temporary moments of security. You may even taste a little glory now and then. But it won't last. None of it compares to what the Lord offers. Isaiah walks us through three burdens—three words—against Babylon, against Edom, and now against Arabia. In each one, there's this sense of people scrambling for help, forming alliances, depending on merchants, warriors, nations, and promises that look sturdy on the outside but collapse almost instantly. And God keeps saying: *Look to Me. I alone am the One who speaks. I alone am the One who sustains. I alone am the One who secures. I alone am the One whose glory endures.*

By the time Isaiah gets to Arabia, you've got caravans on the run, merchants who once had plenty now hiding in brush with no water, no food, no strength. The very people others depended on are now desperate themselves. It's a picture of the futility of trusting in human strength. The nations depend on each other, but all of them are collapsing under the weight—**the kavod**—of war. And the Lord says, "Within a year, all the glory of Kedar will cease." Gone. All the things they gloried in—gone. All the security they thought they had—gone. All the sustenance they could provide—gone. But the Lord? His sustenance, His security, His glory—they are everlasting. The Message: **Stop leaning on what cannot last. Trust in the Lord alone.**

### **1. THE SUSTENANCE OF THIS WORLD IS TEMPORARY (21:13-14)**

Isaiah opens this word against Arabia with a startling picture: the caravans of Dedan—merchants who normally travel prepared, equipped, wealthy—are suddenly fleeing for their lives. These are not the poor; these are the ones who *sell* sustenance. But now they're running from war, driven off the roads into the desert brush, hiding in the scrublands just to survive. They've been pushed so far off the beaten path that even the oasis of Tema is out of reach. Suddenly, those who once to supply others are the ones who are thirsty, exhausted, desperate.

So the Lord gives a command: *"To the thirsty, bring water. Meet the fugitive with food."* Isaiah paints a mini rescue operation—Tema providing water, bread, refuge for caravans who are now refugees. But the sustenance Tema can offer is limited. They can give a cup of water, a loaf of bread—but they can't stop the war. They can't guarantee safety. They can't fix the root problem. Because sustenance apart from the Lord is momentary. Even if you're the one who used to have plenty, all it takes is one crisis—one sword, one bent bow, one unexpected war—and everything you depended on evaporates. We keep trying to supplement and supply our own needs out of our own resources, but eventually those resources run dry.

### **2. THE SECURITY OF THIS WORLD WILL COLLAPSE (21:15)**

Verse 15 reveals why the caravans are fleeing: *"They fled from the swords... from bent bow... from the distress—the weight—of war."* They're running from the very thing they once trusted they could resist. Merchants, nations, warriors—everyone has something they trust in. Everyone has a sense of security they think will hold. But the "weight" (the *kaved*) of war crushes it. And Isaiah uses that same word that elsewhere means *glory* (*kavod*). The very glory of Kedar—their strength, their reputation, their significance—is crushed under a heavier weight.

This is the picture for all of us who lean on the world for security. It works... until it doesn't. People depend on alliances, on nations, on their own cleverness, on their own strength, on their

own network. But the promises of people—just like the promises of nations—are self-serving. When it no longer serves them, they walk away. They break covenant. They break trust. And we're left exposed. But the security the Lord offers? That doesn't collapse. He never walks away. He never breaks His Word. He doesn't depend on circumstances. He *creates* circumstances. The Lord says, "Stop trusting in what cannot hold you. Lean on Me. I alone am your security."

### **3. THE GLORY OF THIS WORLD FADES IN AN INSTANT (21:16-17)**

The Lord speaks clearly—Isaiah emphasizes that it is *Adonai*, the Master, the Sovereign One, who has spoken. "*Within a year... all the glory of Kedar will cease.*" Think about that. Everything they valued. Everything they gloried in. Their significance. Their reputation. Their power. Their mighty warriors. Their archers. The merchants who seemed untouchable. The wealth they carried. The status they enjoyed. God says, "Give it twelve months—and it's gone."

Because human glory always fades. Human glory is always temporary. It can be lost, stolen, ruined, burned. It lasts as long as circumstances hold up. But God's glory doesn't fade. His significance, His kavod, His worthiness, His weight—that is everlasting. And the beauty is: He wants to share *His* glory with His people. Not the flashy glory of the world, but the lasting significance that comes from being His. But we can only share in His glory when we stop fighting for our own. When we stop clinging to our own self-interest. When we stop seeking the approval of others. When we say, "Lord, I trust You. I seek first Your kingdom." Then His security, His sustenance, and His glory become ours—and they last forever.

### **CONCLUSION**

Isaiah 21 gives us three words—three burdens—that point to one truth: *the world cannot solve its own problems*. And the world cannot sustain you, secure you, or glorify you in any lasting way. The nations look to each other for help, but every alliance eventually breaks under pressure. Every promise eventually reveals itself to be self-serving. Every source of sustenance eventually dries up. Every piece of glory eventually fades. But the Lord—His sustenance never runs out, His security never collapses, and His glory never fades. So stop trusting in the world's solutions. Stop fighting to secure your own life by your own strength. Stop reaching for the world's glory. Look to the Lord alone. Trust in Him. His promises are not self-serving. His goodness is not temporary. His glory is not fragile. And His kingdom is everlasting.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Where do you personally tend to look for sustenance, and how does this passage challenge that dependence?
2. What are some ways people today hide "in the brush" when life collapses?
3. Why do you think we are often drawn to human alliances or human promises rather than trusting in God?
4. How does the distinction between temporary glory and God's everlasting glory shape the way you live?
5. What does it look like to seek first God's kingdom rather than your own self-interest?

### **CLOSING PRAYER:**

Abba, we come before You today acknowledging that so often we chase what cannot sustain us, trust in what cannot secure us, and seek glory that cannot last. Forgive us for leaning on the promises and systems of this world. Forgive us for looking to human alliances instead of looking to You. Today we surrender our self-interest, our striving, and our fears into Your hands. Teach us to trust You alone—for our sustenance, for our safety, and for our significance. Help us seek first Your kingdom and Your righteousness. And may Your everlasting glory be reflected in our lives. In Yeshua's mighty name, amen.