



ShalomAZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

Stop the Busy, Restless Search for Help, and Wait on the Lord.

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts: Isaiah 17:12-14; 18:1-7; 2 Kings 19:28-36; Ps. 46:10; Is. 30:15; Ps 20:7

We live in a world that is constantly rushing—always strategizing, planning, and scrambling for solutions. That's exactly what Judah was doing in Isaiah 17 and 18. Instead of trusting God, they were forming alliances, running to other nations for help, and exhausting themselves in fear. The Lord had said, "Ask Me for a sign," but King Ahaz said, "No, I'll ask Assyria instead." How many times do we do that same thing? We run to the strongest option we can see instead of resting in the One who sees it all.

Isaiah's message to Judah—and to us—is this: the nations you're terrified of are like chaff in the wind. They sound powerful, they look unstoppable, but they are lifeless without the wind that drives them. Behind every storm and every power is the hand of the Lord. So stop the restless whirring of your own wings. Stop sending messengers in every direction. Just wait. The ends of the earth you're running to for help will one day be running to Him.

1. The Noise of Nations Cannot Drown Out the Voice of God (17:12-14)

Isaiah describes the Assyrian army like the roaring sea—loud, overwhelming, and relentless. To Judah, it looked like the end. Yet God said He would rebuke the nations and they would scatter like dust before the storm. The problem wasn't Assyria, Babylon, or any other empire. The problem was fear that forgot who was in control.

We can be just like Judah—overwhelmed by the headlines, the chaos, the waves. We start trusting the wrong "kings" for protection: our finances, our networks, our own effort. But every empire, every power that looks so permanent is just chaff on the wind—here today, gone tomorrow. God alone commands the wind. At evening there is terror; by morning, it's gone. That's how quickly God can turn things around. The question is not *how big the waves are* but *whose hand commands the sea*. Don't fix your eyes on the uproar. Listen for His voice through the noise.

2. The Frenzied Search for Help Leads Us Further from God (18:1-2)

Isaiah turns his attention to Cush—modern Ethiopia and Sudan—"the land of whirring wings." It's a poetic picture of restless busyness. Ships are darting up and down the rivers, envoys rushing in every direction, messages flying across borders. Everyone is trying to find a way to survive, to control, to fix things. Judah joined that same frenzy—sending messengers to faraway nations, hoping someone else could save them from Assyria. And God's word through Isaiah was simple: *Stop running*. The Lord was saying, "I'm right here. I've been here the whole time."

How often does our activity become the enemy of our faith? We wear ourselves out chasing human solutions, political alliances, or quick fixes, when God is simply saying, "*Wait for Me*." He doesn't need our frantic energy; He wants our faithful trust. If we'll slow down, we'll find that His presence is already moving quietly on our behalf.

3. The Quiet Presence of God Accomplishes What Our Striving Never Can (18:3–7)

God tells the whole world to *look* and *listen*—because He’s about to act. But His action surprises everyone: “*I will remain quiet*,” He says. Like the shimmering heat in the sunshine or the dew in harvest, His work may seem silent, but it is steady and sure. God’s quiet presence is more powerful than all the world’s armies.

Just like heat ripens the fruit and dew nourishes the harvest, the Lord’s stillness is not inactivity—it’s divine precision. At just the right time, He prunes what needs pruning and cuts back what bears no fruit. And when He acts, His work leaves no doubt. When Sennacherib came against Judah, it wasn’t diplomacy or alliances that saved them—it was the unseen hand of the Lord. One night, 185,000 fell, and the threat vanished.

The end of the story is beautiful: the same nations Judah ran to for help end up bringing tribute to the Lord on Mount Zion. The ends of the earth run to Him! When we finally stop striving and start trusting, we see what He was doing all along—quietly working redemption through every circumstance.

CONCLUSION

The message of Isaiah 17–18 is not “Do more.” It’s “Be still.” Every plan that leaves God out will eventually fail. But those who wait on Him will see Him move with power and precision. The alliances of men crumble; the quiet purposes of God stand forever. So what do we do while we wait? We trust. We listen. We obey. And we worship the One who reigns over every wave, every nation, every fear. Stop running to the ends of the earth for help. The ends of the earth are going to run to Him.

Maybe you’ve been running—racing to fix, to control, to find help. You’ve been sending your “envoys” in every direction, but your heart is exhausted. Today, the Lord says, “Stop. Be still. Return to Me.” His quiet presence is enough. Let Him prune what needs pruning, heal what’s broken, and bring you into rest.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What are some “Assyrias” in your life—threats that make you feel small and powerless?
2. How do you usually respond when God seems silent?
3. In what ways do we “run to Cush” instead of waiting on the Lord?
4. What does God’s quiet work—like heat and dew—teach us about His timing?
5. How can our trust in God become a witness to others, drawing the “ends of the earth” to Him?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Abba, forgive us for our restless running and for seeking help everywhere but You. Teach us to wait in Your presence—to trust Your timing and Your quiet strength. When the nations rage and the storms rise, help us to remember that You alone command the wind and the waves. May Your peace settle over our hearts today. Let Your stillness produce fruit in our lives that brings honor to Your Name. We choose to stop striving and start trusting.

In Yeshua’s mighty name we pray, Amen.