

## Isaiah

Some of my favorite Bible verses come from the Book of Isaiah. My love for the words of Isaiah starts in Chapter 2, verse 4, They will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nations will not take up sword against nation, and they will train for war no more. These words are found in the United States in New York City etched unto the United Nations Building. A community founded to stop wars among nations. In Chapter Five Isiah condemns those who only wish to attain wealth, who spend their lives being consumed by sins, “those who acquit the guilty for a bribe, but deny justice to the innocent.” And a reminder of a hymn we sing in Chapter 6 verse 8, “Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? And I said, “Here I am Lord Send me!” (these words are also found in 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 3 when God called Samuel) Then we are reminded in Chapter 7 verse 9, “If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.” And in verse 14, Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and will call him Emmanuel.’ In Chapter 12 we find words of comfort and encouragement, “Surely God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid. The lord, the Lord, is my strength and song. He has become my salvation.” My very favorite verse from Isaiah is found in Chapter 40, Verses 28-31. Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not faint. Chapter 41:10,13. Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. For I am the Lord your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, do not fear; I will help you.

Isaiah’s words have always been an inspiration to me. They have come to me in times of grief and in times of trials. I have used Isaiah’s words to comfort others, on quilts, in cards, and when we read of the birth of Christ I am reminded of the words of the Prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah offers us so much. It is long, 66 chapters, but the words will comfort you, inspire you, and teach you.

Lord, we thank you for the words from the Bible that offer us encouragement and build our faith. May we always learn from your words and instructions given to us by the writers of this holy book. We thank you Lord for all the saints that have entered our lives here on earth, those that taught us your words through the ways they touched our lives. Thank you, Lord, for this day and for the food on our tables, the warmth of our shelters, for the world you have provided. May we be worthy of all we have and may we give to others in your name Lord. Be with those who are ill and those who grieve. Be with our Pastor and family bless him in all he does and bless his family. Be with our staff and leaders, bless them in their work and may their work bless their lives. Be with those who lend their talents to enrich our lives from those who usher and the greeters to those who collect food and those that cut the grass and those who teach and lead our ministries and those who serve on committees. It takes a lot of hands Lord to do everything, and we thank you for those who so willingly give of their time. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson