

Growing Through Persecutions

Look down from heaven and see, from your lofty throne, holy and glorious.

Where are your zeal and your might?

Your tenderness and compassion are withheld from us.

Isaiah 63:15 (NIV)

Perhaps the most beloved of the Old Testament prophets—if we are allowed to have a preference—is Isaiah.

His tender-hearted manner is so encouraging to people in sorrow's dark hour.

I have often turned to this beloved prophet to share ministry with someone who is hurting from some disaster or another. Because we know Isaiah suffered in his lifetime, it makes it easier for us to listen when he speaks.

In this great chapter of his prophecy he goes back and forth between the joy of fellowship with the Lord and the confusion of being unable to find the Lord. How often do we as God's people go from one extreme to the other?

At one time we are filled with joy and happiness in our worship, Bible reading, and fellowship with God and His people.

Then darkness descends and we wander in a spiritual wasteland for a season.

As we come to the dry times in our faith journey, we try to determine if sin has hidden the Lord's face from us. If the answer does not lie there, we turn to Job or Isaiah to look for some comforting word. These men were devout and faithful yet, at times, the Lord allowed severe sorrow to engulf them.

We seek to learn how they handled the suffering and apply the same lessons to our own situation.

Clearly, from our verse today, we learn that Isaiah was certain that his God was powerful, tender and full of compassion.

All of these attributes of God are needed by us when we stumble in our painful times.

We look for deliverance when the situation has overpowered us. Only the Lord's great strength will do. Then, in our misery, we need comfort and we know that God's tenderness and compassion are all that will satisfy us.

If you're in a deep valley without help do what is recorded in our verse. Call on God to look

and see your difficulties.

State the fact that He is withholding grace and mercy from you. Describe your misery and appeal to the tender heart of your God. Call on Him in your day of darkness.

Read verses like Psalm 10:1; 27:5 and others to strengthen your argument with God to give you what you need.

God is not absent—rather He desires you to pray with a pure heart. He wants you to remember from where your help comes (Psalm 121).

The more urgently you call to Him, the more wonderfully will He deliver you in your time of trouble.

Give God no rest until you are assured He not only has heard but He has risen to act on your behalf.

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