

Psalm 133-134, Isaiah 51-56 (#103) Revised 2024

Psalm 133 — This is a psalm celebrating the brotherhood of believers. *Share a time when you experienced Christian unity and harmony. Describe the impression it made on you.*

Psalm 134 — This is a psalm encouraging reciprocal blessing to the Lord. *What does it mean to bless the Lord?*

Isaiah 51 — The Lord comforts His people who seek Him with a message of hope and encouragement, and with a promise that His righteousness and salvation will last forever (vv. 1-8). **Wake up** and recognize that we need to put on the same strength of God's power that He displayed against Egypt and will be exhibited in Israel's return to Zion in a second exodus where gladness and unending joy will prevail (vv. 9-11). The Israelites who are under captivity of Babylon should not fear dying men who are powerless but trust in their omnipotent God, the creator of all things. God promises to come and set the captives free, to protect them, and provide for them (vv. 12-16). For the second time the Lord urges them to **wake up** and recognize that it was Yahweh who caused them drink the cup of fury because of their great wickedness, but now He will remove the bowl of affliction and wrath. This cup of staggering will forever be removed from them and be given to their tormentors (vv. 17-23). *What are three incentives the Lord gives to His people so that they can obey Him and pursue righteousness? See verses 1-3, 4-6, 7-8.*

Isaiah 52 — For a third time Zion is told to **wake up!** After the slavery of Egypt, Assyria, and now Babylon, Israel is to rise from the dust, remove the chains of slavery, and sit in a place of honor (vv. 1-6). What good news and great joy there is in the return of the captives of Israel to Jerusalem! "The Lord has demonstrated His holy power before the eyes of all the nations. All the ends of the earth will see the victory of our God (v. 10 NLT)." This return will not be in a hurry because the Lord will protect them as He goes before them and as He also becomes their rear guard. The ultimate fulfillment of the promises of this chapter will happen when the Messiah rules on earth during the Millennial Kingdom (vv. 7-12). Now comes the fourth and last of the **Servant-songs**, which depicts the redemptive work of the Messiah. "Here is a summary and preview of the humiliation and exaltation of the Servant described in more detail in 53:1-12. The details cover the work of Christ in His substitutionary death, His burial, His resurrection, His saving of sinners, His intercession, and His kingdom." #2 p.1013. Verse 7 says, "How

beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation...(NIV).” To whom do you need to give the Good News of the salvation of Christ? Name the people in your life you need to speak to, including those from your family, work, neighbors, and friends. What are some steps you need to take to do this?

Isaiah 53 — The fourth Servant-song continues with the clearest and most explicit prophecies concerning the mission of the coming Servant who would vicariously atone for the sins of the world. This chapter was so descriptive of Christ’s first coming that liberal scholars said it had to be written after the life of Jesus. In 1947 the Dead Sea Scrolls were found and dated from 250 B.C. and after and contained the book of Isaiah proving that it was prophecy not history. When Jesus came, His humble birth and unpretentious life did not seem to reveal the great warrior king they were looking for, but only those with the discerning eye of faith understood His real mission to redeem humanity. The theme of verses 4 to 12 is the substitutionary atonement by the suffering Servant for our sins, resulting in forgiveness and healing. This passage makes it clear that Jesus was not a martyr, nor was His death an accident, but His sacrificial death was predetermined in order to satisfy the righteous wrath of Yahweh and bring cleansing and forgiveness to many. *From verse 4 to 12, write down the part of the verses that declare the substitutionary payment for our sins.*

Isaiah 54 — Now that the suffering Servant has taken care of the sin problem, Israel’s husband Yahweh will again restore His relationship with His wife which began at Mount Sinai but was abandoned temporarily due to her continued adultery with other gods. Just as God made a covenant with Noah that there would never again be a world-wide flood, He also makes a covenant with Israel that He will never again be angry or rebuke them. The Lord promises that the storm-battered city will be rebuilt and will be secure under a government that is just and fair. Yahweh promises victory in battle against any and every nation that tries to attack Israel. *The Lord promises Israel that He will never again be angry or rebuke Israel for their sin and disobedience, and that His covenant of blessing will never be broken (vv. 9-10). What is the exact time that this promise will be fulfilled? See also Jeremiah 31:31-34, 36.*

Isaiah 55 — Yahweh invites anyone and everyone to come to Him who is thirsty and hungry and find satisfaction in what He provides. If Israel listens and obeys, the Lord will make an everlasting covenant with them as He did with King David and will cause them to be the leader of nations. For those who are willing to abandon their wicked lives, seek the Lord, and return to Him, He will have compassion on them and abundantly pardon. Just like rain comes and saturates the ground, making it germinate and sprout, so God’s Word will accomplish its purpose and produce the intended fruit. Great joy and blessing will be heaped on Israel as they renew their relationship with Yahweh. *Where do the people of this world go to in order to find satisfaction? What really satisfies?*

Isaiah 56 — The Lord stresses the importance of justice and righteousness for His future kingdom where no one will be excluded, including foreigners and eunuchs. All those who love Yahweh, become His servants, and keep His Sabbath will be acceptable to God. His house will be called a house of prayer for all nations, not just for Israel. Starting at verse nine, Isaiah switches from Israel’s future blessing to a condemnation of their watchmen who live to fulfill their own selfish desires and enjoy drunken parties. *Who are the watchmen mentioned in verse 10? What did Isaiah say about the watchmen?*

Sources for summary and questions: 1. Serendipity Bible for Groups, c. 1988 Littleton, CO. 2. MacArthur Study Bible ESV, c. 1997 Thomas Nelson, Inc. 3. Life Application Bible HCSB, c. 1988 Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 4. The Complete Bible Companion, c. 2014 Barbour Publishing, Inc., Uhrichsville, OH. 5. ESV Study Bible, c. 2008 Crossway Bibles, Wheaton, IL. 6. The World Bible Handbook, Lawrence Richards, Word Inc., Waco, TX. 7. The Quest Study Bible NIV, c. 1994 Zondervan Publishing & Christianity Today, Grand Rapids, MI & Wheaton, IL. 8. The Transformation Study Bible, c. 2009 David C. Cook. 9. Halley’s Bible Handbook, c. 2000 Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI. 10. 500 Answers from the Bible, c. 2006 Barbour Publishing, Uhrichsville, OH. 11. Understanding the Bible, c. 2000 Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 12. Homan Bible Handbook, c. 1992 Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 13. Moody Bible Commentary, c. 2014 Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL.

Psalm 135, Isaiah 57-62 (#104) Revised 2024

Psalm 135 — The psalmist encourages the priests, the Israelites, and all God-fearing people to praise our worthy and sovereign LORD. *What reasons does the psalmist give to prove that God is worthy to be praised?*

Isaiah 57 — Sometimes people wonder why the righteous die early, but God says that He is protecting them from evil because He will find rest and peace for them when they die (vv. 1-2). Isaiah thunders judgment on Judah for polluting the land with idolatry and the sacrifice of children which will ultimately lead them into the Babylonian captivity (vv. 3-13). The Lord in His mercy and grace works to restore those who are penitent and are willing to humble themselves before the High and Exalted One. Yahweh longs to heal and restore the wayward so that they may find the peace their hearts desire, but there will never be peace for the wicked (vv. 14-21). *Where does the Lord live (dwell)? Why is this important? See James 4:6.*

Isaiah 58 — This is a powerful chapter that speaks of our hypocrisy in which we go through the rituals of fasting, attend to the services of the church, but not living moment by moment in the presence of the Lord. We do not enjoy fellowship with Him or meet the needs of the poor by serving them. The people of Judah thought that if they fasted and did all the temple rites, then God would have to respond to them regardless of the evil they were doing. The Lord then tells them the type of fast day that is acceptable to Him. If they follow what He commands, then the glory of the Lord will appear and God will answer their cries. True spiritual piety can never be separated from compassion and justice. #6, p. 309. If they would obey the Lord with acts of compassion and love, He promises to guide them, strengthen them, and use them in rebuilding the ruined cities. Then the Lord stated the Sabbath was to be a day of rest in which they would enjoy their relationship with Him, but instead it had become a day of personal pleasure and commercial commerce. *What kind of fast day did God have in mind for the Jews? See verses 6 to 7. How can you apply these verses to own your life?*

Isaiah 59 — These difficult days in our world are no different than during the days of Judah before the destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon. Then as now, the real problem is that our sin and rebellion has separated us from our God, and untold evil has been committed. Isaiah then enumerates a long list of wickedness, including violence and murder, lying and deceitful lips, and injustice such as the attacking of those who renounce evil. When the world is at its darkest point, the Lord will bring righteousness and salvation to the repentant but vengeance on the wicked. In verses 16 to 21, Isaiah looks into the far future to see the coming of the Redeemer to Zion to save those who have turned from their sin and fear His name. Yahweh will make His covenant with Israel and give them His Spirit in order to enable them to obey His commands and seek Him. *What future event is Isaiah speaking of when he says, "The Redeemer will come to Zion?" See Zechariah 14:3-4, Romans 11:25-27, and Revelation 19:11-16.*

Isaiah 60 — After the thick darkness of the Day of the Lord, in which God will judge the whole earth for their wickedness, the light and glory of the Lord appears as He comes to reign in Jerusalem. Sons and daughters of Israel from all over the earth will come to dwell in the Promised Land, the wealth of the nations will flow into it, and the splendor of the temple of Yahweh will be glorious. The gates of Jerusalem will be opened continuously so that people and kings of the earth can come with silver and gold to honor the Holy One of Israel. The trees of Lebanon will be brought to beautify the Lord's glorious sanctuary, the descendants of those who oppressed Israel will come and bow down, and the Lord will make His chosen people "an object of eternal pride, a joy from age to age (v. 15b HCSB)." No violence, devastation, or mourning will be a part of this kingdom age, but the words to describe this time will be peace, righteousness, and salvation. In verse 19, the prophet seems to look beyond the millennial kingdom to the New Jerusalem in the eternal state (Revelation 21-22). *Verse 1 says, "Arise, shine, for your light has come," and in verse 3 it says, "and your nations shall come to your light." What is meant by the word "light?" See Isaiah 9:2, Matthew 4:12-16, and John 8:12.*

Isaiah 61 — This chapter speaks of the coming anointed Messiah and His kingdom, where mourning will be over, good news will be proclaimed to the poor, and prisoners will be freed to receive a crown of beauty in exchange for ashes (vv. 1-3). This new era will be one of rebuilding the ancient ruins, of Israel being honored by foreigners bringing them treasures from around the world, and strangers becoming

their servants (vv. 4-7). The Lord who loves justice will make an everlasting covenant with Israel and their descendants in order to prosper them and show to the nations that they are truly blessed by Him (vv. 8-9). What a transformation has taken place in Israel! The bride of Yahweh has adorned herself with the garment of salvation and the robe of righteousness (vv. 10-11). *Jesus read Isaiah 61:1-2 in the synagogue in Nazareth. When announcing Himself as the Messiah by reading these verses, what did He leave out and why? Compare Isaiah 61:1-2 with Luke 4:16-21.*

Isaiah 62 — The Lord through the prophet speaks of His determination to transform Jerusalem from a forsaken and desolate city to one where her righteousness shines like a bright light to the nations of the earth. Yahweh will renew His relationship with His wife Israel and call her Hepzibah (My delight is in her) and Beulah (the bride of God), and she will become a glorious crown in the hand of God (vv. 1-5). Now watchmen on the walls are to pray and cry out to Yahweh day and night until He makes Jerusalem famous as the City of Praise. When this happens God's people will no longer be plundered but will be able to eat and drink of their own harvests (vv. 6-9). "Build the highways and clear the boulders from the roadways because your Savior is coming and His reward is with Him." Finally, after many centuries of waiting, Israel will truly be called the Holy People and the Lord's redeemed (vv. 10-12). *Verse 6 speaks of the watchmen on the walls of Jerusalem. What was their assignment, and what other prayer in the Bible is similar? Explain. See Matthew 6:9-13.*

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Psalm 136, Isaiah 63-66, II Timothy 1-2 (#105) Revised 2024

Psalm 136 — This is a song of adoration listing many reasons to give thanks to God. *What are your top 5 reasons to give thanks to God?*

Isaiah 63 — The chapter begins with the Messiah meting out vengeance on the wicked nations (Edom) at the Battle of Armageddon, the consummation of the tribulation. Isaiah describes Yahweh's unfailing love, faithfulness, and mercy upon Israel down through the centuries, but they rebelled against Him and grieved His Holy Spirit in their continued disobedience (vv. 1-10). "We remember the olden days when Moses, God's servant, led us through the Red Sea and finally gave us rest in the Promised Land," Isaiah says (vv. 11-14). Speaking for Israel, Isaiah asks God to show compassion on them since His name is Redeemer who needs to act in order to keep the people of Israel from straying in their ways and hardening their hearts. Living as conquerors during times of peace and security did not last very long for Israelites, and now the enemy is trampling down the temple and taking them as captives (vv. 15-19). *What similarities are there between Isaiah 63:1-6 and Revelation 19:11-15 when looking at the return of Jesus Christ to earth to judge the nations?*

Isaiah 64 — The Israelites long for the manifest presence of the Lord just as they experienced it at Mount Sinai when the mountains quaked and God came down to be with His people. Isaiah admits that their sin is what has caused God to turn His face away from them, and that even their righteous acts are like filthy, polluted rags (vv. 1-7). The prophets said, "Yahweh, You are our Father and potter and we are the work of your hands so don't hold your anger against us forever. Look at what total destruction has happened to the temple and the city of Jerusalem, but now we implore You to take your anger away from us (vv. 8-12)." The words in this chapter were written 100 years before they happened, showing the amazing omniscience of God. *Verse 4 says, "From ancient times no one has heard, no one has listened, no eye has seen any God except You, who acts on behalf of the one who waits on Him (HCSB)." What does it mean to wait on the Lord? Illustrate and explain.*

Isaiah 65 — The Lord longs to be found by the rebellious and obstinate people of Israel, but they don't want to follow His ways and seek His face. Yahweh will repay them for their evil deeds, such as worshiping false gods, being involved in the occult and demons, and eating forbidden food (vv. 1-7). Verses 8 to 16 contrast the wicked majority who are eliminated by God and the righteous servants who will be preserved to return to the land of Judah. This prophecy may be a dual fulfillment by speaking about the close at hand judgment on the wicked Jews and the preservation of the righteous remnant at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (586 B.C.), but may also speak of the still future time of Jacob's trouble (Jeremiah 30:7) during the day of the Lord's wrath on the whole earth (vv. 8-16). From verse 17 to the end of the chapter, Israel and the world are in the kingdom age where holy and purified Jerusalem will be the focus. The bad memories of the past will be forgotten, the blessings of all people will be greatly multiplied, and peace and prosperity will prevail (vv. 17-25). *In verse 17 the Lord says, "For I will create a new heaven and new earth." After reading verses 18 to 25, what evidence might there be that this is different from the "New heaven and New earth" found in Revelation 21-22?*

Isaiah 66 — The chapter begins by seeing a contrast between the righteous and the wicked. The righteous are humble, submissive, and tremble at God's Word, but the wicked people are guilty of eating unclean food, idolatry, murder, delighting in detestable practices, and persecuting the godly. A day is coming when God will execute judgment on all evil doers, and "they will see the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against Him (v. 24 HCSB)." In contrast, Yahweh guarantees that the righteous will rejoice in their immediate deliverance from the wicked, and the new Israel will be born in a day when the Messiah appears and will transform Jerusalem and the land of Israel. The nations will come to Jerusalem to see the glory of Yahweh, bringing their wealth to honor Him, and there will be peace flowing like a river. Israel will continue in its preeminence throughout the Millennial reign of Christ and on throughout eternity into the new heavens and new earth (v. 22, Revelation 21, 22). *Who is the one who the Lord esteems and looks favorably upon? See verse 2b. Fully explain what this means.*

II Timothy — This book to Timothy was Paul's last letter (66-67 A.D.) and was written from prison in Rome while awaiting his execution by Nero. This epistle is full of instructions and encouragement to Timothy who has been in charge of the church in Ephesus. Many of Paul's supporters had deserted him, leaving only Luke at his side in his final months. Paul declares to Timothy his priorities which are sound

teaching, faithful endurance in the midst of suffering, a commitment to discipleship, and the diligent study and preaching of God's Word.

II Timothy 1 — As we read this personal letter to Timothy, Paul's deep love and affection for his spiritual son is expressed with great confidence for his authentic faith. Knowing that his own death was imminent, Paul wanted to encourage Timothy not be fearful or be ashamed of Christ's person and work but to be willing to share in suffering for the gospel (vv. 1-8). The results of the gospel are powerful since because of our Savior Christ Jesus, death has been abolished and eternal life and immortality are now available to all who trust Him. Paul was appointed by Jesus to herald this good news. He had no doubt that because of the merits of Christ alone, God would safely guard all that he had entrusted to Him for the day of His return (vv. 9-12). God's Word and the apostle's teaching gave a clear pattern and guide for Timothy to follow, and so he must not deviate from it (vv. 13-18). *Paul told Timothy not to be fearful (v. 7) or ashamed (v. 8). How did Paul and the apostles behave in the midst of great persecution? See Acts 4:13, 29, 31, and 14:3. Where and to whom do you need to more boldly share your witness for Christ?*

II Timothy 2 — As Paul runs the last lap of his part of the relay race, he calls for Timothy to firmly grasp the baton he is passing off to him, and then in turn find faithful men who can continue the process of teaching others. Using metaphors of a soldier, an athlete, and a farmer to describe the fully surrendered life, Paul says that a soldier should not allow himself to be entangled in the concerns of civilian life, an athlete should only compete according to the rules, and a farmer must work diligently to merit the first fruits of the harvest (vv. 1-7). "Here is what is really important and what can't be chained the way that I am chained! It is the message I preach which is the pure gospel of salvation that is paid for by the sacrifice of Christ and declared powerful and effective through His resurrection (vv. 8-11, adapted)." Paul tells Timothy that it is important to be a diligent student of God's Word and to teach it correctly. Be careful with idle and irreverent talk since it can lead to the ruin of those who hear it. The Lord knows those who belong to Him, but our responsibility as His children is to turn away from evil (vv. 8-19). We should desire to be pure vessels, ready to be used by God for His purposes. God's servants must flee evil passion, pursue righteousness, instruct opponents with patience and gentleness trusting that they will repent and come to the knowledge of the truth (vv. 12-26). *What is Paul telling Timothy to do in verse 2? Why is this so important? Give other verses in the New Testament that declares its importance.*

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