

OUR HOPE: A COVENANT GOD

The book of Isaiah begins with an indictment.

Isaiah 1.2-4: Hear me, you heavens! Listen, earth!

For the LORD has spoken:

I reared children and brought them up,
but they have rebelled against me.

Woe to the sinful nation,
a people whose guilt is great,
a brood of evildoers,
children given to corruption!

They have forsaken the LORD;
they have spurned the Holy One of Israel.

But it concludes with a _____.

Isaiah 61.8-9: In my faithfulness I will make
an **everlasting covenant** with them.

Their descendants will be known among the nations
and their offspring among the peoples.

All who see them will acknowledge
that they are a people the LORD has blessed.

The final word of Isaiah is a word of _____: it's the promise of forgiveness,
redemption and restoration.

**Between the indictment and the fulfillment of the promise the people of Israel will
cry out for God to act, but God will remain unmoved.**

Isaiah 59.1-2: Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save,
nor his ear too dull to hear.

But your iniquities have separated you from your God;
your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

Isaiah tells Israel: God cannot bless your sin; he will not reward your unfaithfulness;
he will not protect you from the consequences of your rebellion.

But he will not _____ you there because he has made a covenant with you.

The word covenant is used over and over throughout the Old Testament, never lightly.
It is reserved for formal agreements of a most serious nature.

So much so that oaths and vows must be taken.

A contract: If you do something for me, I will do something for you. But if you fail to
live up to your part of the bargain, I am no longer bound to fulfill my part of the deal.

A covenant: What I promise today, I will fulfill regardless of whether you are faithful
to your vow.

Isaiah 61.8-9: In my faithfulness I will make an everlasting covenant with my people.

All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people the LORD has blessed.

God does not fulfill his covenant promise to bless us because we are faithful, but because he is faithful.

Our God is not a contract God who is faithful to us until we fail him, until we are difficult to love or until we are costly to care for.

Our God is a covenant God – he is a for “_____” kind of God.

BECAUSE GOD IS A COVENANT GOD

1. You are not _____.

Isaiah 49.15-16: Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has carried? Though she may forget you, I will not forget you. See I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.

Even if you do what would make your mother forget you, even if her love fails and she forsakes you, God says, that his love for you will remain.

Isaiah 41.13: For I the Lord your God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, “Fear not, I will help you.”

2. You can be _____.

Isaiah 1.18: Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

God’s original covenant with Abraham:

Genesis 15.12, 17-18: As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram.

God fulfilled his covenant with the death of Jesus upon the cross.

There he kept his promise not to walk away when loving us was hard.

3. You can be at _____.

Many people struggle to be at peace with themselves.

There is this nagging fear that tells them: I’m not _____. There’s something wrong with me. There’s something more I need to do, something more I need to be, before I can relax and be at peace.

This fear is often implanted in us early in life.

It can come from failures we experience, the abuse we suffer, the _____ we feel, the secrets we hide, or the messages authority figures gives us about ourselves.

To compensate, we begin to play roles:

- A. _____: do more and be better than everyone else and then you'll be enough to feel good about yourselves.
- B. **The fixer or the _____**: solve everyone else's problems and then you'll feel appreciated and loved.
- C. **The victim**: you'll receive attention and affection because you are suffering.
- D. **The good kid**: do everything right and you'll make people _____ of you.
- E. **The _____**: leave 'em laughing and maybe you can feel happy.

But you can't be at peace with yourself when you're trying to be someone else.
You can't accept yourself when you're _____ from yourself.

You don't have to save yourself because you have a Savior.
He is the fulfillment to God's covenant promises.
He is Jesus.
You can live with hope.

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