



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

# BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

ISAIAH 40-66

Week 4

## Separation Anxiety

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Isaiah 59

**OPENING**  
up to the Word

Do you believe those who live immoral and wicked lives are more likely to be plagued with anxiety?

**DIGGING**  
into the Word

**1.** God told Israel that he heard their prayers, and could have saved them if he wanted to—but something had separated them from God. What was it (v. 2)?

**2.** What kind of conduct was easy for the people to follow (v. 7)?

**3.** What was Israel's spiritual "disability" (v. 10)?

**4.** What godly attributes were unable to find a home in their minds and hearts (vs. 14-15)?

**LIVING**  
out the Word

**1.** What do you feel are some of the greatest sources of anxiety for people?

**2.** Which attitude best reflects the views of most people in our world toward lies and immorality? (a) it's okay, as long as no one gets hurt; (b) it's okay, as long as I don't get hurt; (c) it's okay, but only in certain circumstances; (d) it's not okay, but I can't seem to help myself.

**3.** Has a sinful habit or attitude ever created anxiety in your own life? What did you do about it and how did it work?

**WINDOW**  
on the Word

***"Your iniquities have separated you from your God"*** (v. 2). *The Bible teaches that sin creates a barrier between God and us. Jesus' atoning work on the cross, however, removes the barrier of our sin, restoring our relationship with God. Israel's religious activities were like transparent cobwebs (v. 6), through which God could easily see their evil deeds and hearts.*

# The Empire of the Son

DAY 23

## Isaiah 60

What is the wealthiest and most luxurious city you have ever been in? What is your idea of luxury and comfort—what would you need in order to live in luxury?

1. Much of Isaiah's poetry can be explained both literally and figuratively. In this chapter, Isaiah uses things regarded as riches by the ancient Israelites to illustrate the riches of God's eternal kingdom. As Christians, we enjoy a foretaste of that eternal kingdom now, through the spiritual riches given us through the new life in Christ, by God's grace. With this in mind, who is pictured as coming to enjoy the riches of God's grace (v. 4)?
2. What relationship does physical wealth have to spiritual wealth (vs. 5-9; also see Jn 10:10)?
3. Who will rebuild the walls of the city (v. 10)?
4. Why will the gates of the city always be open (vs. 11-12)? Compare Revelation 21:25.
5. Who or what is symbolized as the source of light for the people of God (vs. 19-20)?

What do you think about wealth and riches? (a) I already live in luxury, (b) I'd like to be rich just once to see what it's like, (c) I think that spiritual riches are more important, (d) I would feel guilty living in physical luxury.

*"Midian, Ephah, Sheba, Kedar, Nebaioth, Tarshish" (vs. 6-9). Midian was south of the Dead Sea, and Ephah was a branch of the Midianites. Midian was Ephah's father. (Ge 25:4, 1Ch 1:33). Sheba was usually associated with the Sabaens in southwest Arabia. Kedar was in northern Arabia and Nebaioth was apparently an Arabian tribe. Nebaioth was the oldest son of Ishmael (Ge 25:13). Although there was a Tarshish in the far west (Jnh 1:3), here it may be a region south of Israel.*

### OPENING

up to the Word

### DIGGING

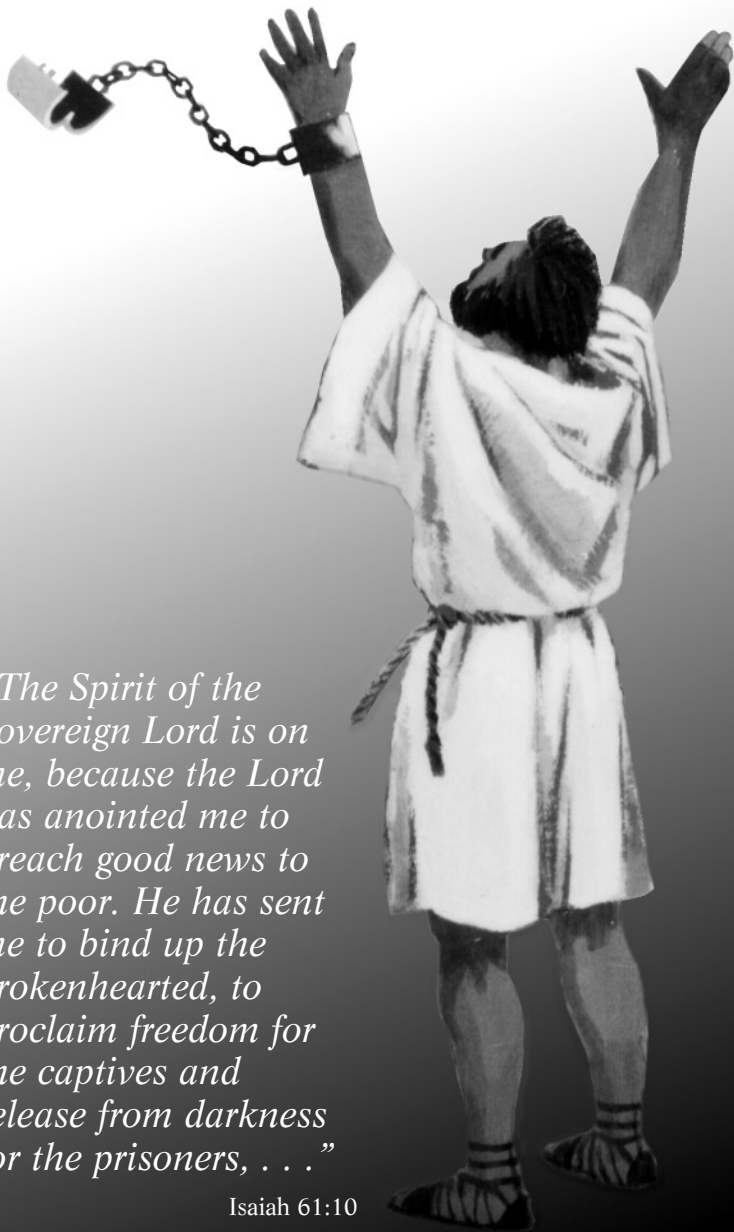
into the Word

### LIVING

out the Word

### WINDOW

on the Word



*“The Spirit of the  
Sovereign Lord is on  
me, because the Lord  
has anointed me to  
preach good news to  
the poor. He has sent  
me to bind up the  
brokenhearted, to  
proclaim freedom for  
the captives and  
release from darkness  
for the prisoners, . . .”*

Isaiah 61:10

# God's Renovation Project

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DAY 24

Isaiah 61

Have you ever tried to renovate a home or an antique that has seen years of abuse and disuse? Did you enjoy the process, or did you find it frustrating?

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**1.** Who would later quote from Isaiah 61:1-2, and then claim this passage was being fulfilled (Lk 4:14-22)?

**2.** How far-reaching is God's restoration of his people (Isa 61:1-2)?

**3.** Do you feel that verses 5 through 7 are speaking of financial prosperity or spiritual riches—or both?

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**1.** What do you think is the most challenging aspect of any renovation?

**2.** Since God is transforming his children, in what stage of his "restoration project" would you say you currently are?

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*"A double portion" (v. 7). In Israel, the oldest son would usually receive a double portion of his father's estate (Dt 21:17). In this sense all of God's spiritual children are his first born, and are given the riches of his grace.*

## OPENING

up to the Word

## DIGGING

into the Word

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out the Word

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on the Word

## What's in a Name

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Isaiah 62

**OPENING**  
up to the Word

Do you know what your name means? Were you named after someone?

**DIGGING**  
into the Word

**1.** Why will God give his people a new name (v. 2; Rev 2:17; 3:12)?

**2.** Are verses 8 and 9 of Isaiah 62 speaking of physical or spiritual agricultural produce—or both?

**3.** What names fit the people of God and Jerusalem perfectly (v. 12)? How do these names suggest that the redemption of anything or anyone is ultimately accomplished by the cross of Christ (Col 1:20)?

**LIVING**  
out the Word

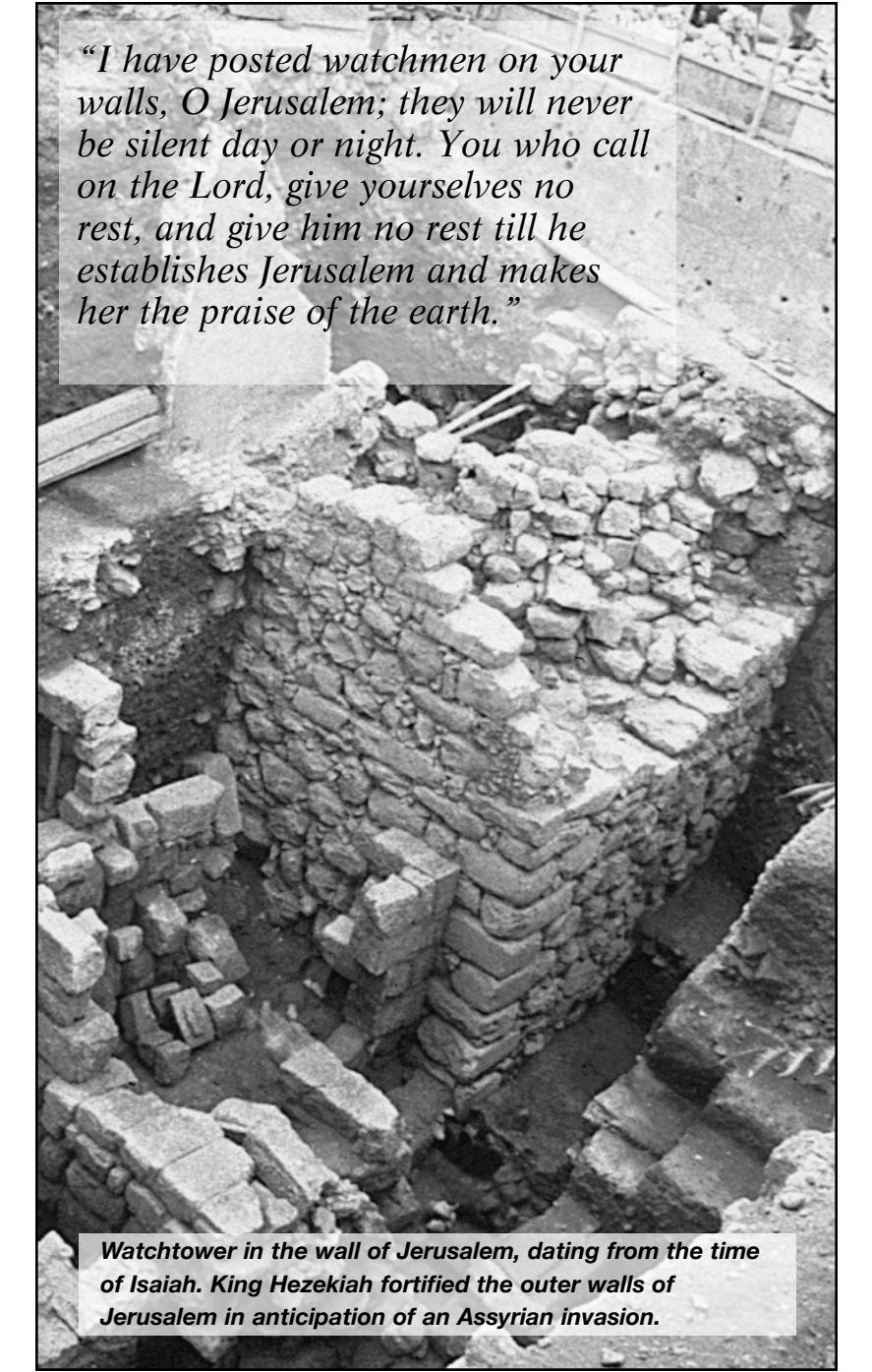
**1.** Why did your parents name you what they did? Do you like your name? If not, why not?

**2.** What did you name your children, and why? If children are in your future, what will you name them, and why?

**3.** If you could choose your own name, or a title that best describes how God has dealt with you, what would it be?

**WINDOW**  
on the Word

*“Called by a new name” (v. 2). In the ancient Near East, names were often given to children to imply their hoped-for character. Such a new name will one day be given to Jerusalem. **Watchmen** (v. 6) were stationed on city walls or towers to keep watch for enemies. It was forbidden to sleep on one’s watch because the city would then be vulnerable to surprise attack.*



*“I have posted watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the Lord, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth.”*

**Watchtower in the wall of Jerusalem, dating from the time of Isaiah. King Hezekiah fortified the outer walls of Jerusalem in anticipation of an Assyrian invasion.**

## Grapes of Wrath

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Isaiah 63

**OPENING**  
up to the Word

Has anyone ever been furious with you? Did they threaten you in any way?

**DIGGING**  
into the Word

1. Who was coming from Edom and Bozrah, stained crimson red (v. 1)?
2. Do you think that verses 3 through 6 are speaking of (a) a great war that has already happened, (b) the crucifixion of Jesus Christ or (c) the judgment that will be given when Jesus returns?
3. When the people started to pray in verse 11, what great acts of God on their behalf did they recall?
4. What questions did the people ask God in their time of distress (v. 17)?

**LIVING**  
out the Word

1. The last time someone was furious with you, would you say their anger was (a) completely justified, (b) completely unjustified, (c) mostly justified, (d) mostly unjustified.

**WINDOW**  
on the Word

***Edom**, a nation southeast of Israel, was their constant enemy. **Bozrah** was one of Edom's cities. In his judgment, Christ is pictured as battling against them and figuratively speaking, returning with his robe stained with their blood.*



# The Silent Treatment

DAY 27

Isaiah 64

Has someone ever given you the “silent treatment” because they were angry with you for something you had done?

1. What does Isaiah ask God to do (vs. 1-3)?
2. What has no one in the whole world ever seen or heard (v. 4)?
3. To what did Isaiah compare all of Israel’s attempts at righteousness before God (v. 6)?
4. In spite of their failings and sin, what did Israel remember about God (v. 8)?

Have you ever given *God* the silent treatment? How do you think he feels when you do?

**Fire and boiling water** (v. 2): *Israel is asking God to “get mad” at their enemies, projecting their human anger on God, assuming he has human characteristics as do the pagan gods of the neighboring nations. In a similar way, many today wish for God’s “wrath” to rain down on others—but of course, they are projecting onto God their own anger and desire for revenge.*  
**“Filthy rags”** (v. 6) *refers to the cloths women used during their menstrual cycle. The picture was intended to convey the disgust with which God viewed the Hebrews’ attempts at righteousness.*

## OPENING

up to the Word

## DIGGING

into the Word

## LIVING

out the Word

## WINDOW

on the Word

*“The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, but dust will be the serpent’s food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain,” says the Lord.*”

Isaiah 65:25



*The Peaceable Kingdom* by Edward Hicks, © Burstein Collection / CORBIS

# Out With the Old, In With the New

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DAY 28

Isaiah 65

If you were to walk around your house and take inventory, how many things would you say had outlived their usefulness?

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1. How were the people of Israel still provoking the Lord (vs. 3-5)?
  2. Why would people sit among graves (v. 4)?
  3. What destiny can those who forsake God look forward to from God (vs. 11-12)?
  4. How long will people live in the new heavens and new earth that God will create (vs. 20-22)?
  5. How will the relationship between predator and prey change in that day (v. 25)? Is this a physical promise, or is it a metaphor pointing to a greater spiritual reality?
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1. What is something old in your possession that you would like to replace with something new?
  2. Is there anything in your heart or mind that you feel God is in the process of transforming and replacing with something new?
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*“Sacrifices in gardens...sit among graves” (v. 3). Some at that time worshiped their idols in gardens. They would also try to consult the dead while sitting among the graves.*

***Fortune and Destiny** (v. 11) were two gods Israel worshiped in an attempt to ascertain the future. They set food and drink before them to try to please them. **“New heavens and a new earth”** (v. 17). The book of Revelation also speaks of this (Rev 21:1).*

## OPENING

up to the Word

## DIGGING

into the Word

## LIVING

out the Word

## WINDOW

on the Word

## Labors of Love

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Isaiah 66:1-16

**OPENING**  
up to the Word

Have you ever witnessed the birth of a child?

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**DIGGING**  
into the Word

**1.** How does God feel towards Israel's ritual offerings to him (v. 3)? (a) appreciates them but wants more, (b) doesn't really appreciate them, (c) is bored with them, (d) is deeply offended by them.

**2.** How were some of those who were idolatrous taunting those who were still faithful to God (v. 5)?

**3.** What unusual analogy did Isaiah use to describe Israel's restoration (vs. 7-11)?

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**LIVING**  
out the Word

**1.** Have you or your spouse ever given birth to a child?

**2.** What was the most amazing part of the process?

**3.** What hopes and dreams do you hold for your child?

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**WINDOW**  
on the Word

***"Sacrifices...break a dog's neck"** (v. 3). God points out that offering ritually clean sacrifices when one's heart was unclean was just as offensive as offering an unclean sacrifice.*

*“For this is what the Lord says: ‘I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of nations like a flooding stream; you will nurse and be carried on her arm and dandled on her knees.’”*

Isaiah 66:12

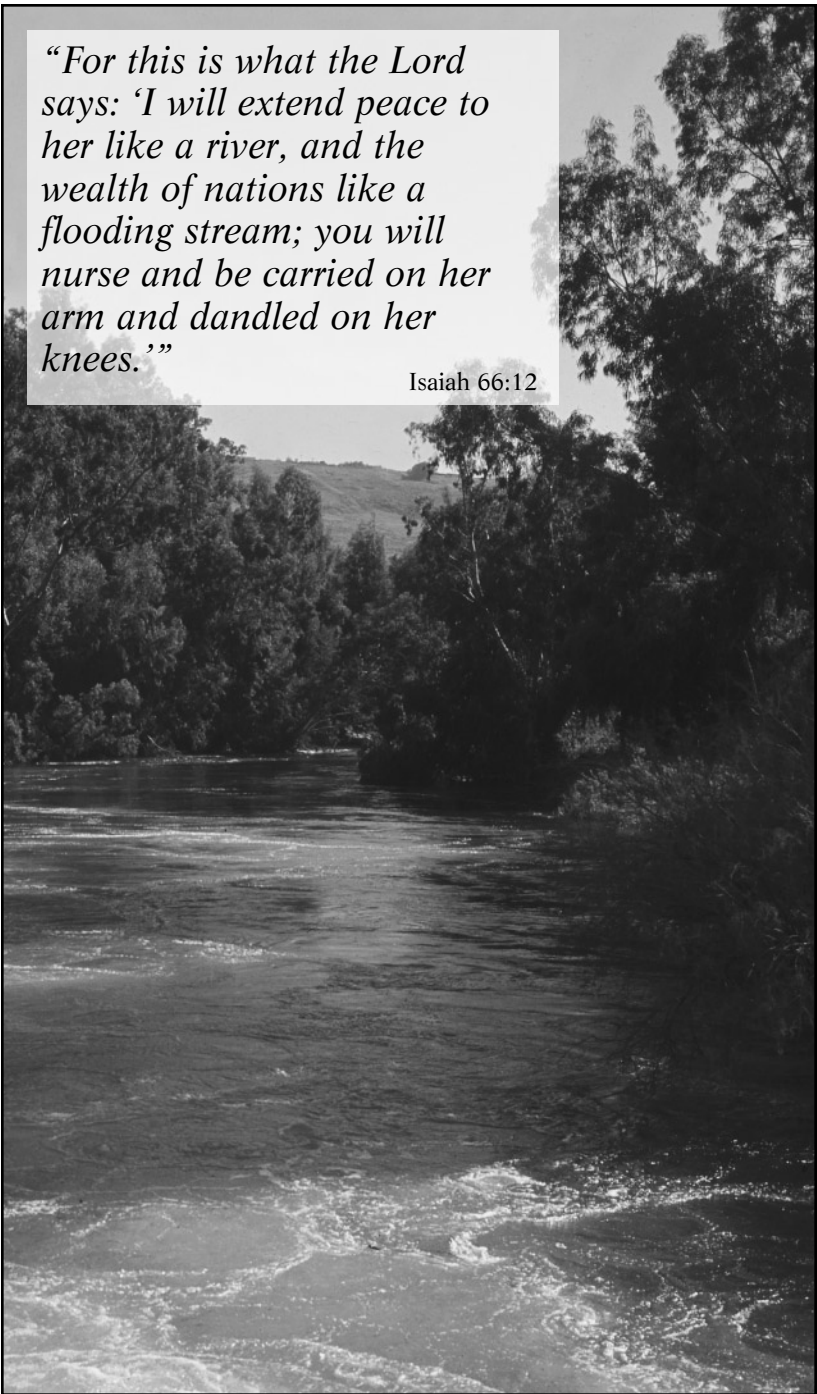


Photo of the River Jordan near the Sea of Galilee by Randal Dick—PTM

*“I will set a sign among them, and I will send some of those who survive to the nations. . . and to the distant islands that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory. They will proclaim my glory among the nations.”*

Isaiah 66:19



Artwork by Ken Tunell

Isaiah 66:17-24

Have you ever neglected to heed a road sign? What was the punishment?

1. Why would Israelites make themselves ceremonially pure in order to eat rats, swine and other animals considered unclean under the old covenant (v. 17)?
2. What future plans did God have to tell other nations about his fame and glory (v. 19)?
3. What do you think would be the *sign* (v. 19) that God would set among these missionaries who would be sent to the gentile nations? Compare Isaiah 11:10 where the Messiah acts as a “banner,” or rallying point for all nations.
4. What would these men and women bring to the Lord as an offering to him (vs. 20-21)?
5. As long as the new heavens and new earth endure, what else will endure (vs. 22)?

1. Have you ever seen an accident occur because someone failed to heed a sign?
2. What Sign has God given you of his love and care for you?

*“Pigs and rats” (v. 17). Israelites were worshiping idols in sacred gardens, purifying themselves with pagan rituals and eating forbidden meats to demonstrate their opposition to God’s covenant.*

## OPENING

up to the Word

## DIGGING

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on the Word