

**Friday, September 13**

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**Isaiah 12:1 - 14:32**

**12** **1** In that day you will sing: “I will praise you, O LORD ! You were angry with me, but not any more. Now you comfort me. **2** See, God has come to save me. I will trust in him and not be afraid. The LORD GOD is my strength and my song; he has given me victory.” **3** With joy you will drink deeply from the fountain of salvation! **4** In that wonderful day you will sing: “Thank the LORD ! Praise his name! Tell the nations what he has done. Let them know how mighty he is! **5** Sing to the LORD, for he has done wonderful things. Make known his praise around the world. **6** Let all the people of Jerusalem shout his praise with joy! For great is the Holy One of Israel who lives among you.”

**13** **1** Isaiah son of Amoz received this message concerning the destruction of Babylon: **2** “Raise a signal flag on a bare hilltop. Call up an army against Babylon. Wave your hand to encourage them as they march into the palaces of the high and mighty. **3** I, the LORD, have dedicated these soldiers for this task. Yes, I have called mighty warriors to express my anger, and they will rejoice when I am exalted.” **4** Hear the noise on the mountains! Listen, as the vast armies march! It is the noise and shouting of many nations. The LORD of Heaven’s Armies has called this army together. **5** They come from distant countries, from beyond the farthest horizons. They are the LORD ’s weapons to carry out his anger. With them he will destroy the whole land. **6** Scream in terror, for the day of the LORD has arrived— the time for the Almighty to destroy. **7** Every arm is paralyzed with fear. Every heart melts, **8** and people are terrified. Pangs of anguish grip them, like those of a woman in labor. They look helplessly at one another, their faces aflame with fear. **9** For see, the day of the LORD is coming— the terrible day of his fury and fierce anger. The land will be made desolate, and all the sinners destroyed with it. **10** The heavens will be black above them; the stars will give no light. The sun will be dark when it rises, and the moon will provide no light. **11** “I, the LORD, will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their sin. I will crush the arrogance of the proud and humble the pride of the mighty. **12** I will make people scarcer than gold— more rare than the fine gold of Ophir. **13** For I will shake the heavens. The earth will move from its place when the LORD of Heaven’s Armies displays his wrath in the day of his fierce anger.” **14** Everyone in Babylon will run about like a hunted gazelle, like sheep without a shepherd. They will try to find their own people and flee to their own land. **15** Anyone who is captured will be cut down— run through

with a sword. **16** Their little children will be dashed to death before their eyes. Their homes will be sacked, and their wives will be raped. **17** “Look, I will stir up the Medes against Babylon. They cannot be tempted by silver or bribed with gold. **18** The attacking armies will shoot down the young men with arrows. They will have no mercy on helpless babies and will show no compassion for children.” **19** Babylon, the most glorious of kingdoms, the flower of Chaldean pride, will be devastated like Sodom and Gomorrah when God destroyed them. **20** Babylon will never be inhabited again. It will remain empty for generation after generation. Nomads will refuse to camp there, and shepherds will not bed down their sheep. **21** Desert animals will move into the ruined city, and the houses will be haunted by howling creatures. Owls will live among the ruins, and wild goats will go there to dance. **22** Hyenas will howl in its fortresses, and jackals will make dens in its luxurious palaces. Babylon’s days are numbered; its time of destruction will soon arrive.

**14 1** But the LORD will have mercy on the descendants of Jacob. He will choose Israel as his special people once again. He will bring them back to settle once again in their own land. And people from many different nations will come and join them there and unite with the people of Israel. **2** The nations of the world will help the people of Israel to return, and those who come to live in the LORD’s land will serve them. Those who captured Israel will themselves be captured, and Israel will rule over its enemies. **3** In that wonderful day when the LORD gives his people rest from sorrow and fear, from slavery and chains, **4** you will taunt the king of Babylon. You will say, “The mighty man has been destroyed. Yes, your insolence is ended. **5** For the LORD has crushed your wicked power and broken your evil rule. **6** You struck the people with endless blows of rage and held the nations in your angry grip with unrelenting tyranny. **7** But finally the earth is at rest and quiet. Now it can sing again! **8** Even the trees of the forest— the cypress trees and the cedars of Lebanon— sing out this joyous song: ‘Since you have been cut down, no one will come now to cut us down!’ **9** “In the place of the dead there is excitement over your arrival. The spirits of world leaders and mighty kings long dead stand up to see you. **10** With one voice they all cry out, ‘Now you are as weak as we are! **11** Your might and power were buried with you. The sound of the harp in your palace has ceased. Now maggots are your sheet, and worms your blanket.’ **12** “How you are fallen from heaven, O shining star, son of the morning! You have been thrown down to the earth, you who destroyed the nations of the world. **13** For you said to yourself, ‘I will ascend to heaven and set my throne above God’s stars. I will preside on the mountain of the gods far away in the north. **14** I will climb to the highest heavens and be like the Most High.’ **15** Instead, you will be brought down to the place of the dead, down to its lowest depths. **16** Everyone there will stare at you and ask, ‘Can this be the one who shook the earth and made the kingdoms of the world tremble? **17** Is this the one who

destroyed the world and made it into a wasteland? Is this the king who demolished the world's greatest cities and had no mercy on his prisoners?' **18** "The kings of the nations lie in stately glory, each in his own tomb, **19** but you will be thrown out of your grave like a worthless branch. Like a corpse trampled underfoot, you will be dumped into a mass grave with those killed in battle. You will descend to the pit. **20** You will not be given a proper burial, for you have destroyed your nation and slaughtered your people. The descendants of such an evil person will never again receive honor. **21** Kill this man's children! Let them die because of their father's sins! They must not rise and conquer the earth, filling the world with their cities." **22** This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies says: "I, myself, have risen against Babylon! I will destroy its children and its children's children," says the LORD . **23** "I will make Babylon a desolate place of owls, filled with swamps and marshes. I will sweep the land with the broom of destruction. I, the LORD of Heaven's Armies, have spoken!" **24** The LORD of Heaven's Armies has sworn this oath: "It will all happen as I have planned. It will be as I have decided. **25** I will break the Assyrians when they are in Israel; I will trample them on my mountains. My people will no longer be their slaves nor bow down under their heavy loads. **26** I have a plan for the whole earth, a hand of judgment upon all the nations. **27** The LORD of Heaven's Armies has spoken— who can change his plans? When his hand is raised, who can stop him?" **28** This message came to me the year King Ahaz died: **29** Do not rejoice, you Philistines, that the rod that struck you is broken— that the king who attacked you is dead. For from that snake a more poisonous snake will be born, a fiery serpent to destroy you! **30** I will feed the poor in my pasture; the needy will lie down in peace. But as for you, I will wipe you out with famine and destroy the few who remain. **31** Wail at the gates! Weep in the cities! Melt with fear, you Philistines! A powerful army comes like smoke from the north. Each soldier rushes forward eager to fight. **32** What should we tell the Philistine messengers? Tell them, "The LORD has built Jerusalem ; its walls will give refuge to his oppressed people."

## **2 Corinthians 13:1 - 14**

**13 1** This is the third time I am coming to visit you (and as the Scriptures say, "The facts of every case must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses" ). **2** I have already warned those who had been sinning when I was there on my second visit. Now I again warn them and all others, just as I did before, that next time I will not spare them. **3** I will give you all the proof you want that Christ speaks through me. Christ is not weak when he deals with you; he is powerful among you. **4** Although he was crucified in weakness, he now lives by the power of God. We, too, are weak, just as Christ was, but when we deal with you we will be alive with

him and will have God's power. **5** Examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine. Test yourselves. Surely you know that Jesus Christ is among you ; if not, you have failed the test of genuine faith. **6** As you test yourselves, I hope you will recognize that we have not failed the test of apostolic authority. **7** We pray to God that you will not do what is wrong by refusing our correction. I hope we won't need to demonstrate our authority when we arrive. Do the right thing before we come—even if that makes it look like we have failed to demonstrate our authority. **8** For we cannot oppose the truth, but must always stand for the truth. **9** We are glad to seem weak if it helps show that you are actually strong. We pray that you will become mature. **10** I am writing this to you before I come, hoping that I won't need to deal severely with you when I do come. For I want to use the authority the Lord has given me to strengthen you, not to tear you down. **11** Dear brothers and sisters, I close my letter with these last words: Be joyful. Grow to maturity. Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you. **12** Greet each other with a sacred kiss. **13** All of God's people here send you their greetings. **14** May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

#### **Psalm 57:1 - 11**

**57 1** Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy! I look to you for protection. I will hide beneath the shadow of your wings until the danger passes by. **2** I cry out to God Most High, to God who will fulfill his purpose for me. **3** He will send help from heaven to rescue me, disgracing those who hound me. Interlude My God will send forth his unfailing love and faithfulness. **4** I am surrounded by fierce lions who greedily devour human prey— whose teeth pierce like spears and arrows, and whose tongues cut like swords. **5** Be exalted, O God, above the highest heavens! May your glory shine over all the earth. **6** My enemies have set a trap for me. I am weary from distress. They have dug a deep pit in my path, but they themselves have fallen into it. Interlude **7** My heart is confident in you, O God; my heart is confident. No wonder I can sing your praises! **8** Wake up, my heart! Wake up, O lyre and harp! I will wake the dawn with my song. **9** I will thank you, Lord, among all the people. I will sing your praises among the nations. **10** For your unfailing love is as high as the heavens. Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds. **11** Be exalted, O God, above the highest heavens. May your glory shine over all the earth.

**Proverbs 23:9 - 11**

**23 9** Don't waste your breath on fools, for they will despise the wisest advice. **10** Don't cheat your neighbor by moving the ancient boundary markers; don't take the land of defenseless orphans. **11** For their Redeemer is strong; he himself will bring their charges against you.