

## APPLICATION

- In what area of your life or society around you are you in faith that God would bring justice? Ask God for wisdom and what He wants you to do in this situation.
- Meditate on Psalm 139:23–24 this week. Ask God to show you any area of unrighteousness in your heart and pray that you would draw near to Him.
- Who among your family members or friends do you think would be encouraged by today's message? This week, how can you encourage them to trust God?

## PRAYER

- Thank God for His hand that brings righteousness and justice. Pray that God will use people in places of authority to help the oppressed and bring righteousness in our nation.
- Ask God to show you how you respond to the unrighteousness and injustice around you. Pray for grace to respond in faith knowing that He is at work and you can be His hands and feet.
- Pray for someone you know who has experienced injustice. Ask God to give you the words that will encourage this person to trust in and wait on God.

## NEARNESS

## Righteousness

WEEK 11

## WARM-UP

- Do you have clothes that you only use on special occasions? What makes it special and when was the last time you wore it?
- Have you experienced playing a sport or any game against someone who broke the rules of the game? What happened?
- What comes to mind when you hear the word “justice”? Why?

**WORD** *He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no one to intercede; then his own arm brought him salvation, and his righteousness upheld him. **ISAIAH 59:16***

(Read also **ISAIAH 59:14–15, 17–21.**)

The prophet Isaiah was describing the condition of their nation: there was inequity, injustice, violence, and corruption. He said that because *righteousness stands far away* (Isaiah 59:14), the people have been separated from God. The injustice in the land has left God's people hopeless. But God wanted Isaiah to not only point out their transgressions. He also wanted to bring hope. Today, we will look at how God responds to unrighteousness in the world.



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## 1 | God does not turn a blind eye to the lack of righteousness and justice.

<sup>14</sup>Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands far away; for truth has stumbled in the public squares, and uprightness cannot enter. <sup>15</sup>Truth is lacking, and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. The LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no justice. <sup>16</sup>He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no one to intercede . . . **ISAIAH 59:14-16**

God saw the unrighteousness and injustice in the land and *it displeased him*. He looked for someone who would intercede and serve as a champion of the oppressed, a protector of the innocent—but found no one. Knowing that God sees and desires to do something against the lack of righteousness and justice in society gives us hope today. We know that out of His concern and love for His people, He will act on their behalf. Zephaniah 3:5 says that *every morning He shows forth His justice*. How can people take comfort in this truth?

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## 2 | God brings about righteousness.

<sup>16</sup>. . . then his own arm brought him salvation, and his righteousness upheld him. <sup>17</sup>He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head; he put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped himself in zeal as a cloak. **ISAIAH 59:16-17**

When God saw that no man was interceding to bring righteousness and justice in the land, He stepped in and upheld His own cause. By His own arm and righteousness, He brought salvation. Putting on *garments of vengeance for clothing* indicates that He brought judgment on those oppressing His people. To this day, we know that God is moving to bring about His righteousness and justice. How

have you experienced God's intervention to bring justice in your situation? How did it encourage you to wait for God to bring His righteousness instead of taking matters in your own hands?

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## 3 | God brings about righteousness through His Redeemer.

*"And a Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression," declares the LORD.* **ISAIAH 59:20**

God promised to send a Redeemer for those who will repent and turn away from sin. We now know that God was referring to Jesus Christ. He died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. Even though He lived a sinless life, God poured out His wrath on Jesus in order to execute His justice. Jesus took the punishment for our sins and gave us His righteousness. Jesus alone can redeem us and bring us to right standing with God.

God also promised His people that His Spirit and His words *shall not depart* out of their mouth, but will be passed on from one generation to the next (Isaiah 59:21). What the Redeemer did for us has reached us and continues to reach people all over the world. What are you doing at this time to pass on the Spirit and words of God to those around you?

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