

Read: Isaiah 64:1-9

God's power is scary-good!

Isaiah 64:1,3,4

Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains would tremble before you!
For when you did awesome things that we did not expect,
you came down, and the mountains trembled before you.
Since ancient times no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who acts on behalf of those who wait for him.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Isaiah was asking for something that seems strange. He is asking God to rip the sky open and make the mountains shake. Anyone who has been in an earthquake or a big thunderstorm knows that these are very scary things. So why would anyone want God to do something scary like that?

The answer the Bible gives is clear. When God comes in his power, he comes to be the God who saves.

This time of year, we begin to look forward to the coming of our God on Christmas. When Jesus was born, the true God entered our world. Jesus is true God and true man in one amazing person. And Jesus came with a remarkable mission. He came to take away our sin, and by doing that, he has made the end of all things sad and scary possible. He even defeated the scariest thing of all—death.

Isaiah knows that he needs God to save him. He knows that he has not always loved God with all his heart and he has not always shown love to the people in his life. Isaiah knows that even though every person is important to God, not a single one has been what God asks us to be. Isaiah knows this is why people die.

But Isaiah is confident and glad to know that his God is the one who does things for the good of others. He says, "No eye has seen any God besides you, who acts on behalf of those who wait for him." As believers all over the world begin this time of waiting before Christmas, they all wait for the God who saves. He saves us with all the power he has, the kind of power that can shake mountains. In fact, when Jesus died to save the world from sin, the people who saw it said that the earth shook. God used all his mighty power to rescue all people from sin and even from death. All who believe in Jesus will one day die, but in the end, God's power will raise us to live forever with the one who does good things for his people.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- What are some of the scary things Isaiah hopes God will do (in verse 1)?
- When Jesus died on the cross it was a scary thing. How did God use such a scary thing for our good?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- People dying is sad and can be scary. How does Jesus dying and rising again help us when people we know are hurt or maybe even die?
- Put in your own words how God uses his mighty power to do good things for his people.

Questions for Middle School and Above

- If God is powerfully at work in our lives, why do so easily forget him?
- “O Lord, we are the clay, you are the potter” (verse 8). What is Isaiah hoping God will “re-shape”?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, thank you for coming down to save us. When you died for our sins the earth shook, just like Isaiah wanted. Give us faith to trust that you are the God who does good things for his people. Bless us today and always. Amen.