

## **The Pursuit of Perfect Peace**

*Isaiah 26:3-4*

### **Introduction**

Because God alone can secure our perfect peace, we ought to place our trust in Him alone.

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### **Isaiah 26:3-4**

You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD himself, is the Rock eternal.

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### **Exposition**

What we have in verses 3-4 is an indicative-imperative structure. Or, to put it in everyday language, in verse 3, we are taught something about the nature of God. Then, as a result of knowing something about the nature of God, in verse 4, we are called to act upon what we now know about God. If I were going to illustrate this, it would be like a parent treading water in the deep end of the pool while calling to their child that is standing on the side of the pool. The parent in the pool says, “I can catch you. I will catch you.” This is the indicative. Then, because the parent has declared their ability to catch the child, they call out again, saying, “Jump to me,” which is the imperative.

In a similar but infinitely more important way, God reveals His nature to us and then call us to action in light of what He has revealed about Himself.

#### **I. God alone can secure our perfect peace. (Vs. 3)**

Verse 3 is a promise. “You will keep in perfect peace.” Not might, but “will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast.” This idea of perfect peace is shalom, the wholeness that results from an undivided mind that trust in God. As scholar John Oswalt noted, “To experience the security of God’s city one thing is required: a fixed disposition of trust. This is the opposite of James’s “double-minded man” (Jas. 1:6–8) or Jesus’ servant of two masters (Matt. 6:24). This person has cast himself upon God without any reservation.” Fundamental to this truth in God is a resolve to “not believe the lie that we are independent and have in ourselves the keys to ultimate success in life.” For Isaiah, the one who steadfastly looks to God can know an inner peace which makes give comfort and rest in the face of the darkest situation.

#### **II. We ought to trust Him alone. (Vs. 4)**

As I have already mentioned, if God is who He says He is, then verse 4 is the only reasonable response to what has been revealed to us. But what does it mean to trust God? My fear for my own life and for many of you that are here today is that we all have a tendency to trust God some, but not completely. There are a number of reasons why we might not trust God completely. First, we might not believe that He is capable. I mean, if God is not able to do what He claims to be able to do, then why would anyone trust Him completely? So, we struggle with unbelief.

Second, though, I think there is a temptation that we struggle with regarding pride in our own abilities. We believe that we are able, that we are capable, that we can guarantee our own futures by our own efforts. Why would I trust in someone else if I can do it myself, right?

Third, there is a temptation to trust others more than we trust God. This was a particular sin for the people of Israel. They seemed to always be trusting in their government or their corrupt priests or their false prophets or their wicked kings instead of trusting their God.

We are all capable of this kind of sin against God. We are prone to distrust God. But Isaiah 26:3-4 commands us to abandon such distrust and place our trust wholly in God alone. To reinforce this command, Isaiah describes the LORD as “the Rock.” Again, John Oswalt helpfully noted that “*the Rock* is a favorite OT description of the Lord. It describes a rocky crag upon which a harassed person could climb, sheltering himself in one of its crannies and there being able to beat off all attackers.” Thus, the image of the LORD as our rock, in the case of Isaiah 26:3-4, is not encouraging us to see God as some foundation upon which we work to build our own life, but rather as complete shelter that God Himself in His grace has provided for all His people. God is a hiding place in the storm for His people.

As the old hymn told us, “Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee, Let the water and the blood, From Thy wounded side which flowed, Be of sin the double cure, Save from wrath and make me pure.”

### **Conclusion**

How has God secured our perfect peace?

**Romans 5:1-5** tells us, “<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup> perseverance, character; and character, hope. <sup>5</sup> And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.”

God has secured our perfect peace through the LORD Jesus Christ.