

1. 1 day I encountered a verse w/idea about God that startled me & I recoiled at affirming it.
 - a. I was so unaccustomed to thinking this way that I thot this must be wrong.
 - b. **Idea** = *As a believer God wants to serve me, or As believers God wants to serve us.*
 - c. Doesn't that just seem crazy, not right? God serve us? Creator serve me, creature?
 - d. My daily outlook has been, *Lord, I'm your servant. You'd never be my servant.*
 - i. So, everyday I've awakened w/this mindset: *Lord, I'm your servant.*
 - ii. *Help me to discern your will & do today what would accomplish your plan.*
 - iii. Now that is **CERTAINLY RIGHT** way to think!! But there is another side we may omit.
 - e. What I have too often not awakened with is the idea that God wants to serve me.
2. In fact, let me go so far & say (**Show**): *Before we can ever serve God, He must 1st serve us.*

I. ISAIAH 64:4-5 TEACHES US THIS ABOUT GOD (**Show Title/Text**):

A. This Character Trait about God

1. So startling/unique is this trait of God that Isaiah says it's not found anywhere else.
2. To teach this Isaiah uses 2 extremes that included everything else in between.¹
 - a. At no time in history (*from of old, all way back*), has a god like ours been told of.
 - b. By no human culture (*heard, perceived, seen*) has any god been observed like ours.
3. No culture has ever observed god like ours, so they can't tell about a god like ours.

B. Isaiah Specifically Has in Mind the Exodus & What Happened with 10 Plagues, etc.

1. Think of Pharaoh after son died in 10th Plague in the famous movie.
 - a. In total brokenness takes lifeless body of 1st born to the sun god of Egypt. (**Show**)²
 - b. Places body in outstretched stone arms of huge idol. Greatest god in Egypt.
 - c. *I beg you, restore my son to life, if you are a god.* Of course, there is no response.
2. Idols of Egypt did not serve. They were to be served. They could take, not give.

C. The Contrast with the Lord God

1. But, notice what God does. *He acts for His people, v. 4. He meets His people, v. 5.*
 - a. *Meet = meet as a friend,³ with kindness,⁴ with the offer of help.* Think what means?
 - b. Like two friends meeting where one helps the other, so God meets to assist us.
 - c. God serves His people. He is ever giving, never needing.
2. If we think about this it is the only way it could ever be. Whole Bible teaches this:
 - a. What could we possibly give to God He doesn't have already? (**Show Rom.11:35f**)⁵
 - b. What could we possibly do for God He can't do better Himself? (**Show Acts 17:25**)⁶
 - c. Jesus said something similar about His purpose for coming. (**Show Mark 10:45**)⁷

¹ Motyer, J. A. (1999). *Isaiah: an introduction & commentary* (Vol.20, p.442). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

²[http://www.doctormacro.com/Images/Brynnner,%20Yul/Annex/NRFPT/Annex%20%20Brynnner,%20Yul%20\(Ten%20Commandments,%20The\)_NRFPT_04.jpg](http://www.doctormacro.com/Images/Brynnner,%20Yul/Annex/NRFPT/Annex%20%20Brynnner,%20Yul%20(Ten%20Commandments,%20The)_NRFPT_04.jpg). Accessed

³ Keil, C. F., & Delitzsch, F. (1996). *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Vol. 7, p. 608). Peabody, MA: Hendrickson.

⁴ Biblical Studies Press. (2005). *NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; NET Bible*. Biblical Studies Press

⁵ <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/156077943312884321>. Accessed 8/25/17.

⁶ <http://slideplayer.com/slide/8673066/26/images/7/Acts+17:24-34.jpg>. Accessed 8/25/17.

⁷ <https://bessg.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/mark-10-45.png>. Accessed 8/25/17.

3. The truth is that we have nothing and need everything.
 - a. God is just the opposite. He has everything and needs nothing.
 - b. Before we can ever serve God, He must first serve us.

II. TWO THINGS FLOW OUT OF THIS:

A. God Is Always Ready to Help His Children in Time of Need.

1. If we are down, He can lift us up. If have hard decision, can give us wisdom.
2. If have difficult choice, can give courage. Hard task, He can help us do it.
3. And not only this, but He is eager/willing. He wants to serve. It's His nature.
4. *Thou art coming to a King, large petitions w/thee bring, for His grace and power are such none can ever ask too much.*⁸

B. There Are Conditions to God Serving Us.

1. These vv. are describing a healthy relationship w/God like two friends meeting.⁹
 - a. Israel was **NOT** in a healthy relationship w/God at this time (see v. 5b-6).
 - b. People were disobedient, contrary, wayward and sinful. God had to judge.
2. THIS WAS A PRAYER by Isaiah that his people would turn back to God in a healthy way.

C. For God to Serve Us Effectively, We Must Be in a Healthy Relationship w/Him.

1. We must wait for him, v. 4.
 - a. This means following His direction & guidance, not running ahead/away from Him.
 - b. God wants to serve us, but He is still God. He serves us to achieve His plans.
2. We must joyfully work righteousness, v. 5.
 - a. God is awesome & holy. He wants to display His righteousness in the world.
 - b. He can't serve us if we are unjust & wronging the very people He wants to reach.
3. We must remember his ways, v. 5.
 - a. Ways in O.T. often refers to God's commands in His Word.¹⁰
 - b. To turn our back on those commands is to turn our back on God.
 - c. To receive the help He wants to give we must turn to Him, not from Him.
 - d. We must read and study His Word to put ourselves in the place of His blessing.
 - e. God doesn't owe us anything, but He wants us to be in place where He can use us.

D. The One God Meets by Pastor Raymond Ortlund, Jr.¹¹

1. God meets not the brilliant one, not the lucky one, but the one who is joyfully, humbly going along in the simple, ordinary path of obedience. That's where God can be found—not with a guru on a mountaintop, but right where you are, if you're willing. You don't need to run from your life; it's where God wants to meet you. You don't need to wait for ideal conditions. You just need to use the life you do have to remember God and his ways. Are God's ways your ways? Is he the center of your lifestyle? For all of us, that's an adjustment worth making.
2. *Before we can serve God, we must first let Him serve us in a healthy relationship.*

⁸ John Newton, author of Amazing Grace. <http://i.quoteaddicts.com/media/q1/681886.png>. Accessed 8/25/17.

⁹ Briley, T. R. (2000–). *Isaiah* (p. 301). Joplin, MO: College Press Pub.

¹⁰ Brown, F., Driver, S. R., & Briggs, C. A. (1977). *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (p. 204). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

¹¹ Ortlund, R. C., Jr., & Hughes, R. K. (2005). *Isaiah: God saves sinners* (p. 434). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.