

1. LifeLines on 5/15 will be Psalm 34:1.

2. We'll meet until 5/22; resume 6/5 – 6/26; break for July & August, & resume September 11, after Labor Day.

LifeLines May 8, 2023

Today's Scripture: 1 Verse

Isaiah 54:15

**If anyone stirs up strife, it is not from Me;
whoever stirs up strife with you shall fall because of you.**

WHY WE'RE HERE

2 Timothy 3:16-17, All scripture is inspired by God & is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, & for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

CONTEXT

(FYI: Isaiah prophesied around 755 BC. Most scholars agree the entire book of Isaiah wasn't written by him single-handedly. Some say he wrote most of the beginning of the book, & King Hezekiah, who ruled from 715-686 BC, & his aides, wrote the rest. Hezekiah was said to be a pretty righteous man, & Isaiah was his chief advisor.)

While Isaiah prophesied to the people of his day & to us, primarily in reference to the end times, there are present day applications to our verse. Isaiah 54 is often considered Isaiah's glimpse at the promises of the new covenant. In some Bibles, this chapter is preceded by the words, "The Eternal Covenant of Peace." Isaiah prophesied that Israel would spread & grow, should not be ashamed, would not be abandoned, would be treated with compassion by God & should not be afraid. There was a caveat or warning – God promised He would protect Israel when other nations rose up against them *if* Israel would live righteously before Him & be obedient to His law. As long as they did so, other nations would not be able to stand against them! This didn't mean other nations wouldn't wage war; it meant those nations wouldn't be successful.

DIFFERENT VERSIONS (Versions not listed are similar to the NRSV.)

AMP

If anyone fiercely attacks you it will not be from Me. Whoever attacks you will fall because of you.

ASV (American Standard Version)

Behold, they may gather together, but not by Me: whoever shall gather together against thee shall fall because of thee.

CEB (Contemporary English Bible)

If anyone attacks you, it's none of My doing. Whoever attacks you will fall because of you.

CEV (Contemporary English Version)

I will never send anyone to attack your city, & you will make prisoners of those who do attack.

CJB (Complete Jewish Bible)

Any alliance that forms against you will not be My doing; whoever tries to form such an alliance will fall because of you.

ERV (Easy-to-Read Version)

I will never send anyone to attack you. And if any army tries to attack you, you will defeat them.

GNT

Whoever attacks you, does it without My consent; whoever fights against you will fall.

GW

If anyone attacks you, it will not be My doing. Whoever attacks you will be defeated by you.

KJV

Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by Me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.

MSG

All your children will have God for their teacher – what a mentor for your children! You'll be built solid, grounded in righteousness, far from any trouble – nothing to fear! Far from terror – it won't even come close! If anyone attacks you, don't for a moment suppose that I sent them, & if any should attack, nothing will come of it.

NCV (New Century Version)

I will not send anyone to attack you, & you will defeat those who do attack you.

NIV

If anyone does attack you, it will not be My doing; whoever attacks you will surrender to you.

NLT (New Living Translation)

If any nation comes to fight you, it is not because I sent them. Whoever attacks you will go down in defeat.

SELAH

BREAKING DOWN THE VERSE

If anyone stirs up strife... Keeping in mind that Satan is the father of lies, we must realize that *all* strife originates with him. Think about that. Think of times when you've experienced strife – at home or in the workplace, with your health or family issues, etc. Just as God works in & through us, so does Satan. From whom do you think he learned that technique? Remember – he comes *only* to steal, kill & destroy (John 10:10). All evil is of the devil.

it is not from Me... God is love & has nothing but love, goodness, abundance to give His people, those who are true to Him. He is compassionate & patient with His children, not wanting any to perish (see 2 Peter verse below) . When Satan attacks God's people, God will protect His people even though the situation looks impossible & even though it may take time. Please remember the woman with the issue of blood who suffered for 12 years. Please remember Abraham & Sarah who waited so long for their own child to be born & also Elizabeth & Zechariah. All goodness is of our God.

whoever stirs up strife with you... As long as there is a devil even God's children, especially God's children, must expect attacks from him. If we weren't God's children, Satan probably wouldn't bother with us. We wouldn't be a threat to him.

shall fall because of you... Because God loves us & His church, He will make certain that those who come against us will not succeed. Remember, God's timing is different from our timing (2 Peter 3:8-9, But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, & a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance).

SELAH

RELATED VERSES (Add other related verses as you think of them.)

Deuteronomy 31:6-8, It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.

Joshua 1:9, I hereby command you: Be strong & courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

2 Samuel 22:4, I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, & I am saved from my enemies.

2 Samuel 22:31, This God – His way is perfect; the promise of the Lord proves true; He is a shield for all who take refuge in Him.

2 Chronicles 20:17a-b, 'This battle is not for you to fight; take your position, stand still, & see the victory of the Lord on your behalf, O Judah & Jerusalem.'

Psalms 9:10, And those who know Your name put their trust in You, for You, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You.

Psalms 23:4a-b, Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for You are with me;

Psalm 27:2, When evildoers assail me to devour my flesh – my adversaries & foes – they shall stumble & fall.

Psalm 34:19, Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord rescues them from them all.

Psalm 37:12-13, The wicked plot against the righteous, & gnash their teeth at them; but the Lord laughs at the wicked, for He sees that their day is coming.

Psalm 42:5-6a, Why are you cast down, O my soul, & why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise Him, my help & my God.

Psalm 73:26, My flesh & my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart & my portion forever.

Psalm 91:9-10, Because you have made the Lord your refuge, the Most High your dwelling place, no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent.

Psalm 91:14, Those who love Me, I will deliver; I will protect those who know My name.

Psalm 110:1, The Lord says to my lord, “Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.”

Proverbs 16:4, The Lord has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble.

Proverbs 19:23, The fear of the Lord is life indeed; filled with it, one rests secure & suffers no harm.

Isaiah 41:10, Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you by My victorious right hand.

Isaiah 41:11, Behold, all who rage against you will be ashamed & disgraced; those who contend with you will be reduced to nothing & will perish.

Isaiah 43:3-4, For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom Ethiopia & Seba in exchange for you.

Because you are precious in My sight, & honored, & I love you, I give people in return for you, nations in exchange for your life.

Isaiah 54:17, No weapon that is fashioned against you shall prosper, & you shall confute (prove a person wrong) every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord & their vindication from Me, says the Lord.

Isaiah 55:6-7, Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near; let the wicked forsake their way, & the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that He may have mercy on them, & to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

Isaiah 60:14a, The descendants of those who oppressed you shall come bending low to you, & all who despised you shall bow down at your feet;

Jeremiah 25:7-9c, “Yet you did not listen to Me, says the Lord, & so you have provoked Me to anger with the work of your hands to your own harm. Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts: Because you have not obeyed My words, I am going to send for all the tribes of the north...& I will bring them against this land...”

Jeremiah 29:8-9, (From a letter to the exiles in Babylon) For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let the prophets & the diviners who are among you deceive you, & do not listen to the dreams that they dream, for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in My name; I did not send them, says the Lord.

Jeremiah 31:3b, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued My faithfulness to you.

Ezekiel 38:18 & 23, (Verses 8-23 explain more about Gog & Magog.) On that day, when Gog comes against the land of Israel, says the Lord God, My wrath shall be aroused...So I will display My greatness & My holiness & make Myself known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I am God.

Matthew 28:20b, “And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life.”

Romans 5:8, But God proves His love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

Philippians 4:19, And my God will satisfy every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

2 Thessalonians 3:3, But the Lord is faithful; He will strengthen you & guard you from the evil one.

1 Peter 5:7, Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

1 Peter 5:10, And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory, will Himself restore, support, strengthen, & establish you.

Revelation 3:9-10, “I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews & are not, but are lying – I will make them come & bow down before your feet, & they will learn that I have loved you. Because you have kept My word of patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.”

SUMMARY

How foolish we would be if we didn't *anticipate* attacks from Satan & his minions! Paul warned us to be prepared & armed with the Armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-17). We've also been taught that living a life of righteousness always has its rewards. God promised Israel that if they lived righteously before Him, obedient to His law, then when other nations rose up against them, those nations would *not* be able to stand against Israel. God would protect them. When evil rises against us, *stirs up strife against us*, God will be with us!

God extends His protection & provision to us today. He is our security because He's our Source. Of course, we must still deal with consequences of our sin, but we know our sin is forgiven when we approach God & repent with sincerity & a contrite heart. This promise is for all who believe.

Sometimes, we still manage to mess things up, right? There are people who point their finger at God when things don't go their way. God is NOT

responsible for most things people blame Him for causing. As humans, we have a tendency to look for someone to blame. We want to know why unfortunate things happen to us or those dear to us. How often have we heard people ask, “Why did this (have to) happen?”

We like to think God is in control of every little thing. It’s true that God is sovereign, but He is not responsible for most of the things people want to hold against Him. Think about the movie, “The War Room,” which many of you have seen. How does that movie relate to tonight’s LifeLine’s verse? When we seek the Lord, He can be found.

CONCLUSION

God loves us. He has done everything possible to make a way for us to be reconciled to Him, to be cared for in this world & to spend eternity with Him in the next. *He sent His Son as a down payment of every one of His promises!* He created *this world* for our enjoyment & pleasure. He created *us* for relationship *with Him*. Why on earth would He design anything to harm us? Why would He arrange for anyone or anything to come against us? Why wouldn’t He do everything to assure us of His Presence & provision in every situation we might face?

Reread Isaiah 41:10, Deuteronomy 31:6-8 & Jeremiah 31:3b.

Think of how you treat your loved ones. In Matthew 7:11, Jesus asks, “If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!”

God is a good & loving parent. All of the good things He wants to give us, do for us, intends for us, may not come to us in this life, but they will surely come. As children, we were often told to wait. Even as God’s children, waiting is often necessary. Lamentations 3 is a good chapter to read *for extra credit*. It is sobering. It’s good content on which to meditate, because as humans, we still have a tendency to want to play *the victim* & disregard all God *has done, is doing & will do*. Remembering God’s great love for us & the love behind His *every good gift*, we’ll let some of the verses from Lamentations 3:21-32 close our study:

“But this I call to mind, & therefore I have hope:
The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
His mercies never come to an end;
They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.

“The Lord is my portion,” says my soul,
“therefore I have hope in Him.”
The Lord is good to those who wait for Him,
to the soul that seeks Him.
It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.
It is good for one to bear the yoke in youth,
to sit alone in silence when the Lord has imposed it...
For the Lord will not reject forever.
Although He causes grief, He will have compassion
according to the abundance of His steadfast love;
for He does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone.”

*“If anyone stirs up strife,
it is not from Me;
whoever stirs up strife with you
shall fall because of you.”*
Isaiah 54:15, Our LifeLine

Let this verse be a *LifeLine* for you!

Let's Continue Learning!

SCRIPTURE IS OUR –

LifeLine!