

Isaiah 59:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

Analysis

The chapter opens with a bold declaration: 'Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear.' The Hebrew 'qatsar' (shortened) indicates incapacity. God's power and attentiveness are not the problem - His arm reaches and His ear hears. The barrier to deliverance lies elsewhere.

Historical Context

This addresses exiles questioning God's ability or willingness to save. Similar complaints appear in Isaiah 40:27 and 50:2. Isaiah corrects the false assumption that God has become weak or inattentive.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. When have you blamed God's inability rather than examining other barriers to blessing?
2. How does this verse correct wrong assumptions about God's power and attentiveness?

Interlinear Text

הִנֵּה	לֹא	קִצְרָה	יָד	יְהוָה	מְהוֹשׁ יַעַ	וְלֹא
Behold	H3808	is not shortened	hand	the LORD'S	that it cannot save	H3808
H2005		H7114	H3027	H3068	H3467	
הַ	כִּבְדָּה	אֶזְנוֹ	מִשְׁמָעוֹ:			
heavy	neither his ear	that it cannot hear				
H3513	H241	H8085				

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 32:17 (References Lord): Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:

Isaiah 50:2 (Parallel theme): Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst.

Numbers 11:23 (References Lord): And the LORD said unto Moses, Is the LORD'S hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.

Isaiah 65:24 (Parallel theme): And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

Genesis 18:14 (References Lord): Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

Hebrews 7:25 (Salvation): Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Matthew 13:15 (Parallel theme): For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

Isaiah 58:9 (References Lord): Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

Isaiah 6:10 (Parallel theme): Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

Isaiah 63:1 (Salvation): Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.