

*After watching the video, reflect on how the biblical word “avon” shapes how you understand humanity, sin, or God.*

## ISAIAH 59:1-16 NAS

1 Behold, the Lord’s hand is not so short that it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull that it cannot hear. 2 But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear. 3 For your hands are defiled with blood and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken falsehood, your tongue mutters wickedness. 4 No one sues righteously and no one pleads honestly. they trust in confusion and speak lies; they conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity.

5 They hatch adders’ eggs and weave the spider’s web; he who eats of their eggs dies, and from that which is crushed a snake breaks forth. 6 Their webs will not become clothing, nor will they cover themselves with their works; their works are works of iniquity, and an act of violence is in their hands. 7 Their feet run to evil, and they hasten to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity, devastation and destruction are in their highways.

8 They do not know the way of peace, and there is no justice in their tracks; they have made their paths crooked, whoever treads on them does not know peace. 9 Therefore justice is far from us, and righteousness does not overtake us; we hope for light, but behold, darkness, for brightness, but we walk in gloom. 10 We grope along the wall like blind men, we grope like those who have no eyes; we stumble at midday as in the twilight, among those who are vigorous we are like dead men.

11 All of us growl like bears, and moan sadly like doves; we hope for justice, but there is none, for salvation, but it is far from us. 12 For our transgressions are multiplied before You, and our sins testify against us; for our transgressions are with us, and we know our iniquities: 13 Transgressing and denying the Lord, and turning away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving in and uttering from the heart lying words.

14 Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands far away; for truth has stumbled in the street, and uprightness cannot enter. 15 Yes, truth is lacking; and he who turns aside from evil makes himself a prey. Now the Lord saw, and it was displeasing in His sight that there was no justice. 16 And He saw that there was no man, and was astonished that there was no one to intercede; then His own arm brought salvation to Him, and His righteousness upheld Him.

*As you read this passage, we invite you to reflect on your own life, community, and world. The prophet is describing how his community has become so morally crooked that people can hardly discern what is bent versus straight. Notice the vivid metaphors that describe the self-deception and the feelings of helplessness when a whole society defines crooked behavior as perfectly acceptable. The kind of community that results is its own form of punishment, and the hope is that people will see the pain around them and turn back to Yahweh.*

### QUESTION 1

What grieves you the most as you read through this passage?

### QUESTION 2

Re-read verses 15-16. What is God’s response to what is happening? What do you think this says about who God is?

## EPHESIANS 2:1-10 NAS

1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

*Paul describes how humanity is a lot like a group of zombies--physically alive but mentally, spiritually, and morally dead. But God is in the business of making new humans who live by his generous mercy, and that's what he accomplished in the resurrection of Jesus.*

### QUESTION 1

What resonates most with you as you read this passage?

### QUESTION 2

Re-read verses 8-10. What can and can't we boast in, or in other words, where does our honor and value come from? How does this relate to what's going on in your life, community, or world currently?