

Isaiah 58-59

Bible Study

Review

Chapter 56

v.1-8 Salvation and blessings offered to the Gentiles/all mankind with requirements (points to NT times)

- Not defiling the Sabbath

God makes it clear that in the millennium other people will be gathered to worship besides Israel

- God's house will be a 'house of prayer' for all nations

v. 9—57: 13 A new section--A message to the wicked

- The watchmen (false prophets) were not doing their job and the people went astray
 - The nation was plunged into gross idolatry

Chapter 57—the message to the wicked continues (Isaiah's day/reflection of the end time)

- The society was so bad that a righteous person had to die to find peace
 - Description of the false pagan religion including child sacrifice
- Description of Israel forgetting God...they did not fear Him as they should have

Healing for the backslider—God's promise of forgiveness upon repentance

Chapter 58

Chapter 58 contains three elements of prophecy: Rebuke, Warning and Promise

1 Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, And the house of Jacob their sins.

“Cry aloud... “lift up your voice like a trumpet” —what God’s messengers and prophets do

- ‘transgression and sins’...Obedience to God is required of His people

“Tell My People”

The prophets in their messages to God’s people: Reminding them of theirs sins and the need to repent

The trumpet blast is loud and clear, and often a warning intended to rouse people to action

Their displays of religion were a pretense...and outward show

2 Yet they seek Me daily, And delight to know My ways, As a nation that did righteousness, And did not forsake the ordinance of their God. They ask of Me the ordinances of justice; They take delight in approaching God.

3 ‘Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and You have not seen? Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?’
“In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, And exploit all your laborers.

v. 2 (NIV) “For day after day they seek me out; they **seem** eager to know my ways, **as if** they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ask me for just decisions and **seem** eager for God to come near them.”

v. 2 In an outward manner the people seemed eager to obey and approach God...but it was **a display** of religion
(Matthew 23: 28) “Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness”

v. 3 Their fasting was hypocritical—it was a show of righteousness

- In fact as they fasted they did their own pleasure and mistreated others

Hypocritical attitudes

4 Indeed you fast for strife and debate, And to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as you do this day,
To make your voice heard on high.

5 Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, And an acceptable day to the Lord?

v. 4 Even while fasting their relationship with others was terrible: strife and debate, and fighting

v. 4 [Last part] “To make your voice heard on high” —they saw their fasting as a way to force God to hear them

- God would not accept their fast because of their attitudes and hypocrisy

v. 5 A person might bow his head and spread out sackcloth and ashes, but the attitude must be right

- They were demonstrating a mock repentance

***Fasting/afflicting ourselves is an exercise of humility, and opportunity to draw near to God

A proper fast and attitude

6 “Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke?”

7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh?”

v. 6-7 In these questions God points out the characteristics of a true fast

A proper fast to draw near to God will result in a greater desire to love and help other people

v. 7 [Last part] “And not hide yourself from your own flesh?”

- While referring to ones own family, it also refers to all mankind...compassion for everyone

Promises for meeting God's spiritual conditions

8 **Then** your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, And your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

9 **Then** you shall call, and the Lord will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.' "If you take away the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,

v. 8 God promises:

- (1) light and life for those who worship Him properly
- (2) Healing– 'shall spring forth speedily'

(3) Protection: The Lord will lead them by His righteousness and 'His glory will be their rear guard'

v. 9 (4) Answered prayer is another promise for proper worship

- If they take away the burdens on others and stop pointing the finger of accusations and speaking wickedness

'wickedness' (KJV) 'vanity'= strife and debate

Obligations to help others and **promises** for doing it

10 If you extend your soul to the hungry And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then your light shall dawn in the darkness,
And your darkness shall be as the noonday.

11 The Lord will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like
a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.

v. 10 For taking care of the hungry person, taking care of the needy;

The promises:

- light will replace darkness in one's life

Matthew 5: 16

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven

v. 11 God will also continually be their guide

- He will take care of them in time of drought
- Strengthen their bones (KJV) 'make fat their bones'= ready for work and action
 - Prosperity 'like a watered garden'
 - Spiritual prosperity 'like a spring of water'

Millennial promises—of revival and restoration

12 Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.

Waste places will be rebuilt

- The walls and foundations of Jerusalem shall be rebuilt (The repairer of the breach)
 - The land will be inhabited (Restorer of Streets to Dwell in)

The restoration of Jerusalem upon the return of the exiles in OT times, pictures the restoration in the kingdom

Reminder of what God **requires** in light of the promises

13 “If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, From doing your pleasure on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a delight, The holy day of the Lord honorable, And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, Nor finding your own pleasure, Nor speaking your own words,

14 Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord; And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

v. 13 [1st part] If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath= Keeping the Sabbath holy
(NIV) “If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath”(The Sabbath is holy ground to walk upon)

v. 13 [Last part] The Sabbath to be honored and kept:
Not doing your own ways
Not seeking one’s own pleasure
Not speaking idle talk

v. 14 For keeping the Sabbath honorable
“you shall delight yourself in the Lord”= building a relationship with Him
And will reap blessings

Chapter 59

Israel's national and individual sins continued
Most likely Isaiah wrote this during king Manasseh's rule

1 Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear.

2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

- Isaiah admonishes the people that God can save them out of their difficult times
 - His powerful arm is able to save...His ear is able to hear them
- The implication is that they needed to seek Him and call out to Him and He would intervene

v. 2 God could save them but their sins separated them from God
It is our sins that cut us off from God

Psalm 66: 18

If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear.

v. 3-15 A listing of the nation's sins (cuts them off from God)

3 **For** your hands are defiled with blood, And your fingers with iniquity; Your lips have spoken lies, Your tongue has muttered perversity.

4 No one calls for justice, Nor does any plead for truth. They trust in empty words and speak lies; They conceive evil and bring forth iniquity.

v. 3 Their sins included: murder (innocent blood shed)
Lying to others...and foul mouths

v. 4 The lack of truth and justice, by means of lies and false testimony
Hatching evil plans

Proverbs 17: 13
Whoever rewards evil for good, Evil will not depart from his house

5 They hatch vipers' eggs and weave the spider's web; He who eats of their eggs dies, And from that which is crushed a viper breaks out.

6 Their webs will not become garments, Nor will they cover themselves with their works; Their works are works of iniquity, And the act of violence is in their hands.

v. 5 Their evil actions were like a poisonous snake which bites and causes great harm

v.6 God sees the evil works and they cannot be hidden

“Their webs will not become garments” —they are useless not fit even for clothing
“Nor will they cover themselves with their works” —they are useless/evil

7 Their feet run to evil, And they make haste to shed innocent blood; Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity;
Wasting and destruction are in their paths.

8 The way of peace they have not known, And there is no justice in their ways; They have made themselves crooked
paths; Whoever takes that way shall not know peace.

v. 7 The society was so bad that much innocent blood was shed...their path was constant iniquity and
destruction

II Kings 21: 16

Moreover Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to
another, besides his sin by which he made Judah sin, in doing evil in the sight of the Lord.

v. 8 The wicked do not know the path to peace, they are constantly traveling down crooked paths
Warning: 'Whoever takes that way shall not know peace'

9 Therefore justice is far from us, Nor does righteousness overtake us; We look for light, but there is darkness! For brightness, but we walk in blackness!

10 We grope for the wall like the blind, And we grope as if we had no eyes; We stumble at noonday as at twilight; We are as dead men in desolate places.

The people had become so spiritually corrupt without righteousness and without spiritual light...

It was like they were blind and dead

v. 11-15 Description of a sinful state

11 We all growl like bears, And moan sadly like doves; We look 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 as for our iniquities, we know them:

v. 11 They had drifted so far away from God that justice and the hope of salvation seemed far, far away

v. 12 Transgressions and sin multiplied...the people noted their own sins

Reflection of the end times

13 In transgressing and lying against the Lord, And departing from our God, Speaking oppression and revolt,
Conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.

14 Justice is turned back, And righteousness stands afar off; For truth is fallen in the street, And equity cannot enter.

15 So truth fails, And he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. Then the Lord saw it, and it displeased Him
That there was no justice.

v. 13 Describes deliberate rebellion...the heart was involved in the evil acts

v. 14 The lack of truth and deliberate lying, the lack of justice have been emphasized in their ways

v. 15 [Mid. Verse] “Then the Lord saw it, and it displeased Him”

➤ God was displeased and He will take action

God moves to intervene

16 He saw that there was no man, And wondered that there was no intercessor; Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; And His own righteousness, it sustained Him.

17 For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, And a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, And was clad with zeal as a cloak.

v. 16 God 'wondered' (was appalled) that there was no one who intervened in the midst of all the evil
'Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him' —God Himself will intervene

v. 17 Symbolism of putting on spiritual armor...Christ will make righteous war (intervene) at His return (Isa. 63: 1-6)

From judgment, to the time of the kingdom

18 According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, Fury to His adversaries, Recompense to His enemies; The coastlands He will fully repay.

19 So shall they fear The name of the Lord from the west, And His glory from the rising of the sun; When the enemy comes in like a flood, The Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.

v. 18 When Christ returns in judgment, He will judge the enemies

v. 19 “So shall they fear The name of the Lord...and His glory”—in the millennium
➤ Everyone will acknowledge His glory and majesty

v. 19 [Last part] “When the enemy comes like a flood, The Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him”
➤ Explains why all the world will fear the Lord...Christ will be in control

²⁰ The Redeemer will come to Zion, And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob,” Says the Lord.

²¹ “As for Me,” says the Lord, “this is My covenant with them: My Spirit who is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants’ descendants,” says the Lord, “from this time and forevermore.”

v. 20 Christ ‘The Redeemer’ will come to Zion” —for the benefit of Zion

- And Israel, who has turned from transgression will be saved



Romans 11:26

And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

v. 21 “My covenant”= the new covenant
Should be: “My spirit which is upon you”

Ezekiel 36: 27

I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

Lessons

God is more concerned with obedience, right attitude and heart, taking care of others, than rituals and outward show of religion

Fasting/afflicting ourselves is an exercise of humility, and opportunity to draw near to God

The observance of the Sabbath is a barometer of one's faithfulness to God and desire to have a relationship with Him

Christ will return in power and the nations will fear and give Him due respect