

## A Trek Through Isaiah 78 - 57:14-21

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For this week:

- The prostitute's brood and the LORD's household 57:1-21

Context

<b><u>The Ideal and the Actual 56:1 - 59:13</u></b>
The waiting people 56:1-8
The divided people 56:9 - 57:21
Ineffective religion 58:1-14
The guilty people 59:1-13

- In the book of the Conqueror (56 - 66): How will God's people fulfill their promise?
- In this book, Isaiah speaks of three things
  - The contrast between the ideal community and the actual community
  - God's glorious promises for the faithful.
  - A Conqueror: the third messianic figure who accomplishes God's purpose and fulfills His promises.
- This section (56 - 59) has four parts which contrast the ideal (the people of God as they are intended to be) with the actual (how they actually are).
- Today we will cover part 2

## The prostitute's brood and the LORD's household 57:1-21

- Structure: A jumbled passage reflecting the jumble of life in a divided society
  - Peace of the righteous (v1-2) contrasts with no peace for the wicked (v20-21)
  - The children of adultery (v3-13) contrasted with the family of God (v14-19)

- V1a Society unfriendly to righteousness. The righteous die and no one understands.

1 The righteous man perishes, and no one lays it to heart; devout men are taken away, while no one understands.

- V1b-2 The peace of the righteous. They are taken out of calamity into peace.

For the righteous man is taken away from calamity; 2 he enters into peace; they rest in their beds who walk in their uprightness.

- V3-10 Offspring of adultery

- V3-4 Mocking the LORD

3 But you, draw near, sons of the sorceress, offspring of the adulterer and the loose woman. 4 Whom are you mocking? Against whom do you open your mouth wide and stick out your tongue? Are you not children of transgression, the offspring of deceit,

- V5 Pagan worship: ritual adultery and child sacrifice

5 you who burn with lust among the oaks, under every green tree, who slaughter your children in the valleys, under the clefts of the rocks?

- V6-8 The spirit of whoredom. Abandoning the faithful Lord to go after other lovers.

6 Among the smooth stones of the valley is your portion; they, they, are your lot; to them you have poured out a drink offering, you have brought a grain offering. Shall I relent for these things? 7 On a high and lofty mountain you have set your bed, and there you went up to offer sacrifice. 8 Behind the door and the doorpost you have set up your memorial; for, deserting me, you have uncovered your bed, you have gone up to it, you have made it wide; and you have made a covenant for yourself with them, you have loved their bed, you have looked on nakedness.

- V9-10 Politics. Depending on politics and alliances rather than on the Lord.

9 You journeyed to the king with oil and multiplied your perfumes; you sent your envoys far off, and sent down even to Sheol. 10 You were wearied with the length of your way, but you did not say, "It is hopeless"; you found new life for your strength, and so you were not faint.

- V11-13 Judgment. They abandon God and worship idols. He will abandon them to their idols.

11 Whom did you dread and fear, so that you lied, and did not remember me, did not lay it to heart? Have I not held my peace, even for a long time, and you do not fear me? 12 I will declare your righteousness and your deeds, but they will not profit you. 13 When you cry out, let your collection of idols deliver you! The wind will carry them all off, a breath will take them away. But he who takes refuge in me shall possess the land and shall inherit my holy mountain.

- V14-19 The LORD's people
  - V14 Their way prepared.

14 And it shall be said, "Build up, build up, prepare the way, remove every obstruction from my people's way."

- Build up, build up, prepare the way,
  - The high road.
  - Prepared for God's people to come to Him.
- remove every obstruction
  - Nothing to hinder them.

- V15 God and His household

15 For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite.

- Thus says the One
  - God speaking
- Speaks of Himself
  - who is high and lifted up,
    - Above all things
  - who inhabits eternity,
    - Lit the eternal inhabitant
    - Used in Ex 25:8 And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst.
    - God purposing to dwell with His people eternally.
  - whose name is Holy
    - God's holiness will be maintained when His people draw near.
    - Thus there must be some provision for their sin.
    - Here is the work of the Servant Is 53:12 he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

- Speaks of believers
  - Chiastic structure
    - A: Contrite
      - B: lowly spirit
      - B': spirit of the lowly
    - A':heart of the contrite
  - With him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit
    - Contrite. Sorry for their sin.
    - Lowly. Humble; not esteemed in their own eyes.
    - As the Beatitudes in Mt 5:3-4 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
  - to revive the spirit ... to revive the heart of the contrite.
    - Revive. To restore. The curse removed.
    - Spirit.
      - Inner motivation.
      - Coming to God rather than hiding from Him.
    - Heart.
      - Mind and will.
      - Seeing truth clearly.
      - Choosing what is right.

○ V16 Revival enabled

16 For I will not contend forever, nor will I always be angry; for the spirit would grow faint before me, and the breath of life that I made.

- Contend. Engage in legal proceedings to satisfy the requirements of His holiness.
- Angry. Wrathful over sin.
- God will bring His judgment and anger to an end. Context tells us that this is by the work of the Servant.
- Grow faint. If He did not, all life would cease.

○ V17 The nature of man: enslaved to sin

17 Because of the iniquity of his unjust gain I was angry, I struck him; I hid my face and was angry, but he went on backsliding in the way of his own heart.

- Because of the iniquity of his unjust gain
  - Mankind's continual sin.
- God's responses
  - I was angry. Wrath
  - I struck him. Affliction
  - I hid my face. Withdrawal
- he went on backsliding in the way of his own heart.
  - Still enslaved to sin
  - A different solution is needed.

- V18-19 Healing and restoration

18 I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and his mourners, 19 creating the fruit of the lips. Peace, peace, to the far and to the near,” says the LORD, “and I will heal him.

- I have seen his ways
  - True diagnosis and appreciation of mankind’s nature
- But
  - Mankind’s ways deserve death
  - But God has another way: the work of the Servant
- What God will do
  - Heal him. A new nature.
  - Lead him. Guide in paths of righteousness.
  - restore comfort to him and his mourners.
    - Mourning comes from sorrow over hard circumstances.
    - Comfort.
      - Forgiveness.
      - Loving concern. Replacing affliction.
  - Creating the fruit of the lips.
    - A new creative act that only the Lord can do,.
    - As Heb 13:15 Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.
- The result
  - Peace, peace.
    - 2x for completeness.
    - No longer enemies of God
  - to the far and to the near.
    - As v8 I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered.
  - I will heal him.
    - Complete wholeness

- V20-21 The condition of the wicked

20 But the wicked are like the tossing sea; for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up mire and dirt. 21 There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

- The condition of the wicked

- Like the tossing sea.

- No stability. Moved by every outside influence,

- It cannot be quiet

- Quiet: at peace within itself.

- Cannot be. Unable to be.

- its waters toss up mire and dirt

- All the movement only results in corruption.

- Warning

- Repeats 48:22 which was spoken to the returning exiles

- Here spoken to the wicked heading for judgment.

## **Discussion**

We will break into three groups for discussion. The questions are

- 1. Their way prepared 57:14**
  - a. The way built up and prepared**
  - b. Every obstacle removed**
  - c. Ro 8:28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.**
- 2. God and His household 57:15**
  - a. I dwell with him who is of contrite and lowly spirit**
  - b. To revive the spirit and the heart**
- 3. True peace and no peace 57:18-21**
  - a. True peace**
    - i. Comfort**
    - ii. The fruit of the lips**
  - b. No peace**
    - i. Never quiet**
    - ii. Tossing up mire and dirt**

Remember to worship the Lord: (1) See (2) Know (3) Respond

For next week:

- Ineffective religion 58:1-14

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