

Sunday, May 24, 2020

God is My Salvation – Isaiah

81. Fasting that Pleases God – Isaiah 58:1-14

Introduction – In Isaiah chapters 56-57 we looked at Irresponsible Leaders and Idolatrous People. In 57:14-21 we were shown the Road Home (repentance) as a gift from God to bring true peace and reconciliation. Now in chapters 58-59 we see a stinging rebuke that leads to repentance and the confession of sin.

- I. Rebuking Self-Righteous Religion – vs. 1-4
 - A. Conviction of Sin Leads to Repentance (vs. 1) – Isa. 57:19; 2 Tim. 4:2; Heb. 12:5-6
 - 1. Shout like a Trumpet – Exodus 19:16, 19
 - 2. Expose rebellion (attitude)
 - 3. Identify sins (actions)
 - B. Seemingly Religious (vs. 2)
 - 1. The people seem eager to worship God rightly
 - 2. They are committed (daily)
 - 3. They are passionate (delight, pleasure)
 - 4. They seek to know, to do, to not do, and they ask and approach
 - C. A Ritual for Reaction (vs. 3-4)
 - 1. “What seems to be the product of delight is actually a calculated practice aimed at producing a heavenly reaction.” – Motyer
 - 2. They act like a righteous nation to pressure the Lord into a response
 - 3. They are dismayed when their self-affliction gets no divine attention
 - 4. “I delight to do so I can get what I really want” – self-serving
 - a. They treated a fast day like a bank holiday
 - b. Worship as an excuse not to work
 - c. Proof of self-serving is that the fake fast always ends in a fight – James 4:1-4
 - d. An unspiritual, disobedient, self-serving, self-righteous family spends a day together in social isolation together getting hungry and angry
 - e. True fasting (that is heard on high, acknowledged by heaven) is not this kind of fasting
- II. The True Objective of Fasting – vs. 5-7
 - A. Would You Call This a Fast? (vs. 5)
 - 1. The ritual, going through exaggerated motions, is a performance
 - 2. How is any of this acceptable to the Lord?
 - 3. This is an attempt to earn God’s favor – to buy grace! – Rom. 4:4-5; 11:5-6
 - B. The Goal: Self Denial and Service to Others (vs. 6-7)
 - 1. Fast to loose the bonds of wickedness – liberty from sin and shame – Gal. 5:1, 13
 - 2. Fast to undo the heavy burden – weighing people down with sin and guilt
 - 3. Fast to free the oppressed, breaking every yoke – end injustice and inhumanity
 - a. Fast to share your bread with the hungry – Acts 2:44-47
 - b. Fast to house the poor and cloth the naked
 - c. In order to love God, we must love others sacrificially – 1 John 3:17-19; Matt. 25:31-46
- III. A Flood of Blessings – vs. 8-12
 - A. Then Four Blessings will Follow (vs. 8-9b)
 - 1. New Life – light like the dawn
 - 2. Healing – like new flesh over a wound
 - 3. Security – surrounded by righteousness and glory – Isa. 52:12; Rom. 13:12; 2 Cor. 6:7

4. Fellowship with the Lord – you will call and He will immediately answer, “Behold, Me!”
- B. The Proper Use of Fasting (vs. 9c-10b) – 2 Cor. 8:8-9, 13-14; 9:6-15
 1. Remove the burden of self-righteousness
 2. Spend yourself on behalf of the hungry
 3. Satisfy the needs of the oppressed
- C. Four More Blessings (vs. 10c-12)
 1. Light in the darkness – divine guidance and direction in life – Prov. 3:5-6
 2. Satisfy and strengthen in time of need
 3. Refreshment – John 7:38
 4. Restoration, recovery, and a future
- IV. From Fasting to Feasting – vs. 13-14
 - A. Enjoy God’s Blessings by Obedience, not Ritual – depriving self for the sake of self isn’t really self-deprivation is it?
 - B. Serve, Worship, and Obey
 1. Not by doing things your way
 2. Not by seeking your own pleasure
 3. Not by speaking your own words
 - C. Find Your Joy (Delight) in the Lord
 1. His Way – John 14:6; Luke 9:23
 2. His Pleasure – 2 Cor. 5:9; Col. 1:9-11
 3. His Word – John 15:7-8; Matt. 4:4

Cross References:

Isaiah 57:19

“I create the fruit of the lips: Peace, peace to him who is far off and to him who is near,” Says the Lord, “And I will heal him.”

2 Timothy 4:2

Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

Hebrews 12:5-6

And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: “My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives.”

Exodus 19:16, 19

Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. 19 And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice.

James 4:1-4

Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? 2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. 4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Romans 4:4-5

Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. 5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,

Romans 11:5-6

Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.

Galatians 5:1, 13

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. 13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

Acts 2:44-47

44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. 46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

1 John 3:17-19

17 But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18 My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. 19 And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.

Matthew 25:31-46

31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

37 “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ 40 And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’

41 “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; 43 I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’

44 “Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ 45 Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ 46 And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Isaiah 52:12

For you shall not go out with haste, Nor go by flight; For the Lord will go before you, And the God of Israel will be your rear guard.

Romans 13:12

The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

2 Corinthians 6:7

by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left...

2 Corinthians 8:8-9, 13-14

I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. 13 For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened; 14 but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack—that there may be equality.

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 9 As it is written: “He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever.” 10 Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, 11 while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. 12 For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God, 13 while, through the proof of this ministry, they

glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal sharing with them and all men, 14 and by their prayer for you, who long for you because of the exceeding grace of God in you. 15 Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

John 7:38

He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”

John 14:6

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Luke 9:23

Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

2 Corinthians 5:9

Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.

Colossians 1:9-11

For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;

John 15:7-8

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

Matthew 4:4

But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ ”