

# Hope For a Lost World

*Book of Isaiah*

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**Bible Text:** Isaiah 56:1-8

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I would like to invite you to look with me in your Bibles to Isaiah chapter 56. I am going to read from verse one down to verse eight. We more than likely will not get through all of these verses, but it is one theme.

Here in my Bible it says, "Strangers included in the blessing." Whenever the Scriptures speak of strangers, they are talking about those who were alien to the commonwealth of Israel. In other words, nations. Some of the prejudice, I suppose, of the translators with regard to people from other countries in our Scriptures is often translated heathens, those heathens. Actually it is the word nations. But there was this mindset in the day, particularly in England at the time that anybody that was not of English descent was a heathen, much like the Jews which considered that anybody that wasn't a Jew was a dog. And much like Americans, well, I won't go there. We kind of have a pride in our own nation which considers people of other ethnicities as much as we trying to defend fairness and what not. I will tell you it is just part of our sin nature to look on a person's skin or color or culture, language and consider ourselves to be better than they.

But I say that because in this portion of Scripture there is a message of mercy for such that are considered to be strangers or heathens or off casts and I find that to be a message of hope even for such as I, because as far as I know I don't have any physical Jewish blood. It may be way back there, but it doesn't matter. I gladly claim myself to be a heathen, a sinner that by God's grace that faithful saying that Christ came in this world to save sinners of whom I am chief.

And so we read this in Isaiah 56.

Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that

please me, and take hold of my covenant; Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.<sup>1</sup>

And so I have entitled this message simply, “Hope for a Lost World.”

When you read verse eight doesn't it remind you of the words of our Lord that said:

“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold.”<sup>2</sup>

He didn't come just to save Jewish sinners, but he came to save sinners from every tribe, nation and tongue and to gather every one that he has redeemed. So that is the message that we see here in this particular portion of Scripture. We see a promised mercy for a lost world of sinners.

I am thankful it is so, because it helps me understand why I, Ken Wimer, can have any hope or why any one of you that are the Lord's can have any hope. It is because the Lord purposed it and promised it and fulfilled it.

Here in verse one when the Lord says:

“Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice...”<sup>3</sup>

A Legalist, with natural minded eyes... And that is who I consider a Legalist to be, somebody that thinks that it is by the works of their hands that they can approach unto God. When they read that particular portion they see, aha, it says to keep the law. And so they set themselves to do it. And the message that they see in reading this particular portion is, especially when it gets down to keeping the sabbath. There are some today that still say that is what we ought to be doing. We ought to be meeting on Saturdays. It is an everlasting ordinance. And that is what it is to keep the sabbath.

But if the Spirit of God ever gives you eyes to see—and this is the problem with most people—they only read a portion of God's Word. They read the portion. It is like going

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<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 56:1-8.

<sup>2</sup> John 10:16.

<sup>3</sup> Isaiah 56:1.

through a buffet. You pick out just what you want and then leave the rest, whether it is healthy for you or not. And here:

“Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.”<sup>4</sup>

What was the Lord announcing there? The coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and a reminder to the people of Israel that as a nation they, to keep justice meant that they were to observe every ordinance that God gave with regard to approaching him, whether it had to do with the priesthood, whether it had to do with the sacrifices or whether it had to do with keeping the sabbath. Those laws were not a means unto an end of themselves. The Lord didn't give those rules and ordinances and laws as a means of salvation. But, rather, as a reminder or as a prophesy or a picture of true justice, of true righteousness, that he declares here that is to be revealed. Notice.

“...and my righteousness to be revealed.”<sup>5</sup>

They had in the Old Testament in the economy that God ordained in the priesthood and the sacrifices and the keeping of the sabbath, all those things foresaw a righteousness to be revealed. And that is why they were to keep it. All of those laws pertaining to tithes, for example, what was the purpose of the tithes? To sustain the priesthood until Christ should come and fulfill that priesthood. And now that he has come the Scriptures don't take and put us back under that economy. No. It points us to Christ. And that is the whole goal of this portion here, to show this one who was to come and the reason they were to keep the sabbath. The word sabbath means a rest, a setting aside of your works, daily works to rest. But attached to that day of rest were sacrifices. We don't have those today. If you want to make Saturday a sabbath day, where are the sacrifices to be offered? It was all related.

There is a reason we don't offer sacrifices today and there is reason we don't observe a day as being a sabbath day anymore, because Christ has fulfilled it. What was declared here in verse one

“....for my salvation is near to come...”<sup>6</sup>

That is what the Old Testament declares. The New Testament declares my salvation is come. The Old Testament declares my righteousness to be revealed, future. The New Testament declares that righteousness which has been revealed. In other words, in the Lord Jesus Christ. So that is why we don't get caught up in all of these debates and arguments today on what we are to do or not to do, going back and picking and choosing out of the law certain things that certain ones want you to continue to do like tithing or keeping a day, but then overlooking the rest. Either it has been fulfilled or it hasn't. Either we are in Christ or we are not. And I believe it is just that simple. You might a

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

well walk away from those that would go back and try again to put you under bondage of the law and of rules and obligations and regulations. What did Paul write to the Galatians?

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.”<sup>7</sup>

You see, so we have got to keep these things in perspective.

This was a message that was set forth by Isaiah not to cause people to start arguing about what is and what isn't as far as the law. But to point needy sinners to Christ. And I believe that should be the object of every message every time we open up this particular book. And if God gives you eyes to see, that is what you are going to see here. I thank God that there is a justice that has been satisfied. There has been a judgment rendered. And it hasn't been through my keeping of the law, but it has been through his keeping of the law, Christ fulfilling of the law. And in verse two when it says there:

“Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it.”<sup>8</sup>

Again, he is speaking of those that were under that Old Testament economy that did keep what God ordained. They came with that blameless sacrifice. They offered it to the priest and that blood was shed, but their confidence wasn't in that priest or in that sacrifice or in that physical altar. If they were the Lord's they did these things. And, you see, that is what it is speaking of in verse two.

“Blessed is the man that doeth this.”<sup>9</sup>

The salvation isn't in the doing, but in what it represents as Abel, for example, brought that blood sacrifice and offered before the Lord. There was that assurance that God gave him that he had done the right thing. There wasn't any righteousness in him, but he had done the right thing in coming with that blood sacrifice, just as Cain did the wrong thing. Cain did not keep judgment. Cain did not do justice, because he came with the works of his own hands. And it is that simple, a line drawn today. You come to God through Christ and that sacrifice that he has accomplished. You have done the right thing. That is the righteous thing to do. There is no righteousness in the doing it, because the doing and all the righteousness is in Christ's doing and dying, but you did the right thing. God brought you as it says here to keep judgment and to do justice. Any other way of coming is only condemnation. And I am sure that is what the message of Scripture is.

So we see here the promised mercy for a lost world of sinners. This applied not just to the Jew. You can see in verse three there were strangers in the midst of the nation of Israel who joined themselves—you can see it in verse three—as an act of faith, if you will, even when Israel was brought out of Egypt, there were Egyptians that came with them. Let's not forget that, that saw the hand of the Lord in delivering Israel and they came out with

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<sup>7</sup> Galatians 5:1.

<sup>8</sup> Isaiah 56:2.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

them to worship. That is why when the Lord began to give laws he established laws regarding the strangers in their midst. Even along the way there were the Rahabs, there were the Ruths that the Lord purposed should be joined unto this people. Even there he was giving us a picture of his salvation that it was not just for anyone particular people, but it was for the world in that sense when...

I don't have any problem quoting John 3:16.

“For God so loved the world...”<sup>10</sup>

There is a world of sinners that God has loved, that he gave his only begotten Son, delivered him up as that redemption, as that ransom, as that reconciliation which, Bob, you read about in Colossians one.

“... that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”<sup>11</sup>

These are described here in Isaiah 56 where it says:

“Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people.”<sup>12</sup>

You can imagine these that were among the nation of Israel still being considered somewhat as second class citizens by those that they were among. Kind of the idea that being a Jew was still a little better than being a son of a stranger. That is the way most people reason in their lost minds, that somehow we are better than the other.

But the Word that the Lord speaks here is that he is a God of mercy and that if they are there in that place—and that is what Israel represented at the time. Of all the nations, here was one place where God had caused his name to dwell and that he had established in their way of worship, distinct way of worship, different from all the other nations, but established in that a picture of his Son and what his Son would accomplish and come in the world.

The Lord speaks peace to these and tells them, as we read in verse six:

“Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant.”<sup>13</sup>

These were they that were found in that place of worship. It says there in the previous verse:

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<sup>10</sup> John 3:16.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Isaiah 56:3.

<sup>13</sup> Isaiah 56:6.

“I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.”<sup>14</sup>

You know, Paul writes to the Galatians it is neither Jew nor Greek, circumcised or uncircumcised, bond or free. All those distinctions go away in the Lord Jesus Christ and what he has accomplished. And so here we have a message of mercy. The gospel that declares that salvation is of the Lord, it was purposed of God and Christ came and executed it, accomplished it and now the Spirit of God reveals it in the hearts of sinners that he has purposed to save from every tribe, nation and tongue.

If you go over to Romans chapter one this is the message that Isaiah declared and it is the same message that Paul declared, because it is the message of God. This is a verse I am sure that you probably learned as a child if you grew up as I did memorizing Scripture. But look at what it says in Romans one and verse 16. Well, if you go back on up, Paul, you know, was raised up being a Jew by the Lord to go preach the gospel to the Gentiles. He was the apostle to the Gentiles. And do you know he had to constantly defend that? By his Jewish brethren, what are you doing taking this message to the nations?

And so he declares here, really, beginning with verse 14.

“I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.”<sup>15</sup>

Obviously, when he says wise he is speaking of those who think themselves wise. But whatever it is, I am debtor, what he is saying there, is, “I owe it to them to declare to them the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in his finished work accomplished at Calvary.”

And so he says in verse 15:

“So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.”<sup>16</sup>

Think about what was at Rome at the time, Nero, Caesar. These were the occupiers. You know, it would be kind of like you are not going to Washington, are you, to preach the gospel?

Paul says:

“So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.”<sup>17</sup>

As we learn later, there was a reason the Lord took Paul to Rome, because there were those of the house hold of Caesar that the Lord had purposed to save and that was the means that they would hear through the bonds of Paul. He never once... I am sure he groaned within himself, but I don't read anywhere where there was a complaint. In fact,

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<sup>14</sup> Isaiah 56:5.

<sup>15</sup> Romans 1:14.

<sup>16</sup> Romans 1:15.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

he considered those bonds to be the bonds of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Now he wasn't Rome's prisoner. In a number of his epistles he said a prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ, because in those situations he was given opportunity to declare the glory of Christ to some who might not have heard otherwise. I think that is a good mindset to have sometime, you know, when the car breaks down on the side of the road or you're delayed a little bit in a line. Look around. Might this be an opportunity to speak to somebody of the glory of Christ rather than just thinking about, you know, I have got to get on her.

But he said, verse 16:

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”<sup>18</sup>

And when he says everyone it is talking about in the Jew, in the ethnic sense, whether they be Jew, Greek, whatever.

“...to the Jew first...”<sup>19</sup>

That is to whom the message was brought initially. Isaiah was preaching here to the Jew first, but you notice even in Isaiah 56 he directs it to the Gentiles, to that stranger in their midst and same message we see here and also to the Greek.

And notice:

“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.”<sup>20</sup>

Isaiah back here spoke of that righteousness to be revealed. Paul declares here therein, in other words, in the gospel is the righteousness of God revealed. What was the righteousness of God? Well, it was that righteousness that was necessary for the Lord Jesus Christ to work out. He had to earn it. It had to be established, law and justice satisfied and upon completion of his work applied, imputed to everyone that God purposed to save.

And that is revealed from faith to faith. In other words, any in whom this is revealed it is revealed in that faith that is the body of truth in connection with Christ and his death.

As it is written the just, or the justified ones, those that have been justified by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, shall live by faith. And so this is the message of hope, a righteousness that God himself has accepted.

Notice it is always called God's righteousness. I know sometimes we refer to the righteousness of Christ, but it is God's righteousness. He is the one that ordered it and he is the one that approved it. And he is the one that accepted it. And so back here in Isaiah

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<sup>18</sup> Romans 1:16.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Romans 1:17.

56 the Old Testament believers were given eyes to look forward to this salvation that was coming. As it says here, drawing near, for my salvation is near to come, speaking of that work that Christ would accomplish.

And what I want us to look at here is how this hope for sinners of the world was represented, how it was typified. Well, the Lord had laid the groundwork in verse two.

“Blessed is the man that doeth this...”<sup>21</sup>

In other words, blessed is that one that comes to God in this way and this way only.

Do you remember when Christ asked his disciples who do men say that I am? Some said he was Jeremiah. Some said he was John the Baptist or one of the other prophets. And Christ said, “Whom do you say that I am?” And Peter said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And what did the Lord say to him? “Blessed are thou, Simon bar Jonah, for flesh and blood have not revealed this unto you, but my Father which is in heaven.”

Blessed is the man that doeth this. Blessed is the one who comes to God in no other way.

“...and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.”<sup>22</sup>

The next time that someone asks you do you keep the sabbath, and I have seen billboards around town. The are people around here promoting a day as the sabbath day. And their whole goal is to draw people to their particular denomination to where you are holy or more spiritual or right if you start meeting on Saturday. That is what they call Shabbat, Saturday. There is different groups. There is a Jewish group here. Whenever I get off work and drive to my house I drive by their place of worship. And Friday evening at six o'clock that parking lot is packed. You ask them, “What are you doing here on a Friday evening after six?”

Well, that is when the sabbath begins. And for them they are observing the sabbath by going. Others will say, “No, our sabbath is on Saturday.” And so that is when they organize their meeting, during the day on Saturday. Everything kind of looks like it would any other type of congregation only they are meeting on Saturday at 10 o'clock in the morning instead of Sunday at 10 o'clock. So there is that particular group of people. And if you were to ask them what are you doing. They are saying, “We are keeping judgment and we are doing justice.”

But then there is another whole group of people that are meeting on Sunday and think that Sunday is the new sabbath and woe be unto you if you try to do anything else on the sabbath except for drive to worship and then go home and take a long nap and it breaks down into all kinds of rules and regulations from there whether you can watch TV or not,

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<sup>21</sup> Isaiah 56:2.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.



whether you can read the newspaper or, as when I was growing up we better fill up the car on Saturday, because we don't want to pay a gas station owner to be open on Sunday which is the sabbath or we cannot go out and eat on Sunday lest we be an obstacle to that restaurant owner, because we are helping keep him open on Sunday.

These are things that are very prevalent today and I will say it as plainly as I can. People that reason that way and put their confidence in a day have never seen Christ. When people ask you, do you keep the sabbath, tell them yes. I keep the sabbath Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday. It is not a day, dear friends, it is a person. Sabbath means rest. And to do judgment and to do justice, to keep judgment and do justice is just that. To rest in Christ. There is no greater rest than that in which the Lord Jesus Christ himself has accomplished for poor sinners such as I am. I have nothing else to contribute. There is no greater name as it is described here or that is a name better than of sons and of daughters. I liken that to denominations. I am thankful not to be joined to a denomination, organized religion, to be separated out. Why? I am not ashamed of that. Because in the Lord I have been given an everlasting name that will not be cut off.

So we can see here that this sabbath command that was given, it was given, yes and you can read it throughout the Old Testament. It was to be observed. Not one work was to be done on that day because it typified perfect rest. But it also typified the work of the Lord Jesus Christ that he would accomplish in his coming and his living and his doing and his dying there at the cross. A lot of people think that the Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the grave on the first day of the week and so that is why they say, well, we need to... you know that is our sabbath now. They have moved it to a so-called Christian sabbath.

You go back and read the Scriptures there in Matthew 28. When the women came to the tomb on the first day of the week, what did they find? The tomb already empty. That wasn't when Christ was raised from the grave. It wasn't Sunday morning early. I believe that he was raised in fulfillment, just like he fulfilled every other type and picture of the Old Testament, he was raised at the end of the sabbath, the Jewish sabbath. He would have had to have been raised some time before 6 PM, or, if you will, right at 6 PM on Saturday, that Saturday night. That was a victorious accomplishment of all that was given him to do. Now every aspect of his life and death was predetermined, even down to his dying on the Passover, the Passover Lamb. There wasn't any detail left to chance. And I don't believe that even in this there is any detail left to chance, that he was raised and therefore he is our sabbath. He has fulfilled all righteousness and accomplished it.

If you look in Hebrews chapter four, this is hope. He is our hope. He is the hope for lost sinners and a lost world. I am thankful that I don't have to become a Jew in order to be saved. That was the thinking back in the early Church. That is what they call proselytes. You had to be circumcised. You know, they said, "We are not requiring a whole law." But you had to keep the day, the sabbath, at least that had to be kept. This is how men reason today. And Paul said that. If you put a person under any aspect of the law then you are debtor to the whole law. It is as if Christ is dead in vain. That is what you make of it.

Now, dear friend, we are to rest there is no question. But we rest in him who is our sabbath. You see here in Hebrews four the writer talks of those even in the Old Testament economy, verse one.

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into rest...<sup>23</sup>

It is not in the keeping of the day, but it is in that righteousness revealed from faith to faith that we read about in Romans 1:17 that we enter into rest. Christ said:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”<sup>24</sup>

Do you really want to have your salvation depending upon something you do even in the observing of a day? I don't. I am an imperfect being. My judgment is faulty. How do I know I have done everything right? The truth is I am wrong right from the get go if I try. See? But Christ being come in the flesh, Christ being obedient, Christ having fulfilled all things, he is that sabbath rest. And that is why it says here:

For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.<sup>25</sup>

He is just describing from creation what is the picture of the sabbath day. It is rest.

And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.<sup>26</sup>

If righteousness could have come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. It wouldn't have been necessary for Christ to come, but the reality is Joshua could not give them rest. Moses couldn't. No law can give a sinner rest. It can only condemn. But it says:

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<sup>23</sup> Hebrews 4:1-3.

<sup>24</sup> Matthew 11:28.

<sup>25</sup> Hebrews 4:3-4.

<sup>26</sup> Hebrews 4:5-8.

“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.”<sup>27</sup>

Whether that people is Jewish, Gentile, bond or free there is a rest to the people of God.

“For he that is entered into his rest hath himself also rested from his works, as God did from his.”<sup>28</sup>

Put a big old circle around verse 10 if you want to know what sabbath rest is. It is to enter into his, that is God’s rest, that rest that the Lord Jesus Christ worked out on behalf of sinners and he that is that one who enters into his rest also hath what? Ceased from his own works as God did from his. It is going back there to creation when God saw all that he had created and said it was good. He commanded that seventh day to rest.

Here God commands us to rest whom he has brought into his rest that the Lord Jesus Christ has worked out on behalf of his people. I am telling you. There is no hope in us. But all the hope is in him who is our rest. And may he indeed give us eyes to look to him and to him alone.

We will pick up with this again next time, verses three through eight and look at the encouragement the Lord gives there for lost sinners in this world that are drawn to Christ. I pray the Lord will bless this to our hearts.

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<sup>27</sup> Hebrews 4:9.

<sup>28</sup> Hebrews 4:10.