

Isaiah Chapter 57

Verses 1-12: The message begun in the previous chapter is continued throughout this chapter. The “righteous perisheth” refers to the suffering of the godly. “Slaying the children” refers to the practice of child sacrifice. “Clifts of the rocks” is a description unique to Isaiah, appearing only here (and in 2:21). Such a description is very appropriate for Israel, but would have been unknown to a supposed Second Isaiah living later in Babylon.

Verses 1-2: In contrast to the evil leaders, who were engaged in debauchery and self-indulgence, were the righteous that were removed from impending divine judgments. The righteous do suffer by oppression and distress at what is going on around them, but they die in faith and enjoy their eternal reward.

Isaiah 57:1 "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth [it] to heart: and merciful men [are] taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil [to come]."

One of the most vivid examples of God removing someone from the earth is Enoch. Look, with me, at the following Scripture that shows that.

Genesis 5:24 "And Enoch walked with God: and he [was] not; for God took him."

Another example of this is when Elijah was carried to heaven in a whirlwind accompanied by a chariot of fire.

2 Kings 2:11 "And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, [there appeared] a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."

Sometimes God removes someone from the earth, because they have greatly pleased Him, and He does not want any more problems for them. Other times He removes people like Jezebel, because they do not hesitate to kill people who are living for God.

We should not grieve for those who are killed, because they take a stand for Jesus. This life is not the end. There is a glorious life awaiting those who live for God.

Isaiah 57:2 "He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, [each one] walking [in] his uprightness."

We know there will come a time when the believers in Christ will go to be with the Lord in heaven. Those left here on the earth will face the wrath of God.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:” “Then

we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

This is a time of peace which only the Lord can give, and it is for all the believers in Christ.

Isaiah 57:3 "But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore."

"Sorceress ... adulterer ... whore": Sorcery and adultery were figurative designations for idolatry. God summoned the wicked to give an account.

Notice the word "but" here. This indicates that the peace spoken of (in verse 2), is not for this group of people. The sad thing is that some of the Israelites had fallen into idolatry. Usually this type of reprimand is to get the people to change.

The whoredom, spoken of here, can be physical whoredom (adultery), or spiritual adultery. Sorcery has to do with spiritual adultery.

Isaiah 57:4 "Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom make ye a wide mouth, [and] draw out the tongue? [are] ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood,"

"Draw out the tongue": The ungodly blatantly ridiculed God's messengers (28:9-10).

The idolatrous then, and the worldly people today, make fun of those who truly love God. False gods are liars. Those who worship false gods would be classified as children of transgression, and seed of falsehood.

They may criticize the believers now, but there is coming a day when they will wish they were a believer. All stand before God in judgment. Those, who worship false gods, will wind up in hell.

Verses 5-6: These verses feature elements of idolatry such as child sacrifice, which were a part of worshipping the Ammonite god Molech (Jer. 32:35; Ezek. 20:26, 31). In response to Israel's offerings to idols, what was the Lord's appropriate response, to be satisfied or to take vengeance? Jeremiah had the answer (Jer. 5:9, 29; 9:9).

Isaiah 57:5 "Enflaming yourselves with idols under every green tree, slaying the children in the valleys under the cliffs of the rocks?"

Some who worshipped false gods then, practiced human sacrifice of children. We are no better, the Satanists of today have human sacrifice of children, as well. The reference to the "green trees" here, is possibly speaking of some of their cults that met in groves.

This cult was well known for sacrificing children. Moloch was the false god they sacrificed children to.

Isaiah 57:6 "Among the smooth [stones] of the stream [is] thy portion; they, they [are] thy lot: even to them hast thou poured a drink offering, thou hast offered a meat offering. Should I receive comfort in these?"

Just as the Nile River in Egypt was worshipped by the Egyptians, some of the people here had begun to falsely worship even the stones in the river. They had poured their offerings in the water, over these stones.

I have said it over and over, anything you can see with your eyes, is not to be worshipped. It is part of creation. We are not to worship creation, but the God who is Creator of it all.

Verses 7-8: The location of idol altars where Israel committed spiritual adultery in offering sacrifices (Jer. 3:6; Ezek. 16:16) to Baal and Astarte.

Isaiah 57:7 "Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set thy bed: even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice."

This is speaking of the worship in high places, which God had forbidden.

Isaiah 57:8 "Behind the doors also and the posts hast thou set up thy remembrance: for thou hast discovered [thyself to another] than me, and art gone up; thou hast enlarged thy bed, and made thee [a covenant] with them; thou lovedst their bed where thou sawest [it]."

Many of the Israelites had begun to worship false gods in addition to worshipping Jehovah. It was as if they were covering every side. They did not truly know who to worship, so they worshipped false gods to ensure they did not miss worshipping the right god.

There is but One God, and He alone should be worshipped. Israel should know this better than anyone else. God had proved over and over that these false gods were not god.

Isaiah 57:9 "And thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase [thyself even] unto hell."

“Wentest to the king”: An example of this was Ahaz, who called on the king of Assyria for help and spared no expense in copying the idolatry of Assyria (2 Kings 16:7-18).

We see in this, that these Israelites had no confidence in God. They went to earthly kings to help them. From past experience they should have known that all they had to do was repent of their evil ways, and call out to God, and He would help them.

The sad thing about all of this is that they actually debased God in the sight of these evil countries. When they went to others for help, it was as if they were saying God was not strong enough to help them.

Isaiah 57:10 "Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; [yet] saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found the life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved."

“Found the life of thine hand”: Rather than recognizing the hopelessness of idolatry, and in spite of the weariness of idol worship, the Israelites found renewed strength to pursue their idolatrous course.

The sad thing about Israel is that they found no hope in these earthly rulers. They were so proud that they did not, even then, come to God and ask for His help. Some of us, even today, hesitate to go to God with our problems. We try to work them out by ourselves, and that really does not work.

We have no power within ourselves, except what the Lord fills us with. Pride goeth before a fall.

Isaiah 57:11 "And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid [it] to thy heart? have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not?"

“Thou has lied”: These wicked people feared false gods more than the true God to whom they played the hypocrite, trading on God’s patience.

We can see from the 2 Scriptures that follow, we are to fear the Lord and Him only.

Psalms 111:10 “The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do [his commandments]: his praise endureth for ever.”

Proverbs 9:10 "The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy [is] understanding."

To fear the world and its people is a sin. To be fearful is ranked with the unbelieving.

Revelation 21:8 "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

Fear of God is the only fear allowed; any other fear is the opposite of faith. These Israelites had feared the people around them more than they feared God. They had actually taken up idolatry, because of their fear of the world.

Isaiah 57:12 “I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee.”

“I will declare thy righteousness”: God will break His silence by elaborating on Israel’s sham righteousness, a sarcastic way of saying they have no real righteousness. The folly of such devotion to non-existent gods will show up when judgment comes and they are all blown away,

while the worshipers of the true God enjoy the blessings of the kingdom (see Psalm 37:11; Matt. 5:5).

Verses 13-21: The terminology “cast ye up, prepare the way,” is a technical term for constructing a highway by heaping up a mound of earth. God is pictured here as inhabiting both “eternity” and the hearts of those who have a “contrite and humble spirit.” The chapter ends with the observation that “there is no peace ... to the wicked,” who are described as a “troubled” (restless) “sea”.

Isaiah 57:13 "When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee; but the wind shall carry them all away; vanity shall take [them]: but he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain;"

To fear the world is to deny the Lord. All the false gods in the world cannot help at all. An idol is a nothing. They are helpless. If you depend on a nothing, you will get no help. We see another message in the verse above beginning with the word "but". It is the opposite.

Psalm 4:5 "Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD."

When all else fails, God will not let you down. He is our very present help in trouble.

Psalm 46:1 "(To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, A Song upon Alamoth)". God [is] our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

Those who have faith in the Lord are like faithful Abraham. Their faith is counted unto them for righteousness. All who have faith in the Lord, will inherit eternal life, and also will dwell in the Lord's holy mountain.

Verses 14-20: In contrast with the threats of judgment for idolatry (verses 3-13; 14-20), give promises of blessing.

Isaiah 57:14 "And shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling block out of the way of my people."

“Take up the stumbling block”: The command is to remove all barriers to prepare the way for God’s people to return to Him (62:10).

Jesus Christ is the Way. When we follow Him, we will have an open door to heaven and eternity. These Hebrews found the way open to Jerusalem, because God opened the way.

Verses 15-18: "Revive the spirit ...revive the heart": The Lord sends true revival, which comes to the humble and contrite (61:1-3). After all the years of Israel's sin and backsliding, and of Israel's punishment, God's grace will prevail (43:25), and spiritual healing and restoration will come.

Isaiah 57:15 "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name [is] Holy; I dwell in the high and holy [place], with him also [that is] of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

The first thing a person must do to be saved is to realize they need a Savior. God has no time schedule. He dwells in eternity. Where He is, there is one eternal day. Not only does He dwell in a high and lifted up place, but He is the High and Lifted up One.

He is Creator God. He is Almighty God. He is omnipresent, He is omniscient. He is omnipotent. There is none above Him. He is All in All. Those of us, who recognize Him as our Savior and Lord and are of a humble heart, will dwell with Him.

Revelation 7:13-15 "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they?" "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them."

Isaiah 57:16 "For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls [which] I have made."

God will not always be angry with His people. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. All deserve to die. God sent His Son, while we were yet in sin. God made a plan whereby man could be saved. The wages of sin is death. The payment for sin is blood.

Jesus gave His blood on the cross to abolish our sin, that we might receive His righteousness and be saved. We must believe in His name, and that He paid the price for us. There is safety in accepting His name. God sent Jesus so that all of His creation would not die. Jesus is our Way and our Life.

Isaiah 57:17 "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart."

"He went on frowardly": This is speaking of a backslider in heart (see Prov. 14:14). He belongs in the category of the fool, the wicked and the disobedient and he is contrasted with the godly wise. It is a word that the prophets used for apostate unbelievers.

One of the 10 commandments says, “Thou shalt not covet”. God would not overlook their covetousness. Not only did Judah covet, but it was the desire of their hearts to continue this evil. This angered God and is one of the main reasons they were captives.

Isaiah 57:18 "I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners."

Mourners are those who are grief stricken. God is a forgiving God. When they repent and change their ways, He forgives them. God is the Great Shepherd, who nudges the wandering sheep back into the fold. If they will follow Him, He will give them forgiveness and rest.

Isaiah 57:19 "I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to [him that is] far off, and to [him that is] near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him."

“Fruit of the lips”: (According to Hebrews 13:15), this phrase refers to praising and thanking God (Hosea 14:2). In this context, it is the voice crying “peace, peace” calling to people far and near to come to the Lord and receive spiritual healing.

Those that are “far off” are the Gentiles, and those who are “near” are the Jews. Peace comes from God, and not from man. Jesus is King of Peace.

Verses 20-21: “Like the troubled sea”: (in contrast to those in verse 19), the wicked enjoy anything but peace (48:22; Jude 13)

Isaiah 57:20 "But the wicked [are] like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt."

The wicked are those who reject the peace that only God can bring. They are so evil, they will not settle down long enough to receive this peace of God. They are restless and fearful. They are constantly fearing the things that are coming upon the earth.

Isaiah 57:21 "[There is] no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

In this world, there is no peace. The only peace is the peace that the believers have within them.

Isaiah Chapter 57 Questions

1. The righteous perisheth, and no man _____ it to _____.
2. The righteous is taken away from the _____ to come.

3. Who does the author believe to be one of the most vivid examples of God removing a righteous person from the earth?
4. Who is another example of the same thing?
5. Who killed many of the people living for God?
6. Why should we not grieve for those who died for their faith?
7. In verse 3, what one word shows there is a great change?
8. What does sorcery have to do with?
9. Who do the worldly people today, make fun of?
10. What will happen to those who worship false gods?
11. What did some of the people worshipping false gods do that Satanists do today?
12. Why were the "green trees" mentioned in verse 5?
13. What had some of the people begun to worship in (verse 6)?
14. What is verse 7 speaking of?
15. Why did many Israelites take up the worship of false gods?
16. Who had the Israelites gone to for help, instead of going to God?
17. Why did they not ask for God's help?
18. To be fearful is ranked with _____.
19. What is the only fear allowed?
20. Why had they taken up idolatry?
21. He that puts his trust in God, shall possess the _____.
22. Who are those who have faith like?
23. Who is the Way?
24. Who inhabiteth eternity?
25. His name is _____.
26. What is the first thing a person must do to be saved?
27. What are some of the things God is?

28. Where do we find the Scriptures that say the Christians are in heaven with God?
29. What was the payment for our sin?
30. What sin had they committed in verse 17?
31. Mourners are those who are _____.
32. Who are those who are far off in verse 19?
33. The wicked are like the _____.
34. In this world, there is no _____.
35. What is the only peace?