**“Insights into Isaiah”—Chapters 57-59**

**Chapter 57—Israel’s Spiritual Adultery**

1. **Describe how verses 1-2 depict the sins committed by Israel before the Babylonian captivity.**
   1. **Could some of Manasseh’s abominations be “pointed at” here?**
   2. **The righteous are “gathered in” out of the way of evil…..does that seem to be the Rapture?**
2. **Where else have we seen Israel paralleled to an adulterous harlot? See Isaiah 54, Hosea 1 and Hosea 2.**
3. **Verses 3-10 offer a description of the pagan practices of Israel. Comment.**
4. **In verse 4, a curious reference to “sticking out the tongue” is seen. Review Isaiah 28:9-10.**
   1. **Is this a direct reference to Israel ignoring God’s prophets?**
5. **Verses 5-6 point to the pagan practices of Israel. See also Molech worship in Jeremiah 32:35 and Ezekiel 20:26 and 31.**These are the sacrifices that *should* have been given to the Lord. But His unfaithful people gave them to idols instead. For the devil is Gods ape, and idolaters used the same rites and offerings in the worship of idols which God has prescribed in his own [worship]. The Valley of Hinnom, child sacrifice to Molech. This section is entangled with false worship with sexual overtones….sexual and spiritual indiscretions.
   1. **Refer to Jeremiah 5:9, 29 and 9:9.**
   2. **Refer to Deuteronomy 6:4-9, where God told Israel to inscribe His name and His word on every door post.** Also behind the doors and their posts you have set up your remembrance.
      1. **Review Jeremiah 3:6, Ezekiel 16:16. Baal and Astarte.**
6. **In verse 7, compare the “whoredom” of Judah to their pagan practices.**
7. **Verse 9 seems to be referring to Ahaz. Read 2 Kings: 16:7-18 and comment on Ahaz adopting the idolatry of the Assyrian King.**
8. **Why does God want His people to “fear Him?”** Here, the Lord confronts the fact that His people *do not* fear Him, and that they *do fear* someone or something else. Nor taken it to your heart: Their superficial relationship was connected to a *low view of God*, and their *lack of respect* for Him.
9. **Discuss how verse 14 actually refers to the road described in the Millennium, Isaiah 35:8.** Heap it up! Heap it up! This doesn’t describe setting things in the way of those coming to God. Instead, using the same imagery as [Isaiah 35:8](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+35:8&t1=en_nas), which describes a *highway* for Gods people, meaning a raised road that is above all obstacles. Heap it up refers to the building of this road, so that Gods people can return to Him without obstacle.
10. **In verse 14, what is “A stumbling block removed?”**
11. **Verses 15-21 detail God’s way of peace and restoration.** 
    1. **What is God’s name in verse 15?**
    2. **Discuss this title of God: “The High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy.”** OUTSIDE TIME ALTOGETHER
       1. **Compare to I John 3:2-3. . . we shall see Him as He is...**
    3. **Does God display His mercy here?**
    4. **Does God promise peace to His people? See** [**Ephesians 2:17**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Ephesians+2:17&t1=en_nas)**.** Paul speaks of Jesus fulfilling this promise exactly: *And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.* As revealed through Paul, God shows that him who is far off refers to the Gentiles, while him who is near is the Jewish man. Both can come to peace through receiving God’s gift through Jesus.
12. **What is “fruit of the lips” in verse 19? Refer to Hebrews 13:15 and Hosea 14:2. This refers to praising and thanking God.**
13. **Describe how Isaiah 57:20-21 shows an excellent example of the dangers of the sea for the ancient Jew.** 
    1. **Correlate that concept with Revelation 21:1, the promise of forever, which has no more sea.**
    2. **Also see Jude 13. Is it the same idea as in Daniel 7 and Revelation 13 where the Gentile world seems to be depicted**, with the beasts out of the sea
14. **What is your “take away” from Isaiah 57? Where do you see Jesus?**
    1. **Use verse 21 in your summation.**

**Chapter 58—The Blessing of True Worship.**

**This next section, Chapter 58-66:24, describes the future glory for God’s people, Israel.**

1. **In verses 1-3a, God’s people seem to ask: “Why do our prayers go unanswered?”** Comment. ”Cry Aloud” actually should be translated, “Groan.”
   1. **Discuss how Israel’s outward appearance of spirituality, fasting, sacrificing, surface worship, etc. “looked like” a people delighting in God.**
   2. **Was this religion only? Was this outward only worship?**
2. **Explain how, in verses 3b-5, God exposes the “shallow worship” of His people.** The reality was that His people didn’t fast with the right heart, and did it only as an empty ritual. The reality was that even on a day when they fasted, they still exploited their employees. God didn’t accept their fasting when it wasn’t connecting with a sincere heart of obedience.
   1. **Talk about “false fasting.”**
   2. **Compare the “insincere worship” of the people of Isaiah’s day with the problematic “religiosity of the Pharisees of Jesus’ day. Examine Matthew 17:21, 23:23 and Luke 18:9-14.** They trusted in empty ritual, apart from the spiritual reality. Real fasting - fasting that is partnered with real repentance, and isn’t only about image - has great power before God ([Matthew 17:21](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+17:21&t1=en_nas)). But God sees through the hypocrisy of empty religious ritual, including fasting. In Jesus parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, He told how the self-righteous Pharisee made a special point to say, *I fast twice a week* ([Luke 18:9-14](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Luke+18:9-14&t1=en_nas)).The answer isn’t to stop fasting, but to get right with God and make your fasting more than superficial. As Jesus said to His people about the empty religious rituals of the Pharisees, *These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone* ([Matthew 23:23](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+23:23&t1=en_nas)).
3. **What does God expect in “true worship?”** verses 6-7? The kind of worship and fasting most acceptable to God. First, they had to *stop* acting wickedly towards others (loose the bonds of wickedness . . . undo the heavy burdens . . . let the oppressed go free . . . break every yoke). Getting right with God *begins* by stopping the evil we do towards others. Then, they had to *start* acting lovingly towards others (share your bread with the hungry . . . cover those without clothing, and to not hide yourself from your own flesh). Getting right with God *continues* by *doing* loving things for other people.
4. **What blessings are promised for the true worshipper of God in verses 8-12**? If God’s people would couple their fasting with lives of righteousness and love, then they would see their prayers answered. They would have lives full of light, full of healing, full of righteousness, full of the glory of the Lord. When they called out to God, then the Lord will answer.
5. **What were they warned against, verses 8-12?** They must *stop* pointing . . . the finger at others, and see where they are to blame. They must *stop* speaking wickedness.
6. **Elaborate on the commission given**. If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul: Again, the Lord gives them two things to *start* doing. They needed to minister to the hungry with more than food; they had to extend their soul to the hungry. They had to look for the afflicted soul and seek to satisfy it.
7. **What are the blessings promised for obedience in verse 10-11?** 
   1. **Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday; Isaiah 9:2, Luke 1:79, Matthew 4:16 and John 1:5.**
   2. **The Lord will guide you continually; Psalm 32:8.**
   3. **The Lord will satisfy your soul in drought; Jeremiah 31:12 and Deuteronomy 29:19.**
   4. **He will strengthen your bones; Proverbs 3:8.**
   5. **You will be like a watered garden; Amos 4:9 and 9:14.**
   6. **You will be like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail; Jeremiah 31:12.**
   7. **You shall build the old waste places; Nehemiah 2:11 and Amos 9:11.**
   8. **You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; Judges 2:10 and Psalm 112:2.**
   9. **You shall be the “Repairer of the Breach;” Lamentations 2:13 and I John 3:4.**
   10. **You shall be the “Restorer of the Streets to dwell in;” these reference Gentiles and Jews walking to Zion in the Millennium.**
8. **Verse 13 lays out the conditions for blessings for keeping the Sabbath. Discuss.** 
   1. **Are Christians today obligated to keep the Sabbath? See** [**Colossians 2:16-17**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Colossians+2:16-17&t1=en_nas)**,** [**Galatians 4:9-11**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Galatians+4:9-11&t1=en_nas)**,** [**Hebrews 4:9-11**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Hebrews+4:9-11&t1=en_nas)**, and** [**Exodus 20:9**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+20:9&t1=en_nas)**.**
9. **What is the central theme in this chapter?** Be sure to focus on “formalism,” “ritualism,” and “empty worship.”In this chapter, God exposed the emptiness of two religious rituals as practiced in Isaiahs day: fasting and Sabbath keeping. Both of these are expressions of *not doing* things. In fasting, you *don’t eat*. In Sabbath keeping, you *don’t work*. An important aspect to this chapter is showing us that what we *don’t do* isn’t enough to make us right before God. Our walk with God shouldn’t only be defined by what we *don’t do*. What do we *do for* the Lord?
10. **The promise of the Millennial Kingdom is seen in verse 15. Highlight and re-visit the promises implied here**.

**Chapter 59—Separated from God**

1. **The imagery of God’s mercy is also echoed in Isaiah 50:2, 58:9 and 65:24. Discuss.** Behold the Lords hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear.
   1. **Isaiah 59:1 is often called “the heart of the gospel.” Describe why.**
   2. **This touches on one of the greatest problems in practical theology: how can there be a God of love and all power when there is human suffering?** If we loved someone and had the power to end their suffering, wouldn’t we do it? Isaiah addresses those who wondered if God wasn’t all powerful, and that is why their suffering continues.
2. **Verse 2 seems to answer the question of why God doesn’t always answer people. Elaborate.** But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear. The problem isn’t with Gods power, His knowledge, or His interest. The problem is with our iniquities. Sin has separated you from your God.
   1. **In what way does sin separate us from God? Refer to Job 1:6, Psalm 139:7, and Romans 5:8?** Sin does not necessarily separate us from the *presence* of God, because God is present everywhere ([Psalm 139:7](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Psalm+139:7&t1=en_nas)) and even Satan can have an audience with God ([Job 1:6](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Job+1:6&t1=en_nas)). Sin does not separate us from the *love* of God, because God loves sinners ([Romans 5:8](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Romans+5:8&t1=en_nas)). But sin still does separate.
      1. **Relate the story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32 and sin.** Sin separates us from the some of the *benefits of God’s love*, even as the Prodigal Son ([Luke 15:11-32](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Luke+15:11-32&t1=en_nas)) was still loved by the father, but didn’t enjoy the benefits of his love when he was in sin.
      2. **Talk about the phrase, “And your sins have hidden His face from you,” in verse 2b. Use Numbers 6:25 as reference.** This explains why Gods people no longer felt the face of the Lord shining on them ([Numbers 6:25](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Numbers+6:25&t1=en_nas)). It was their sins, not the inability of God to hear, or his lack of interest in hearing.
         1. **How does Jesus’ cry from the cross, Matthew 27:46, relate to this concept?**
         2. **How does sin separate us from God? See Romans 3:23.**
3. **Discuss verse 3 and the relationship to the Creation/Evolution**. The word “perversity,” can be translated “chaos” or “randomness.”
   1. **How does this translate to the lies of evolution taught in our schools today**? Fraud and lies on every educational level.
4. **Compare verse 5’s imagery to Romans 1:32**. It is sad when persons do evil, but even sadder when they delight in poisoning/ensnaring others in the lies and evil habits; Israel had reached this stage. The adder doesn’t actually lay eggs.
   1. **Is this a reference to the “seed of the serpent?” See also John 8.**
   2. **Why is there a reference to spider’s webs?** A trap, not a way to weave like silk worms.
5. **Isaiah’s discourse in verses 9-15 describes the tragedy of sin. Elaborate.**
6. **Paul quotes** [**Isaiah 59:7-8**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+59:7-8&t1=en_nas) **in** [**Romans 3:15-17**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Romans+3:15-17&t1=en_nas)**.** He uses this passage, connected with other Old Testament passages, to demonstrate that man is a sinner from head to toe.
   1. **Parallel with Isaiah 59:1.** In light of all this sin, it is amazing - absolutely amazing - that Gods people could still believe (as they did in [Isaiah 59:1](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+59:1&t1=en_nas)) that the problem was with God, and not them! Go into detail.
7. **Verse 15a is an interesting statement of God’s ability to judge sin. Relate Isaiah 53:12 to this section.** The Lord was aware of Israel’s tragic condition and of the absence of anyone to intervene on His behalf. He took it on Himself to change Israel’s outcome through the intervention of His Suffering Servant.
8. **Verse 16, “He saw that there was no man,” seems to echo Revelation 5:3-7. Review.**
   1. **Who is the “intercessor?”**
9. **Isaiah 59:17-18 echoes Ephesians 5:10-17, 6:14, 17 and I Thessalonians 5:8. Compare.**
10. **Is there an ominous warning in verse 18 for America’s sinfulness? And the coastland He will fully repay.** 
    1. **Also see Isaiah 63:1-6.**
11. **Verse 19’s reference to “the enemy comes in like a flood” is highlighted by Paul in Romans 8:37. Examine.**
12. **Re-state the Millennial promise in verses 20-21.** After speaking in the third-person through the prophet, now the Lord speaks in the first-person through the prophet. When He speaks, He declares: the Redeemer - the *goel* - will come to Zion.
13. **In verse 20, the Redeemer, “the goel,” or kinsman-redeemer reference is used here. Refer back to Leviticus 25:48, Numbers 35:19, Leviticus 25:25, Deuteronomy 15:5-10 and the book of Ruth.** This promise of the Lord in [Isaiah 59:20](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+59:20&t1=en_nas) could be reworded, "I will send My Messiah, the Redeemer for all humanity, Jesus of Nazareth!"
    1. **Examine God’s promise in Romans 11:26-27.**
    2. **When does the Redeemer come to Zion? See Acts 15:16-17**.……after the Rapture.
14. **What is God’s covenant with Israel?** Verse 21
    1. **What’s the promise for Israel in verse 21?**
    2. **Review Isaiah 55:3 and Jeremiah 31:31-34.**
15. **Sum-up the heart of Isaiah 59. Can it relate to you today?**

**Assignment for Next Week: Read Luke 4 in preparation for next week’s Isaiah 61.**

**And, here are “The Promises”……**

**Isaiah 57: 13b, “But he who puts his trust in Me shall possess the land, And shall inherit My holy mountain.”**

**Isaiah 57: 20-21, “But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, Whose waters cast up mire and dirt. “There is no peace,” Says my God, “for the wicked.”**

**Isaiah 58:8-9, “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. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, ‘Here I am.’”**

**Isaiah 59:1, “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear….”**