

Lesson 21

Isaiah 56 & 57

Rewards and Condemnation

Note: Scholars often call Isaiah's final 11 chapters the "Third Isaiah" which was assembled 100 years after Isaiah's death. Some pieces may be Isaiah's; others are believed to have been written by some of his disciples.

Isaiah 56

1. How does this first piece show that the Lord wants to welcome all non-Jews and outcasts among "His People"? (Is 56:2-5)
2. Isaiah 56:9 thru 57:5 is an oracle against the wicked Jewish leaders.
 - a. How does Isaiah characterize the nations about to invade Jerusalem? (Is 56:9)
 - b. Identify some of the different images Isaiah uses to describe the wicked Jewish leaders? (Is 56:10-12)

Isaiah 57

3. What does Isaiah say will happen to the righteous people at this time? (Is 57:1-2)
4. Isaiah calls forward people that mock and those who have died. (Is 57:3) What images does Isaiah use to describe those who mock others? (Is 57:4)
5. How does Isaiah hint that the Jewish leaders are participating in pagan worship? (Is 57:5-9)
6. Who among the Israelites does Isaiah see as "dead" because of their idolatry? (Is 57:8)
7. What is the Lord's final offer to the Jewish idolaters? (Is 57:13)
8. Isaiah 57:14-20 is a *Poem of Consolation*, in which the writer promises comfort and consolation for those who are contrite. (Is 57:14-20)
 - a. Where does the poem explicitly mention the contrite as the ones whom God will comfort? (Is 57:15)
 - b. What might cause even the contrite to fall away and lose their faith in God, which is something the Lord wants to avoid? (Is 57:16)
9. Throughout scripture, we are continually reminded that God wants to forgive sinners.
 - a. How is this theme reaffirmed in this poem? (Is 57:18)
 - b. How else does the Lord bless them beyond forgiveness? (Is 57:19)
10. The poem says that the wicked are never at rest. (Is 57:20-21)
 - a. What image aptly describes their continual unrest? (Is 57:20)
 - b. *Reflection:* Is this continual unrest still true of wicked people today, such as the greedy, the proud, the powerful, the lustful, and how does this unrest manifest itself in them?