

Isaiah 56 and 57

Salvation for foreigners

56 Thus says the LORD:

“Keep justice, and do righteousness,
for soon my salvation will come,
and my righteousness be revealed.

² Blessed is the man who does this,
and the son of man who holds it fast,
who keeps the Sabbath, not profaning it,
and keeps his hand from doing any evil.”

³ Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say,
“The LORD will surely separate me from his people”;

and let not the eunuch say,
“Behold, I am a dry tree.”

⁴ For thus says the LORD:

“To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths,
who choose the things that please me
and hold fast my covenant,

⁵ I will give in my house and within my walls
a monument and a name
better than sons and daughters;
I will give them an everlasting name
that shall not be cut off.

⁶ “And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD,
to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD,
and to be his servants,

everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it,
and holds fast my covenant—

⁷ these I will bring to my holy mountain,
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;
their burnt offerings and their sacrifices
will be accepted on my altar;
for my house shall be called a house of prayer
for all peoples.”

⁸ The Lord GOD,
who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares,
“I will gather yet others to him
besides those already gathered.”

Israel's irresponsible leaders

⁹ All you beasts of the field, come to devour—
all you beasts in the forest.

¹⁰ His watchmen are blind;
they are all without knowledge;
they are all silent dogs;
they cannot bark,
dreaming, lying down,
loving to slumber.

¹¹ The dogs have a mighty appetite;
they never have enough.
But they are shepherds who have no understanding;
they have all turned to their own way,
each to his own gain, one and all.

¹² “Come,” they say, “let me get wine;
let us fill ourselves with strong drink;
and tomorrow will be like this day,
great beyond measure.”

Israel's futile idolatry

57 The righteous man perishes,
and no one lays it to heart;
devout men are taken away,
while no one understands.

For the righteous man is taken away from calamity;

² he enters into peace;
they rest in their beds
who walk in their uprightness.

³ But you, draw near,
sons of the sorceress,
offspring of the adulterer and the loose woman.

⁴ Whom are you mocking?
Against whom do you open your mouth wide
and stick out your tongue?

Are you not children of transgression,
the offspring of deceit,

⁵ you who burn with lust among the oaks,
under every green tree,
who slaughter your children in the valleys,
under the clefts of the rocks?

⁶ Among the smooth stones of the valley is your portion;
they, they, are your lot;
to them you have poured out a drink offering,
you have brought a grain offering.

Shall I relent for these things?
⁷ On a high and lofty mountain
you have set your bed,
and there you went up to offer sacrifice.
⁸ Behind the door and the doorpost
you have set up your memorial;
for, deserting me, you have uncovered your bed,
you have gone up to it,
you have made it wide;
and you have made a covenant for yourself with them,
you have loved their bed,
you have looked on nakedness.
⁹ You journeyed to the king with oil
and multiplied your perfumes;
you sent your envoys far off,
and sent down even to Sheol.
¹⁰ You were wearied with the length of your way,
but you did not say, "It is hopeless";
you found new life for your strength,
and so you were not faint.
¹¹ Whom did you dread and fear,
so that you lied,
and did not remember me,
did not lay it to heart?
Have I not held my peace, even for a long time,
and you do not fear me?
¹² I will declare your righteousness and your deeds,
but they will not profit you.
¹³ When you cry out, let your collection of idols deliver you!
The wind will carry them all off,
a breath will take them away.
But he who takes refuge in me shall possess the land
and shall inherit my holy mountain.

Comfort for the contrite

¹⁴ And it shall be said,
"Build up, build up, prepare the way,
remove every obstruction from my people's way."
¹⁵ For thus says the One who is high and lifted up,
who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:
"I dwell in the high and holy place,
and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit,
to revive the spirit of the lowly,
and to revive the heart of the contrite.

¹⁶ For I will not contend forever,
nor will I always be angry;
for the spirit would grow faint before me,
and the breath of life that I made.
¹⁷ Because of the iniquity of his unjust gain I was angry,
I struck him; I hid my face and was angry,
but he went on backsliding in the way of his own heart.
¹⁸ I have seen his ways, but I will heal him;
I will lead him and restore comfort to him and his mourners,
¹⁹ creating the fruit of the lips.
Peace, peace, to the far and to the near,” says the LORD,
“and I will heal him.
²⁰ But the wicked are like the tossing sea;
for it cannot be quiet,
and its waters toss up mire and dirt.
²¹ There is no peace,” says my God, “for the wicked.”

Cross References

Matthew 21 v 12, 13: ¹² And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. ¹³ He said to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you make it a den of robbers.”

Mark 11 v 15 to 17: ¹⁵ And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. ¹⁶ And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. ¹⁷ And he was teaching them and saying to them, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a den of robbers.”

John 10 v 16: And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

Leviticus 21 v 18, 19: ¹⁸ For no one who has a blemish shall draw near, a man blind or lame, or one who has a mutilated face or a limb too long, ¹⁹ or a man who has an injured foot or an injured hand,

Isaiah 55 v 3 to 5:

Incline your ear, and come to me;
hear, that your soul may live;
and I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.

⁴ Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.

⁵ Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know,
and a nation that did not know you shall run to you,

because of the LORD your God, and of the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.

Deuteronomy 6 v 4 to 9: ⁴“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.^[b] ⁵You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. ⁷You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ⁸You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.