

Isaiah's Prophecy to Judah—A Call to Obedience (c. 689 BC)

Isaiah 56:1–8

1 Thus says Yahweh:

“Observe justice
and do righteousness,
for my salvation *is* close to coming,
and my justice to being revealed.

2 Happy *is the* man *who* does this,
and *the* son of humankind *who* keeps hold of it,
who keeps *the* Sabbath so as not to profane it,
and who keeps his hand from doing any evil.”

3 And do not let the foreigner *who* joins himself to Yahweh say, “Surely Yahweh will separate me from his people.”
And do not let the eunuch say, “Look! I *am* a dry tree!”

4 For thus says Yahweh, “To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths,
and choose that in which I delight,
and who keep hold of my covenant.

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

6 And the foreigners *who* join themselves to Yahweh to serve him
and to love the name of Yahweh, to become his servants,
every one who keeps *the* Sabbath, so as not to profane it,
and those who keep hold of my covenant,

7 I will bring them to my holy mountain;
I will make them merry 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,” [\[Matt 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46\]](#)

8 declares the Lord Yahweh, who gathers the scattered ones of Israel (still I will gather to him, to his gathered ones).

Isaiah's Prophecy to Judah—Denunciation of the Wicked (c. 689 BC)

Isaiah 56:9–57:13

A Picture of Adulterous Israel

56:9 All wild animals *in the* field, come,
to devour, all wild animals in the forest!

10 His watchmen *are* blind,
none of them know.
They *are* all dumb dogs;
they are unable to bark,
panting, lying down,
loving to slumber.

11 And the dogs have a greedy appetite;
they are never satisfied.
And they are *the* shepherds!
They do not have understanding.
They all turn to their *own* way,
each one for his *own* gain, every one of them.

12 “Come, let me take wine,
and let us carouse *with* intoxicating drink,
and tomorrow will be like today,
very great indeed.”

57:1 The righteous *one* perishes, and there is no one who takes *it* to heart.
And men of faithfulness *are* gathered, while there is no one who understands,
for the righteous is gathered from the presence of wickedness.

2 he enters *into* peace;
they will rest on their beds,

walking straight ahead of him.

- 3 “But you, come near here, you children of a soothsayer,
offspring *of* an adulterer and she *who* commits fornication.
- 4 At whom do you make fun?
At whom do you open *your* mouth *and* stick out *your* tongue?
Are you not children of transgression,
offspring of deception,
- 5 who burn with lust among the oaks,
under every leafy tree,
who slaughter children in the valleys,
under the clefts of the rocks?
- 6 Your portion *is* among *the* smooth *stones of the* valley;
they, they *are* your lot;
indeed, to them you have poured out a drink offering,
you have brought a food offering.

Shall I relent concerning these *things*?

- 7 You have set your bed upon a high and lofty mountain;
indeed, you went up there to slaughter sacrifice.
- 8 And you have set your symbol behind the door and the doorpost;
for you depart from me, and you go up;
you make your bed wide, and you make a deal with them,
you have loved their bed; you have seen *their* genitals.
- 9 And you climbed down to the king with oil,
and you made your perfumes numerous,
and you sent your envoys far away,
and you sent down deep to Sheol.
- 10 You grow weary by the greatness of your way,
but you did not say, ‘Despairing!’
You found the renewal of your strength,
therefore you do not grow weak.
- 11 And of whom were you afraid and feared, that you deceived
and did not remember me?
Did you not place *it* on your heart?
Have I not been silent, even from long ago,
and *so* you do not fear me?
- 12 I myself will declare your righteousness and your works,
but they will not benefit you.
- 13 When you cry, let your collection deliver you,
and *the* wind will carry all of them away;
a breath will take *them* away.
But he who takes refuge in me shall take possession *of the* land,
and he shall inherit my holy mountain.”

Isaiah’s Prophecy to Judah—The Holy and the Humble (c. 689 BC)

Isaiah 57:14–21

Comfort for the Contrite

- 14 And one shall say, “Build up, build up! Clear *the* way!
Remove *the* obstacles from the way of my people!”
- 15 For thus says *the* high and lofty one who resides forever, and *whose* name *is* holy:
- “I reside *in* a high and holy place,
and with *the* contrite and humble of spirit,
to revive *the* spirit of *the* humble,
and to revive *the* heart of *the* contrite.
- 16 For I will not attack forever,
and I will not be angry forever,

- for *the* spirit will grow faint before me,
and *the* breaths *that* I myself I have made.
- 17 I was angry because of his sin of gain, and I struck him;
I hid and I was angry, but he walked apostate, in the ways of his heart.
- 18 I have seen his ways, but I will heal him;
and I will lead him and give him and his mourners comfort as a recompense,
19 creating fruit of lips.
Peace, peace to the far and near,” says Yahweh, “and I will heal him.
- 20 But the wicked *are* like the churning sea,
that is not able to keep quiet,
and its waters toss up mire and mud.
- 21 There is no peace,” says my God, “for the wicked.”

Isaiah’s Prophecy to Judah—Please God Not Yourselves (c. 689 BC)

Isaiah 58

The People’s Complaint

- 1 “Call with *the* throat; you must not keep back!
lift up your voice like *a* trumpet,
and declare to my people their rebellion,
and to the house of Jacob their sins.
- 2 Yet they seek me *day by day*,
and they desire the knowledge of my ways
like a nation that practiced righteousness,
and had not forsaken the judgment of its God;
they ask me for righteous judgments,
they desire the closeness of God.
- 3a ‘Why do we fast, and you do not see *it*?
We humiliate our soul, and you do not notice *it*?’

God’s Response—The Proper Kind of Fasting

- 3b Look! You find delight on the day of your fast,
and you oppress all your workers!
- 4 Look! You fast to quarrel and strife,
and to strike with a wicked fist.
You shall not fast as *you do* today,
to make your voice heard on the height.
- 5 Is *the* fast I choose like this,
a day for humankind to humiliate himself?
To bow his head like a reed,
and make his bed *on* sackcloth and ashes;
you call this a fast
and a day of pleasure to Yahweh?
- 6 Is this not *the* fast I choose: to release *the* bonds of injustice,
to untie *the* ropes of *the* yoke,
and to let *the* oppressed go free,
and tear every yoke to pieces?
- 7 *Is it* not to break your bread for the hungry?
You must bring home *the* poor, *the* homeless.
When you see *the* naked, you must cover him,
and you must not hide yourself from your relatives.
- 8 Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall grow quickly.
And your salvation shall go before you;
the glory of Yahweh will be your rear guard.
- 9 Then you shall call, and Yahweh himself will answer.
You shall cry for help, and he will say, ‘Here I *am*!’
If you remove from among you *the* yoke,
the finger-pointing and evil speech,

How to Have Prosperity and a Good Relationship With God

- 10 if you offer your soul to the hungry,
and you satisfy *the* appetite of *the* afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness,
and your darkness *will be* like noon.
- 11 And Yahweh will lead you continually, and satisfy your soul in a barren land,
and he will strengthen your bones,
and you shall be like a well-watered garden,
and like a spring of water whose water does not fail.
- 12 And they shall rebuild ancient ruins from you;
you shall erect *the* foundations of many generations,
and you shall be called *the* bricklayer of *the* breach,
the restorer of paths to live *in*.
- 13 If you hold your foot back from *the* Sabbath,
from doing your affairs on my holy day,
if you call the Sabbath a pleasure,
the holy *day* of Yahweh honorable,
if you honor him more than doing your ways,
than finding your affairs and speaking a word,
- 14 then you shall take your pleasure in Yahweh,
and I will make you ride upon *the* heights of *the* earth,
and I will feed you the heritage of Jacob your ancestor,

for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken.”

Isaiah's Prophecy to Judah—The Consequences of Sin (c. 689 BC)

Isaiah 59

Israel's Sin Prevents God from Acting

- 1 Look! The hand of Yahweh is not too short to save,
and his ear is not *too* dull to hear.
- 2 Rather, your iniquities have been barriers between you and your God,
and your sins have hidden *his* face from you, from hearing.
- 3 For your hands are defiled with blood,
and your fingers with iniquity.
Your lips have spoken lies,
your tongue speaks wickedness.
- 4 There is nobody who pleads with justice,
and there is nobody who judges with honesty.
They rely on nothing
and speak vanity.
They conceive trouble
and beget iniquity;
- 5 they hatch viper eggs,
and they weave a spider web.
One who eats their eggs dies,
and that which is pressed is hatched *as* a serpent.
- 6 Their webs cannot become clothing,
and they cannot cover themselves with their works.
Their works *are* works of iniquity,
and deeds of violence *are* in their hands.
- 7 Their feet run to evil,
and they hasten to shed innocent blood.
Their thoughts *are* thoughts of iniquity;
devastation and destruction *are* in their highways. [\[Rom 3:15–17\]](#)
- 8 They do not know *the* way of peace,
and there is no justice in their firm paths.
They have made their paths crooked for themselves;
everyone who walks in it knows no peace.

- 9 Therefore justice is far from us,
and righteousness does not reach us.
We wait for light, but look! *there is* darkness;
for brightness, *but* we walk in darkness.
- 10 We grope like the blind *along* a wall,
and we grope as without eyes.
We stumble at noon as *in* the twilight;
among the strong *we are* like the dead.
- 11 We all groan like bears,
and we coo mutteringly like doves.
We wait for justice, but there is none;
for salvation, *but* it is far from us.
- 12 For our transgressions are numerous before you,
and our sins testify against us.
Indeed, our transgressions *are* with us,
and we know our iniquities:
- 13 transgressing and denying Yahweh,
and turning away from following our God;
speaking oppression and falsehood,
conceiving and uttering words of deception from *the* heart.
- 14 And justice is pushed back,
and righteousness stands afar;
for truth stumbles in the public square,
and straightforwardness is unable to enter,
- 15a and truth is missing,
and he who turns aside from evil *is* plundered.

God Will Rise Up and Execute Justice

- 15b And Yahweh saw,
and it was displeasing in his eyes that there was no justice
- 16 And he saw that there was no man,
and he was appalled that there was no one who intercedes,
so his arm came to assist him,
and his righteousness was what sustained him.
- 17 And he put on righteousness like *a* breastplate,
and a helmet of salvation on his head, [cf. [Eph 6:11–17](#)]
and he put on garments of vengeance *for* clothing,
and he wrapped *himself in* zeal as *in a* robe.
- 18 According to deeds, so he will repay;
wrath to his enemies, requital to those who are his enemies.
He will repay requital to the coastlands.
- 19 So they shall fear the name of Yahweh from *the* west,
and his glory from the sunrise,
for he will come like *a* narrow stream;
the wind of Yahweh drives it on.
- 20 “And a redeemer will come to Zion,
to those in Jacob who turn away from transgression,”

declares Yahweh. [[Rom 11:26](#)]

- 21 “And as for me, this *is* my covenant with them, says Yahweh:

my spirit that *is* upon you,
and my words that I have placed in your mouth
shall not depart from your mouth,
or from the mouths of your children,
or from the mouths of your children’s children,”
says Yahweh, “from now on and forever.”