

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

Isaiah 56:1–8

- 1 This is what the LORD says,  
“Promote justice! Do what is right!  
For I am ready to deliver you;  
I am ready to vindicate you openly.
- 2 The people who do this will be blessed,  
the people who commit themselves to obedience,  
who observe the Sabbath and do not defile it,  
who refrain from doing anything that is wrong.
- 3 No foreigner who becomes a follower of the LORD should say,  
‘The LORD will certainly exclude me from his people.’  
The eunuch should not say,  
‘Look, I am like a dried-up tree.’”
- 4 For this is what the LORD says:  
“For the eunuchs who observe my Sabbaths  
and choose what pleases me  
and are faithful to my covenant,
- 5 I will set up within my temple and my walls a monument  
that will be better than sons and daughters.  
I will set up a permanent monument for them that will remain.
- 6 As for foreigners who become followers of the LORD and serve him,  
who love the name of the LORD and want to be his servants—  
all who observe the Sabbath and do not defile it,  
and who are faithful to my covenant—
- 7 I will bring them to my holy mountain;  
I will make them happy in the temple where people pray to me.  
Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar,  
for my temple will be known as a temple where all nations may pray.” [\[Matt 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46\]](#)
- 8 The sovereign LORD says this,  
the one who gathers the dispersed of Israel:  
“I will still gather them up.”

## 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 you wild animals in the fields, come and devour,  
all you wild animals in the forest!
- 10 All their watchmen are blind,  
they are unaware.  
All of them are like mute dogs,  
unable to bark.  
They pant, lie down,  
and love to snooze.
  - 11 The dogs have big appetites;  
they are never full.  
They are shepherds who have no understanding;  
they all go their own way,  
each one looking for monetary gain.
  - 12 Each one says,  
‘Come on, I’ll get some wine!  
Let’s guzzle some beer!  
Tomorrow will be just like today!  
We’ll have everything we want!’
- 57:1 The godly perish,  
but no one cares.  
Honest people disappear,

- when no one minds that the godly disappear because of evil.
- 2 Those who live uprightly enter a place of peace;  
they rest on their beds.
- 3 But approach, you sons of omen readers,  
you offspring of adulteresses and prostitutes!
- 4 At whom are you laughing?  
At whom are you opening your mouth  
and sticking out your tongue?  
You are the children of rebels,  
the offspring of liars,
- 5 you who practice ritual sex under the oaks and every green tree,  
who slaughter children near the streams under the rocky overhangs.
- 6 Among the smooth stones of the stream are the idols you love;  
they, they are the object of your devotion.  
You pour out liquid offerings to them,  
you make an offering.  
Because of these things I will seek vengeance.
- 7 On every high, elevated hill you prepare your bed;  
you go up there to offer sacrifices.
- 8 Behind the door and doorpost you put your symbols.  
Indeed, you depart from me and go up  
and invite them into bed with you.  
You purchase favors from them,  
you love their bed,  
and gaze longingly on their genitals.
- 9 You take olive oil as tribute to your king,  
along with many perfumes.  
You send your messengers to a distant place;  
you go all the way to Sheol.
- 10 Because of the long distance you must travel, you get tired,  
but you do not say, 'I give up.'  
You get renewed energy,  
so you don't collapse.
- 11 Whom are you worried about?  
Whom do you fear, that you would act so deceitfully  
and not remember me  
or think about me?  
Because I have been silent for so long,  
you are not afraid of me.
- 12 I will denounce your so-called righteousness and your deeds,  
but they will not help you.
- 13 When you cry out for help, let your idols help you!  
The wind blows them all away,  
a breeze carries them away.  
But the one who looks to me for help will inherit the land  
and will have access to 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 He says,  
"Build it! Build it! Clear a way!  
Remove all the obstacles out of the way of my people!"
- 15 For this is what the high and exalted one says,  
the one who rules forever, whose name is holy:  
"I dwell in an exalted and holy place,  
but also with the discouraged and humiliated,

- in order to cheer up the humiliated  
and to encourage the discouraged.
- 16 For I will not be hostile forever  
or perpetually angry,  
for then man's spirit would grow faint before me,  
the life-giving breath I created.
- 17 I was angry because of their sinful greed;  
I attacked them and angrily rejected them,  
yet they remained disobedient and stubborn.
- 18 I have seen their behavior,  
but I will heal them and give them rest,  
and I will once again console those who mourn.
- 19 I am the one who gives them reason to celebrate.  
Complete prosperity is available both to those who are far away and those who are nearby,"  
says the LORD, "and I will heal them.
- 20 But the wicked are like a surging sea  
that is unable to be quiet;  
its waves toss up mud and sand.
- 21 There will be no prosperity," 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 "Shout loudly! Don't be quiet!  
Yell as loud as a trumpet!  
Confront my people with their rebellious deeds;  
confront Jacob's family with their sin!
- 2 They seek me day after day;  
they want to know my requirements,  
like a nation that does what is right  
and does not reject the law of their God.  
They ask me for just decrees;  
they want to be near God.
- 3a They lament, 'Why don't you notice when we fast?  
Why don't you pay attention when we humble ourselves?'

#### God's Response—The Proper Kind of Fasting

- 3b Look, at the same time you fast, you satisfy your selfish desires,  
you oppress your workers.
- 4 Look, your fasting is accompanied by arguments, brawls, and fistfights.  
Do not fast as you do today,  
trying to make your voice heard in heaven.
- 5 Is this really the kind of fasting I want?  
Do I want a day when people merely humble themselves,  
bowing their heads like a reed  
and stretching out on sackcloth and ashes?  
Is this really what you call a fast,  
a day that is pleasing to the LORD?
- 6 No, this is the kind of fast I want.  
I want you to remove the sinful chains,  
to tear away the ropes of the burdensome yoke,  
to set free the oppressed,  
and to break every burdensome yoke.
- 7 I want you to share your food with the hungry  
and to provide shelter for homeless, oppressed people.  
When you see someone naked, clothe him!

- Don't turn your back on your own flesh and blood!
- 8 Then your light will shine like the sunrise;  
your restoration will quickly arrive;  
your godly behavior will go before you,  
and the LORD's splendor will be your rear guard.
- 9 Then you will call out, and the LORD will respond;  
you will cry out, and he will reply, 'Here I am.'  
You must remove the burdensome yoke from among you  
and stop pointing fingers and speaking sinfully.

#### **How to Have Prosperity and a Good Relationship With God**

- 10 You must actively help the hungry  
and feed the oppressed.  
Then your light will dispel the darkness,  
and your darkness will be transformed into noonday.
- 11 The LORD will continually lead you;  
he will feed you even in parched regions.  
He will give you renewed strength,  
and you will be like a well-watered garden,  
like a spring that continually produces water.
- 12 Your perpetual ruins will be rebuilt;  
you will reestablish the ancient foundations.  
You will be called, 'The one who repairs broken walls,  
the one who makes the streets inhabitable again.'
- 13 You must observe the Sabbath  
rather than doing anything you please on my holy day.  
You must look forward to the Sabbath  
and treat the LORD's holy day with respect.  
You must treat it with respect by refraining from your normal activities,  
and by refraining from your selfish pursuits and from making business deals.
- 14 Then you will find joy in your relationship to the LORD,  
and I will give you great prosperity,  
and cause crops to grow on the land I gave to your ancestor Jacob."  
Know for certain that the LORD 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 LORD's hand is not too weak to deliver you;  
his ear is not too deaf to hear you.
- 2 But your sinful acts have alienated you from your God;  
your sins have caused him to reject you and not listen to your prayers.
- 3 For your hands are stained with blood  
and your fingers with sin;  
your lips speak lies,  
your tongue utters malicious words.
- 4 No one is concerned about justice;  
no one sets forth his case truthfully.  
They depend on false words and tell lies;  
they conceive of oppression and give birth to sin.
- 5 They hatch the eggs of a poisonous snake  
and spin a spider's web.  
Whoever eats their eggs will die,  
a poisonous snake is hatched.
- 6 Their webs cannot be used for clothing;  
they cannot cover themselves with what they make.  
Their deeds are sinful;

- they commit violent crimes.
- 7 They are eager to do evil,  
quick to shed innocent blood.  
Their thoughts are sinful;  
they crush and destroy. [[Rom 3:15–17](#)]
- 8 They are unfamiliar with peace;  
their deeds are unjust.  
They use deceitful methods,  
and whoever deals with them is unfamiliar with peace.
- 9 For this reason deliverance is far from us  
and salvation does not reach us.  
We wait for light, but see only darkness;  
we wait for a bright light, but live in deep darkness.
- 10 We grope along the wall like the blind,  
we grope like those who cannot see;  
we stumble at noontime as if it were evening.  
Though others are strong, we are like dead men.
- 11 We all growl like bears,  
we coo mournfully like doves;  
we wait for deliverance, but there is none,  
for salvation, but it is far from us.
- 12 For you are aware of our many rebellious deeds,  
and our sins testify against us;  
indeed, we are aware of our rebellious deeds;  
we know our sins all too well.
- 13 We have rebelled and tried to deceive the LORD;  
we turned back from following our God.  
We stir up oppression and rebellion;  
we tell lies we concocted in our minds.
- 14 Justice is driven back;  
godliness stands far off.  
Indeed, honesty stumbles in the city square  
and morality is not even able to enter.
- 15a Honesty has disappeared;  
the one who tries to avoid evil is robbed.

**God Will Rise Up and Execute Justice**

- 15b The LORD watches and is displeased,  
for there is no justice.
- 16 He sees there is no advocate;  
he is shocked that no one intervenes.  
So he takes matters into his own hands;  
his desire for justice drives him on.
- 17 He wears his desire for justice like body armor,  
and his desire to deliver is like a helmet on his head. [cf. [Eph 6:11–17](#)]  
He puts on the garments of vengeance  
and wears zeal like a robe.
- 18 He repays them for what they have done,  
dispensing angry judgment to his adversaries  
and punishing his enemies.  
He repays the coastlands.
- 19 In the west, people respect the LORD's reputation;  
in the east they recognize his splendor.  
For he comes like a rushing stream  
driven on by wind sent from the LORD.
- 20 "A protector comes to Zion,  
to those in Jacob who repent of their rebellious deeds," says the LORD. [[Rom 11:26](#)]

21 “As for me, this is my promise to them,” says the LORD. “My spirit, who is upon you, and my words, which I have placed in your mouth, will not depart from your mouth or from the mouths of your children and descendants from this time forward,” says the LORD.

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