

**Looking at Life with and Without God  
Promises from God Versus Promises from the Culture  
Isaiah 58:9 – 59:8**

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Last time together we discussed the desire of YAHWEH for His people to truly be faithful to Him rather than making a show of it or by taking elements of idolatry and adding it into the mix. There is nothing we can do to make God love us more and there is no way we can obligate God to perform if we do certain rituals. The nation was complaining about unanswered prayer because they had injected idolatry into their ritual and truly became religious hypocrites.

God pointed out to the people what He really wanted was not so much the doing, but the being. The changed heart and life coupled with faithful obedience.

Isaiah 58:9–12

“Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; You will cry for help, and He will say, ‘Here I am.’ If you remove the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger and speaking wickedness, And if you offer yourself to the hungry And satisfy the need of the afflicted, Then your light will rise in darkness, And your gloom will become like midday. And the LORD will continually guide you, And satisfy your desire in scorched places, And give strength to your bones; And you will be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water whose waters do not fail. Those from among you will rebuild the ancient ruins; You will raise up the age-old foundations; And you will be called the repairer of the breach, The restorer of the streets in which to dwell.” (NASB 2020)

As Judah returns to YAHWEH in repentance, they change and begin to become what it is that was His original desire for them as a people as stated in Deuteronomy 26:17 – 19. The nation was to be a light shining and drawing the nations to YAHWEH...they failed thus the need for the Suffering Servant to pick up due to that failure.

At the end of the age however, once Messiah has returned and restored them, they will, because of His Spirit being poured out upon them, finally be capable of being all He has desired for them to be.

Isaiah 58:10b–11

“...Then your light will rise in darkness, And your gloom will become like midday. And the LORD will continually guide you, And satisfy your desire in scorched places, And give strength to your bones; And you will be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water whose waters do not fail.” (NASB 2020)

Then the remnant will:

- Reflect His salvation to the nations.
- Be continually guided in all they do by the Lord.
- Be fully satisfied and no longer searching.
- Be Spirit filled and Spirit led.

For all of us today, this is all available right now if we repent of our sin, place our faith in the accomplished work of Jesus Christ and allow Him to be the Lord of our lives. The Holy Spirit comes into us at that point and if we ask Him to empower us with the Holy Spirit... “If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” (Luke 11:13, ESV) We can experience rivers of living water gushing from us right now.

Jesus talked about the source of this spring of water whose waters do not fail.

John 7:37–39

“On the last day of the feast, the greatest day, Jesus stood up and shouted out, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. Just as the scripture says, ‘From within him will flow rivers of living water.’” (Now he said this about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were going to receive, for the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.)” (NET)

When the nation gets it right with the Lord, then they will be returned to the land and will be rebuilders of what had been destroyed due to sin. This is more than just a promise to rebuild after the future exile in Babylon.

A life that is in right relationship with the Lord, with false pretenses removed, with hypocrisy thrown aside, is a life that begins to rebuild. “True worshippers would also rebuild what their sin had previously torn down. This refers not only to the return and rebuilding of Jerusalem and Judah following the exile but the Promised Land in the Millennium. It also refers to the restoration of other types of ruins caused by sin.” (Constable 2003, Is 58:12)

How does that work? Well, here is what God is saying.

Do you want God to answer your prayers? Be his answer to someone else’s prayers. Do you want God to come in his immediacy and say to you, “Here I am”? Get close to someone who needs you and say, “Here I am.” Here’s the paradox at the center of truth: “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). Almost nothing in our consumerist American culture encourages us to believe that, but it just happens to be the way life works. Why? Because God is a happy Giver, an intense Lover, a relevant Helper, and he wants us to share in his joy. (Ortlund, Jr. and Hughes 2005, 390)

Isaiah 58:12

“Those from among you will rebuild the ancient ruins; You will raise up the age-old foundations; And you will be called the repairer of the breach, The restorer of the streets in which to dwell.” (NASB 2020)

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are all engaged in this construction project right now. We follow our Servant Leader by being like Him and becoming servants rather than remaining selfish consumers. He turns us into rebuilders of lives starting with our own life. Peter made specific reference to this analogy of building not being just a physical thing, but spiritual as well.

#### 1 Peter 2:4–10

“Come to the Lord, the living stone rejected by people as worthless but chosen by God as valuable. Come as living stones, and let yourselves be used in building the spiritual temple, where you will serve as holy priests to offer spiritual and acceptable sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ. For the scripture says: “I chose a valuable stone, which I am placing as the cornerstone in Zion; and whoever believes in him will never be disappointed.” This stone is of great value for you that believe; but for those who do not believe: “The stone which the builders rejected as worthless turned out to be the most important of all.” And another scripture says: “This is the stone that will make people stumble, the rock that will make them fall.” They stumbled because they did not believe in the word; such was God’s will for them. But you are the chosen race, the King’s priests, the holy nation, God’s own people, chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God, who called you out of darkness into his own marvellous light. At one time you were not God’s people, but now you are his people; at one time you did not know God’s mercy, but now you have received his mercy.” (GNB)

Sin, as we learned in Genesis 3, destroys everything. It destroyed Adam and Eve’s relationship with God.

Sin resulted in the curse and the introduction of death into the universe. It changed everything for the worse. Ruin, death, and destruction though are not the last words. “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10, ESV)

The last word for Israel, Jerusalem, us, the universe is not death but life. When the Jews returned from Babylon, they rebuilt, but then again sin got the better of them, again, resulting in destruction and exile again in 70 AD and 130 AD. But we now see the land being rebuilt again, but His people have not embraced Messiah yet, they are still wandering around in the dark, just like we were before coming to Christ.

Everything changes after Messiah returns and pours out the Holy Spirit upon the remnant.

#### Zechariah 12:10

“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.” (ESV)

It is that remnant that will be called the repairer of the breach.

#### Amos 9:11–12

“In that day I will rebuild the collapsing hut of David. I will seal its gaps, repair its ruins, and restore it to what it was like in days gone by. As a result they will conquer those left in Edom and all the nations subject to my rule. The LORD, who is about to do this, is speaking!” (NET)

God always gives us the dignity of being involved in putting back together what we have broken. We cannot do it apart from him, but he will not do it apart from us. The ruins here may be specifically those of Jerusalem after the destruction of 587 B.C., but they need not be limited to those. (Oswalt 1998, 507)

#### Isaiah 58:13–14

“If, because of the Sabbath, you restrain your foot From doing as you wish on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a pleasure, and the holy day of the LORD honorable, And honor it, desisting from your own ways, From seeking your own pleasure And speaking your own word, Then you will take delight in the LORD, And I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; And I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.” (NASB 2020)

We learned earlier in our study of Isaiah 56, that when Messiah returns, He will rule and reign from Jerusalem and His law will also go forth from there. We talked about the very real idea of the Sabbath being reinstated for all.

Here in Isaiah 58, that idea continues. “The Lord is more concerned with the enjoyment of his blessings through obedience to his commands than in self-imposed deprivations.” (Motyer 1999, 410)

Here we have lined out for us the “how to” of Sabbath keeping.

In no place in the Bible is there a more full account of the proper mode of keeping that holy day. We are to refrain from ordinary travelling and employments; we are not to engage in doing our own pleasure; we are to regard it with delight, and to esteem it a day worthy to be honored. And we are to show respect to it by not performing our own ordinary works, or pursuing pleasures, or engaging in the common topics of conversation. (Lange, et al. 2008, 643)

It is interesting to note that the instructions do not include any specifically Jewish ceremonies. Once Messiah returns and is ruling the planet, there is a distinctly different type of standard in place, so it makes sense to not repeat the way it was done by the Jews...there is the possibility this will change in observance with the basic functions listed here observed in some manner we are not totally clear about yet.

And for those who are obedient and follow Him, we see promises in verse 14.

Isaiah 58:14

“Then you will take delight in the LORD, And I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; And I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.” (NASB 2020)

All throughout the middle east of that day and age, the cloud rider is the deity to be worshipped. Jesus identified Himself as the cloud rider of Daniel 7:13 & 14.

Mark 14:61–62

“But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” And Jesus said, “I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”” (ESV)

The Lord is talking to syncretistic hypocrites who have included ideas about Baal into their overall world view. So He uses terms they would know. “The literary tactic made a theological statement. The effect was to “displace” or snub Baal and hold up Yahweh as the deity who legitimately rode through the heavens surveying and governing the world.” (Heiser 2015, 252)

Messiah is not only the son of David and the Suffering Servant, but He is the King and is fully man and fully God. He is the cloud rider.

To ride on the heights of the earth is a reference to the new reality that exists after Messiah has taken over the planet. “These positive images of flight above the heights where God rides among the clouds (19:1; Deut 33:26; Hab 3:8) present thoughts of victory and power, so **God is here offering to share the benefits of his sovereignty with his holy people**. This will involve their possession of the land that their forefather Jacob inherited from God and the blessing of abundant produce from this fertile land (cf. 30:23; Amos 9:13–15; Hos 2:21–22; Ezek 34:14, 26–27). Although these are marvelous promises, how can one know for certain that all these positive promises will actually come to pass? God’s persuasive proof of authenticity is: “truly, it is absolutely certain” that what the mouth of the Lord has spoken will happen. (Smith 2009, 584-585)

How can God do this? Will He really enter this reality we call life once again and upset everything in order to fulfill these promises? The answer to that question is yes.

Isaiah 59:1

“Behold, the LORD’S hand is not so short That it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull That it cannot hear.” (NASB 2020)

Right now, in the here and now, in this very moment, He hears. We can take Him at His word regarding the promises He makes. The people of Judah had the same opportunity, and some did take advantage of the offer, but the majority did not and the exile under Babylon overtook them.

We already have seen from Isaiah 57 that the Lord was moving among His faithful followers and removing them from the scene prior to judgement taking place.

There is a point in time, coming very soon, that Jesus will stage a final rescue mission, all prior to the coming judgement and wrath of God on this planet. He will forcibly snatch (harpazo) believers away to be with Him (1 Thessalonians 5:13 – 18). There will be no warning in what we call the rapture of the church, and then judgement, as previously discussed when we covered Isaiah 57, will take place.

Until then, to those who are watching the entire Kingdom of Judah turn woke under King Manasseh and embrace all that the enemy has to offer, He has a word, a promise for them. “Behold, the LORD’S hand is not so short That it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull That it cannot hear.” (Isaiah 59:1, NASB 2020). This is for us today too.

Romans 10:8–13

“In fact, it says, “The message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart.” And that message is the very message about faith that we preach: If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)

For the people of Judah, God still holds out the option of peace if they only listen and repent. But if God is there and holding His hand out right now, why are bad things still happening to me? It must be God’s fault. Adam started that lie by the way (Genesis 3:12). No, the real answer is much closer. Isaiah 59:2 “But your wrongdoings have caused a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.” (NASB 2020)

Because of our parentage, Adam and Eve, we, along with Judah, are all suffering from the same disease of sin.

It is from no want of power in God, but from their own obstinate perseverance in sin. Their transgressions are like a thick wall between them and their God, so that their prayers cannot pass through. Evil, so long as it prevails, must breed questionings of the Divine power or goodness. But both will be cleared at last from all the reproaches of sinners, who claim that God shall deny himself, and work moral contradictions, in order to throw on the All-wise Creator the blame of their own sin. (Birks 1878, 285)

God loves His people and desires to bless them and turn towards them but they have a problem. They have forgotten one of the primary attributes of God, and it is this one that has set up a barrier between them. ““Speak to the whole congregation of the Israelites and tell them, ‘You must be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.’” (Leviticus 19:2, NET)

God is Holy.

“The holiness of God is active. As a primary motive, it incites all that He does; therefore, He is righteous in His ways. Though infinitely holy, He nevertheless maintains a relation to fallen creatures; not a quiescent aloofness from them, but a vital, pulsating nearness. His is not a holiness which is engendered by a sustained effort or preserved by segregation from other beings. The holiness of God is intrinsic, uncreated, and untarnishable; it is observable in every divine attitude and action. It embraces not only His devotion to that which is good, but is also the very basis and force of His hatred of that which is evil. Thus

there is in divine holiness the capacity for reaction toward others which is both positive and negative.”  
(Chafer 1993, 202)

Yes, God is Holy, but He still desires relationship with His fallen creation, that’s us. The work of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 53 is vitally important to us as He is the only provision that has been made for the redemption of our fallen sin nature and provides the only pathway back to God.

2 Corinthians 5:21

“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (ESV)

John 14:6

“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (ESV)

For the people of Judah, as well as for us, this is not a minor disease or condition that can be resolved with a couple of aspirin and some bedrest. This is a terminal disease for which there is only one known cure...the blood of Jesus Christ.

This is going to require His people to face themselves and see who they are clearly in the lens of His word.

There is no delay in that indictment.

Isaiah 59:3–8

“For your hands are defiled with blood, And your fingers with wrongdoing; Your lips have spoken deceit, Your tongue mutters wickedness. No one sues righteously and no one pleads honestly. They trust in confusion and speak lies; They conceive trouble and give birth to disaster. They hatch vipers’ eggs and weave the spider’s web; The one who eats of their eggs dies, And from what is crushed, a snake breaks out. Their webs will not become clothing, Nor will they cover themselves with their works; Their works are works of wrongdoing, And an act of violence is in their hands. Their feet run to evil, And they hurry to shed innocent blood; Their thoughts are thoughts of wrongdoing, Devastation and destruction are in their paths. They do not know the way of peace, And there is no justice in their tracks; They have made their paths crooked, Whoever walks on them does not know peace.” (NASB 2020)

God is making this accusation about His own people the Jews. They should know better. This is not an indictment of those who do not know, but of those who do. This is one of the reasons why Isaiah is an important book for us to study and take to heart. The people of Judah, who were supposed to know better and represent God, entertained the same sins that many in the 21st century church do as well.

Let’s go through the list and see if there are any similarities from the early days of Manasseh’s rule in Judah with those who follow the Lord from a distance today.

Isaiah 59:3

“For your hands are defiled with blood, And your fingers with wrongdoing; Your lips have spoken deceit, Your tongue mutters wickedness.” (NASB 2020)

- They are murderers
- Profligate sinners
- Liars
- Vile speakers

That starts off as rather harsh. Murderers? Some of the people, maybe, but a blanket condemnation? Remember, Jesus did expand the overall concept in Matthew 5.

But we read that first line and start asking the question along with those in Judah – when? Recall this is written to a culture that has recently begun to return to the sacrifice of babies to Molech.

Sacrifice to Molech—usually involving child sacrifice, especially firstborn males—is prohibited in Lev 20:2–5 (compare Lev 18:21; 20:2–5; 2 Kgs 23:10; Jer 32:35). In Israel, child sacrifice was most prominent in Topheth during Manasseh’s reign (2 Chr 33:6; 2 Kgs 23:10). The kings Ahaz and Manasseh are said to have made their own sons “pass through the fire” (2 Kgs 16:3; 21:6 LEB). (Favara 2016)

The reference to the hand, or rather the palm of the hand indicates that there is personal involvement in the violence taking place against those who are innocent. Children, believers, prophets. God forgave Manasseh who led this infernal revival, He can also forgive us as well.

In our current culture, we find that we are still fighting against the same enemy today. The fallen ones still want to destroy all that God has done and that includes us. They are the ones instigating government to embrace abortion and infanticide.

This could also mean the destruction of others through what they say to others or how they malign others. Today we would call it responding on social media and getting our opinion out there.

Currently Satan is working overtime to destroy and divide the church worldwide. The attack is insidious and what we truly need is revival.

The tool being used to divide the church right now is COVID 19 and the ongoing debate regarding vaccination or no vaccination.

The pandemic has played right into Satan’s hand. It began with the closure of churches followed by some of those churches never opening again.

Then he turned to dividing us on the topic of masks and social distancing and now it is vaccination.

Social media is filled with people who name the name of Jesus Christ actively destroying other believers who simply have taken a different view than they have on this topic. I have seen the terms increase in vitriol and now reflect, in some cases, hatred. Yet many insist this simply them being faithful to Christ. There is no such thing as being a troll for Jesus.

The bottom line...repentance by all who name the name of Christ and have indulged in this game of division is needed.

A Biblical worldview is needed. We are to reflect Jesus which means to love one another. Agape love is love, no matter what.

1 John 3:15

“Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.” (ESV)

Jesus referred to there being a much higher standard for residency in the Kingdom. This definitional expansion of the term murder that Jesus provides tends to throw all of us under the bus.

Matthew 5:22

“But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.” (ESV)

Yes, we find that just as the people of Judah, we too have an issue in the 21st century church having palms defiled with blood and our fingers with sin.

Then the Lord turns to a discussion of what the people of Judah were doing with their mouth. They were lying and speaking wicked things. The Hebrew word translated as wickedness is עֲוֹלָה (awlah) means “injustice, unrighteousness, wrong...violent deeds of injustice...injustice of speech...injustice, in general.” (Brown, Driver and Briggs 1977, 732)

It seems that what they are repeating are lies. The manner in which they speak is corrupt. Here is a picture for you, God looks down at His people Judah and sees hands lifted up to Him in worship with blood dripping off of them and mouths that are not praising but scheming how to get God to do what they want to in order to satisfy themselves.

They are lying to themselves. With actions and words, they are nowhere near to where they need to be. That is not all either.

Isaiah 59:4

“No one sues righteously and no one pleads honestly. They trust in confusion and speak lies; They conceive trouble and give birth to disaster.” (NASB 2020)

Now, talking about the court system in Judah, it is utterly corrupt and not just the judges. Everyone connected with it to include the plaintiffs and defendants are all corrupt. “The Prophets expect relationships in the community to be characterized by people doing the right thing by one another and living in truthfulness.” (Goldingay 2014, 192) But no one is.

Reading this in the GNB translation, we see how much like today things were then.

Isaiah 59:4

“You go to court, but you haven’t got justice on your side. You depend on lies to win your case. You carry out your plans to hurt others.” (GNB)

Welcome to the court system of the 21st century where we have a term that has developed over the past few years...venue shopping. “Venue shopping” — where plaintiffs pick court locations that they believe will be favorable to the cases they’re arguing. (Brieland 2017)

Justice is contingent upon the judge and their political leanings. This is how we wound up getting a court decision saying it is ok to kill babies.

In the arcane world of pre-2000 USLH insurance, those of us working within the system, well we “knew” which judges would provide decisions based on the facts versus those who would stretch the facts to fit the law. Assignment of judges was based on rotation, and we would literally wait to file until we got the “right” judge.

There is a reason why certain groups always seem to file their case in certain courts. This happens on both sides of the aisle.

There is an annual publication for insurance claims, an area I worked in for over 30 years that lets you know where justice exists, is dicey or does not exist. The American Tort Reform Foundation issues that report annually.

Again, as believers, we are to reflect Jesus Christ. Paul saw this same type of injustice taking place in his day and age. He was subjected, personally, to it. The emperor was a guy named Nero. Yet Paul writes the following to a young pastor.

Titus 3:1–11

“Remind the believers to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good. They must not slander anyone and must avoid quarreling. Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone. Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were



misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. But—When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying, and I want you to insist on these teachings so that all who trust in God will devote themselves to doing good. These teachings are good and beneficial for everyone. Do not get involved in foolish discussions about spiritual pedigrees or in quarrels and fights about obedience to Jewish laws. These things are useless and a waste of time. If people are causing divisions among you, give a first and second warning. After that, have nothing more to do with them. For people like that have turned away from the truth, and their own sins condemn them.” (NLT)

John 13:34

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.” (ESV)

As the 21st century church, we are to reflect Jesus Christ in all that we say and do. We are to love one another and not create roadblocks to others coming to Christ.

This is tough. It has not gotten easier since 700 BC. Their world looked a whole lot like our world today. Habakkuk provides insight for us.

Habakkuk 1:2–4

“How long, O LORD, must I call for help? But you do not listen! “Violence is everywhere!” I cry, but you do not come to save. Must I forever see these evil deeds? Why must I watch all this misery? Wherever I look, I see destruction and violence. I am surrounded by people who love to argue and fight. The law has become paralyzed, and there is no justice in the courts. The wicked far outnumber the righteous, so that justice has become perverted.” (NLT)

Ecclesiastes 1:9

“What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.” (ESV)

Isaiah 59:4

“No one sues righteously and no one pleads honestly. They trust in confusion and speak lies; They conceive trouble and give birth to disaster.” (NASB 2020)

Welcome to 2021. “Justice was not coming out of the courts, but legal maneuvering and loopholes had taken the place of straightforward decisions. The people were using and abusing the legal system for their own ends rather than allowing it to sit in judgment on their actions. They were trying to confuse the issues and lie their way out of their responsibilities. Instead of conceiving the truth that would issue in righteousness, they were conceiving mischief that would result in iniquity (cf. Job 15:35; James 1:15).” (Constable 2003, Is 59:4)

Romans 1:28

“And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.” (ESV)

This is not healthy for anyone and twists things around.

Isaiah 59:5–6

“They hatch vipers’ eggs and weave the spider’s web; The one who eats of their eggs dies, And from what is crushed, a snake breaks out. Their webs will not become clothing, Nor will they cover themselves with their works; Their works are works of wrongdoing, And an act of violence is in their hands.” (NASB 2020)

Misuse of the justice system means there is no justice. The eggs being hatched are viper eggs and only breed more snakes. It is impossible to do life with justice when you breed more snakes and then try to make the injustice work and cover your lifestyle. It did not work then; it does not work now.

The context makes it clear that just as spiders' webs cannot cover a person, so evil people cannot hide under the cover of their vicious actions. Their actions will be exposed. The pronoun Their refers to the evil people described in verse 4, not to the spiders. Men will not cover themselves with what they make is literally "and they will not [be able to] cover themselves with their deeds." The pronouns "they" and "their" refers to the same evil people, not to the spiders. "Their deeds" is a clear reference to their abuse of the justice system described in verse 4. (Ogden and Sterk 2011, 1658-1659)

As spider webs are used to catch prey, so is a court system that is being run where all involved in the system "trust in confusion and speak lies." Evil people use this to trap others in their webs of confusion. Isaiah 59:6b "...Their works are works of wrongdoing, And an act of violence is in their hands." (NASB 2020)

For an insect caught in a spider web, in the end, they become food for the spider. The message, those who misuse the justice system in Judah to create their own web of confusion, the intent is to "eat" their prey. They were taking property.

Micah 2:1-2

"Woe to those who devise wickedness and work evil on their beds! When the morning dawns, they perform it, because it is in the power of their hand. They covet fields and seize them, and houses, and take them away; they oppress a man and his house, a man and his inheritance." (ESV)

Isaiah 5:8-9

"Woe to those who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is no more room, and you are made to dwell alone in the midst of the land. The LORD of hosts has sworn in my hearing: "Surely many houses shall be desolate, large and beautiful houses, without inhabitant." (ESV)

The lifestyle of the people of Judah, those who should know better, those who say they are believers in YAHWEH but in name only, is described for us. These are the same people who are conniving to get what it is they desire, no matter what. They have prayed and fasted, yet their prayers have not been answered so they have turned the system to their own devices in order to fulfill their own prayers. The implication is that another reason why fasting, and prayer do not work for them is because of what they are praying and fasting about, selfish ambitions. They are unsatisfied, so their life does not look like that of a faithful follower of YAHWEH.

Isaiah 59:7-8

"Their feet run to evil, And they hurry to shed innocent blood; Their thoughts are thoughts of wrongdoing, Devastation and destruction are in their paths. They do not know the way of peace, And there is no justice in their tracks; They have made their paths crooked, Whoever walks on them does not know peace." (NASB 2020)

Paul leans on this section of Isaiah when he was writing Romans 3. He used the LXX version for his source in his discussion of the universal corruption of morals.

Isaiah 59:7-8

"Their feet run swiftly to evil to pour out blood, and their thoughts are from murder; affliction and misery are in their paths. And they do not know the way of peace, and there is no judgment in their ways, for their paths through which they travel are crooked, and they do not know peace." (LES2)

Have you noticed in our culture that when an evil edict comes out, it always seems that it has to be enforced immediately. In those states which mandated the closure of churches due to the pandemic, the

enforcement of that edict rapidly moved to the draconian including fines and arrest. The picture here is that these people are eager to harm others.

When the society has become thoroughly perverse, all restraints are removed, and in the mad rush of self-interest, it is those who can move the most quickly who reap the apparent rewards, although those rewards be snakes' eggs and spiderwebs. (Oswalt 1998, 515)

The overall perversion of our culture, such as the culture of Judah under Manasseh, places everything that is done under a cloud. You begin to wonder what the real reason for a law or ruling is. What web is this being drawn into.

These are people who cannot wait to commit evil. They are looking forward to it and “there is no restraint in the doing of evil; it is their delight and they turn to it with all readiness. The thoughts (i.e. the intentions, plans, devices) are born in iniquity, lead to iniquity, and are themselves of iniquitous nature. Were one to walk upon their paths he would find only wasting and ruin.” (Young 1972, 432-433)

When we take this and add in the actions of Manasseh, “Furthermore Manasseh killed so many innocent people, he stained Jerusalem with their blood from end to end, in addition to encouraging Judah to sin by doing evil in the sight of the LORD.” (2 Kings 21:16, NET)

Shedding of innocent blood to include the murder of children, the persecution of believers, the killing of prophets and the enabling of evil. Sin destroys and the goal of those living this type of lifestyle is one of destruction, emulating the fallen ones pushing this.

Today, we are being continually shown the lives of politicians and entertainers who embrace all that these verses state. They are godless.

Job 15:34–35

“For the company of the godless is barren, and fire consumes the tents of those who accept bribes. They conceive trouble and bring forth evil; their belly prepares deception.” (NET)

The false teachers of today fall into this category. Their thoughts are of wrongdoing, their teaching devastates many keeping them from finding the truth about salvation resulting in their destruction. They do not know the Lord and as such they have no peace with God or anyone else either. Note the comments when Paul and Barnabas confronted one.

Acts 13:6–12

“When they had crossed over the whole island as far as Paphos, they found a magician, a Jewish false prophet named Bar-Jesus, who was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. The proconsul summoned Barnabas and Saul and wanted to hear the word of God. But the magician Elymas (for that is the way his name is translated) opposed them, trying to turn the proconsul away from the faith. But Saul (also known as Paul), filled with the Holy Spirit, stared straight at him and said, “You who are full of all deceit and all wrongdoing, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness—will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? Now look, the hand of the Lord is against you, and you will be blind, unable to see the sun for a time!” Immediately mistiness and darkness came over him, and he went around seeking people to lead him by the hand. Then when the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, because he was greatly astounded at the teaching about the Lord.” (NET)

Paul directly confronted what it is the enemy was trying to do by using Elymas. We must do so as well. The Lord is using Isaiah to warn His people by demonstrating for them the lifestyle of one who is the religious hypocrite following their own path and not His.

Isaiah 59:8

“They do not know the way of peace, And there is no justice in their tracks; They have made their paths crooked, Whoever walks on them does not know peace.” (NASB 2020)

It is impossible for someone who does not have peace with God, to have any peace in their life. Whatever they do is false even though they make a good show, there is always an agenda being followed. Nothing is face value, everything has an ulterior motive behind it and all in the name of getting what they want. Another viper egg at the end of the day.

Peter identified one of the groups we deal with today.

2 Peter 2:1–3

“But false prophets arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. These false teachers will infiltrate your midst with destructive heresies, even to the point of denying the Master who bought them. As a result, they will bring swift destruction on themselves. And many will follow their debauched lifestyles. Because of these false teachers, the way of truth will be slandered. And in their greed they will exploit you with deceptive words. Their condemnation pronounced long ago is not sitting idly by; their destruction is not asleep.” (NET)

The common thread is one of death and destruction, not life. The remnant of Judah followed YAHWEH and would be the recipients of the promises we discussed earlier. Just as there were those who wanted to mislead them and take advantage of them, we have the same issue today. The entire world system is in the hands and control of the evil one.

His goal is death and destruction. To get our eyes off of Jesus and put them on our immediate surroundings. Satan wants us to do as most of Judah did, to love the world.

1 John 2:15–17

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.” (ESV)

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