

Isaiah 57

11-9-05

“War & Peace!”

1. Intro:

- 1.1. **Outline:** At War with God(1-13); At Peace with God(14-21).
- 1.2. **Lord Byron** abandoned himself to the pursuit of pleasure; yet at the age of 35 he wrote, *“My days are in the yellow leaf, The flowers and fruits of love are gone; The worm, the canker, and the grief Are mine alone.”* Compare those lines with the words of **Adam Clarke**, a Christian saint and biblical expositor. At 84, he said, *“I have passed through the springtime of my life. I have withstood the heat of its summer. I have culled the fruits of fall. I am even now enduring the rigors of its winter, but at no great distance I see the approach of a new, eternal springtime. Hallelujah!”*
 - 1.2.1. **Q:** Are you at War with God or at Peace with Him?
 - 1.2.2. **Out of the mouth of babes!** – (SS teacher) Nanette Cook relayed a story in her 3rd grade class to me. Regarding a students 2 yr old sister Maile. At the Harvest festival her ballon got away & her mother said “oops there it goes to heaven” Maile said, “I get it later”

2. WAR & PEACE! (1-17)

- 2.1. **AT WAR WITH GOD!** (1-13)
- 2.2. **The Good Die Young!** (1,2)
 - 2.2.1. Because of the failure of these blind watchman & drunken leaders, righteous men perish, while none take it at heart.
 - 2.2.1.1. The people have now joined in & yielded to the evil influences.
 - 2.2.2. **Q:** What do we learn about dieing here?
 - 2.2.3. [1] **Good** people do die! (the righteous, the saints)
 - 2.2.3.1. **See** 1 reason why **Jn.17:24**
 - 2.2.4. [2] They are **taken away** from the **evil** of this world!
 - 2.2.4.1. They are spared future evil!
 - 2.2.5. [3] So they may enter ultimate **Peace & Rest!**
 - 2.2.6. **Popular Proverb:** “*only the good die young.*”
 - 2.2.6.1. We sang along w/the catchy **Billy Joel** song back in 1977 – His (appalling) words sum up the 1st ½ of our chapter. {Read}
- 2.3. **Their Wickedness!** (3,4)
 - 2.3.1. They are offspring of adulterers & prostitutes, children of sinners & liars.
 - 2.3.2. Anytime there is a rejection of God & His ways the floodgates of sin fling wide open!

- 2.4. **Their Worship!** (5-11)
- 2.4.1. (5) The climax will come in the terrible days of King Manasseh who made his son “*pass through the fire*” (2 kings 21:6) for the god Molech.
- 2.4.1.1. That event was prophesied back here by Isaiah.
- 2.4.2. (6) (Message) “*You take stones from the creek and set up your sex-and-religion shrines. You’ve chosen your fate. Your worship will be your doom.*”
- 2.4.3. It became an age of **sexual immorality & religious idolatry**.
- 2.4.3.1. Very often these 2 go together.
- 2.4.3.2. **Idolatry** is always easier than **faith** in the true God, because it makes no moral demands. Man made gods cannot **do** anything, nor do they **demand** anything.¹
- 2.4.4. This description of the godless in society in Judah seems quite **contemporary** 😞
- 2.4.4.1. **Read** article [Palmdale School Dist & Sex-Survey to 1st 3rd 5th grades]
- 2.4.5. (9,10) *They relentlessly searched for more pagan gods to worship!*
- 2.4.6. (10) The way of **Wickedness**, leads to **Weariness**, which ends in **Restlessness!**(20)
- 2.4.7. Sin does not satisfy & yet they still won’t turn back.
- 2.4.8. **The prodigal didn’t turn back right away!**
- 2.4.8.1. He wasted his possessions w/wasteful(prodigal) living & **didn’t return home**. - He spent all & **didn’t return home**. - A famine came & **didn’t return home**. – he gets a job feeding swine & **didn’t return home**. – He eats the swine food(carob pod diet) & **didn’t return home**. – It said, “no one helped” & **didn’t return home...THEN he came to himself!**
- 2.4.8.2. Often time one goes further & further down, until he can go no further...then comes to his senses! [How low can you go?]
- 2.4.9. (11b) Israel **forgot** God, & since He was silent they **failed to fear Him!**
- 2.5. **Their Hope!** (12,13)
- 2.5.1. Nothing can save them but **trust in God**.
- 2.6. **AT PEACE WITH GOD!** (14-21)
- 2.7. **Clearing the Way!** (14)
- 2.7.1. God clears the way for His people to return from captivity.

¹ Philip Hacking; Isaiah; pg.179

2.8. **The Person of God!** (15a)

- 2.8.1. Jehovah declares Himself to be the One inhabiting eternity, & yet dwelling w/the contrite & humble in spirit.
- 2.8.2. What a triumph of Grace...God, dwell with us?
 - 2.8.2.1. What a great God to condescend to care for lowly people.
- 2.8.3. Here we have both the **Transcendence** of God & the **Immanence** of God.
 - 2.8.3.1. **Transcendence** - that God is exalted above His creatures & distinct from them.
 - 2.8.3.2. **Immanence** [Latin "to dwell w/in"] - teaches that God also condescends to fellowship w/those who are contrite & lowly of spirit.

2.9. **The Promise of God!** (15b-19)

- 2.9.1. **Contrite** = crushed or broken!
- 2.9.2. Ps.51:17 "A **broken** and a **contrite** heart - These, O God, You will not despise."
- 2.9.3. Ps.34:18 "The LORD is near to those who have a **broken** heart, And saves such as have a **contrite** spirit."

2.10. What a special relationship that is offered to those who are **broken**?

2.11. If you want to learn what a person is really like, ask **three questions**:

- 2.11.1. What makes him **laugh**? What makes him **angry**? What makes him **weep**?

2.12. What we need today is not **anger**, but **anguish**!

- 2.12.1. The kind of anguish that **Moses** displayed when he broke the two tablets of the law, **and then** climbed the mountain to intercede for his people.
- 2.12.2. Or that **Jesus** displayed when He cleansed the temple, **and then** wept over the city.
- 2.12.3. The difference between **anger** and **anguish** is a broken heart.
- 2.12.4. It's easy to get angry, especially at somebody else's sins; but it's not easy to look at sin, our own included, and weep over it.²

2.13. When God wants to do an **impossible task**, He takes an **impossible man** and **breaks him**!

- 2.13.1. Charles Spurgeon said, *We are but men, frail, feeble, & apt to faint.*
- 2.13.2. It is not until the pride of our heart is **shattered** that we will begin to understand the deep things of God.

² The Integrity Crisis by Warren W. Wiersbe, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991, pp. 75-76

- 2.13.3. The **shattering** and the **bruising** are so designed by God for the preparation of his spokesman.
- 2.13.4. All of God's giants have been **weak men**.
- 2.13.5. The greatest gift you can give your family/church/community is a genuine model of your humanity.
- 2.13.6. Admit your weakness, or your unresolved conflicts, and then let yourself be broken about it by God.
- 2.14. **5 broken things in the Bible and the results achieved by them:**
- 1) Broken **pitchers** (Judges 7:18,19) and the **light shone out**.
 - 2) Broken **Box** (Mk 14:3) and the **ointment was poured out**.
 - 3) Broken **Bread** (Mt 14:10) and the **hungry were fed**.
 - 4) Broken **Body** (I Cor 11:24) and the **world was saved**.
 - 5) Broken **will** (Psa 51:17) and **a life of fulfillment in Christ**.
- 2.15. **Q: What type of Christian do you like to hang out with?**
- 2.15.1. Here is the kind of person God likes to hang out with.
- 2.16. **Q: Does God feel at home in your heart?**
- 2.17. Here is God's relationship with repentant & humble individuals:
- 2.17.1. [1] **To safely regather the contrite**.
 - 2.17.2. [2] **To revive their spirits**.
 - 2.17.2.1. He refreshes them & gives them courage.
 - 2.17.3. [3] **To never accuse them of sin**.
 - 2.17.3.1. He does not fight against them forever.
 - 2.17.4. [4] **To heal, lead, & comfort them**.
 - 2.17.5. [5] **To impart to them His peace**.
- 2.18. (19) **Peace, peace to him who is far off & to him who is near**.
- 2.18.1. **Read** Eph.2:14-18.
 - 2.18.2. This became the inspiration of Paul in Acts 2:39 "**For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.**" Paul saw Jew & Gentile at peace w/one another because they were at peace with God.
 - 2.18.2.1. It takes **vertical** peace for **horizontal** peace!
- 2.19. **The Wicked!** (20,21)
- 2.20. **Peace is** in contrast to the **Restlessness** of the wicked!
- 2.20.1. **Restless** is the opposite of **peace/restful**.
- 2.21. What a solemn warning against wickedness!