

Evil Deeds Deprive Us of Justice!

Isaiah 59:1-14 (vv. 13-14)

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I. Historical Background and Biblical Context

This chapter is a continuation of the judgments enumerated in the previous chapter regarding Israel's hypocrisy. This entire chapter is devoted to defining and exposing the sins of the people. There was a great deal of injustice in the land. Even though they were fasting and doing all of the outwardly religious things that they believed would please God, God seemed distant. God felt distant to them because they were not worshipping Him with pure hearts. They had outward signs of religion but not pure religion. James 1:27 tells what is pure religion: "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." In spite of their rebellion and sin, Israel continued to act as if they were a righteous nation that genuinely sought after God. **Their rebellion and sin were wrapped in a cloak of hypocrisy.** In this chapter, we hear more about the sinfulness of the people and how the people had separated themselves from God by the evilness in their lives. God never moves away from His people but His people move away from Him when we live according to the sinful flesh and not do those things that He command us to do that bring Him glory, honor, and true worship. If we do not walk in the Spirit, we will do those things that gratify the desires of the flesh. Galatians 5:19-21, describes the things after the flesh as being sexual immorality, impurity, and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. But there is another path that is to those who walk in the Spirit, who have the fruit of the Spirit, that is, love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law. God's heart for justice is loving Him in obedience and not with empty and sinful living.

II. The Lesson: Evil Deeds Deprive Us of Justice!

1. vv. 1-2.

Isaiah reminds the people that God has not lost His power to save them. God's arm is not shortened. We can never go too far that God cannot reach us. The

power of God is unlimited and unmeasurable. No matter the state of condition or situation, Almighty God is able to save anyone from anywhere at anytime from anything. He is the all-powerful and all loving God. God both hears and understands their need for deliverance and has the capability within Himself to provide that deliverance. However, at this time that deliverance had not come. It was their sin that separated them from God not God from them. There was a central wall or partition that divided the people of God from the person of God. The word states, “your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.” Sin will cause us to draw away from God in disobedience. Through their wicked and sinful ways, they removed themselves from the presence of God. We were born in sin, with hearts that bent toward evil. Romans 3:10-18
And your sins have hid his face from you. We must recognize that our sin often becomes a major hindrance to receiving answered prayers from God. Despite our sinful nature, God’s grace extends an invitation for redemption and eternal life through Jesus Christ. God’s love transcends our transgressions and leads us to path back to Him. While our sinful ways may separate us from God, God’s grace restores us.

2. v 3.

Isaiah established his accusations in verse 2. He now utilizes various members of the body (hands, fingers, lips, and tongue) to publicly expose the sin of the people. Their sin is both actions, the description of the hands and fingers, and in word, the description of lips and tongue. The very hands lifted up to God in prayer were defiled with blood. This is not the first time that they heard this. Isaiah 1:15 states, “When you spread out your hands in prayer, I hide my eyes from you; even when you offer many prayers, I am not listening. Your hands are full of blood. “Their sins also involved what they said and thought. Your tongue mutters wicked things. Isaiah condemns their thoughts, their language, and their activity.

3. vv 4-8.

Isaiah continues his exposition of sin. No one calls for justice; no one pleads a case with integrity. They rely on empty arguments, they utter lies. Justice refers to that which is right and clearly implies righteousness. No one is calling for public justice in regard to transgression and law breaking. The people were constantly trusting in things. They were putting their trust in emptiness. The people who had abandoned justice and truth were conceiving trouble, plotting, and planning to do evil things which would bring more sin instead of doing what was right. When you conceive, you do not give birth overnight. There is a process and it can lead to spiritual death. James 1:14 – 14, “but each of person

is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”

The imagery Isaiah gives is that the effects of the vipers is that if the eggs are eaten, one dies; and when the egg is crushed, it gives birth to more vipers (more evil). This is the devastation of sin. Just as a spider’s web cannot serve as a covering for the spider, these wicked works of rebellion can never serve as a covering in the sight of God. These webs ensnare other people. People’s actions like the spinning webs, useless thin and unable to cover their sins. Webs of false righteousness that could not clothe nor protect them. If they continue the path that are taking, the people will not know the all-surpassing peace of God. Their eagerness of their sinful intentions to run to evil, shed innocent blood, and thoughts of iniquity, they will recognize the all-surpassing peace of God. Paul uses these statements speaking to the church in Rome as a basis for his argument on widespread corruption in Romans 3:15-18, “Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know. There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

4. vv. 9-11.

In this verse Isaiah is speaking in the first person. Up to this time, he had included them but now he was also including himself with the people of Israel. Therefore (for that reason), because of their sinful way of life and perverted directions, Isaiah reminds them that they are suffering the consequences of their sin. Judgment is far from us – the just decision of God related to their deliverance they could not recall – it had escaped them. Therefore, God would intervene and deliver them. The people continued in the darkness of their sin with no immediate hope of light and brightness. They are described as blind men feeling their way for a wall for a way to escape. Even though it is bright, they stumble as if they were in darkness. They were walking in spiritual blindness. Isaiah continued his indictment of the people’s blindness by comparing to bears and doves. They are like bears who hunt the flock and walk around growling with evil intent and at the same time mourn and moan like doves. Isaiah states that justice is far from us – the peace, light, and righteousness are all part of God’s salvation. All of their hopes regarding salvation were emptiness but later in chapter 60, we see the covenant keeping God who would come in behalf of Israel as their Redeemer.

5. vv 12-14.

In these verses the prophet confesses his sins and the sins of the people. Since they were under God’s judgment for their sin, it was necessary for them that

they confess their sin and turn back to God. There is a need for us to confess individually and collectively. We must confess sin personally and as a nation. It was their sin that separation from God. Because of their continued disobedience, their rebellion against God had greatly increased. The prophet describes the terrible conditions that the people were living in. Justice is driven back, and righteousness stands at a distance. No room is made for righteousness when the land is filled with sin. Truth can no longer occupy to open public places. It is seeable absent. When we live for God and stand for righteous are an easy prey for those who choose to live their own lives without God. As Jesus foretold those who follow him, that they would be hatred and persecuted because him. You will be rejected and dejected, talked and criticized without reason. We are not greater than the Master. God is a God of justice, and that to walk with God, we must love mercy, and do justice which is how we are supposed to live as the people of God. Proverbs 14;34, Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to any people.

III. Conclusion

Our sin may separate us from the presence of God but His grace will restore us. Through His divine grace we have restoration and reconciliation. When evil deeds prevail, it robs us of peace, healing, and transformation. Injustice is like poison. To walk with God is to walk in justice.