

Israel's Watchmen are Blind and Mute !

Isaiah 56: 9-12

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I. Biblical Context

God warns against the princes and spiritual leaders of Israel for neglecting their duties as Shepherds to God's flock. Sin has blinded them so that instead of keeping watch over God's people they have pandered to their own pleasures and lust. They were leaders who were in it for their own gain and pleasure, and not for the people. God's assessment of these leaders was that they were spiritually asleep and loved pleasures more than they did Him. Again, not the kind of watchmen that you want, but they are still around today.

Isaiah's words, it underscores the persistent nature of God's anger towards unrepentant sin, emphasizing that despite the calamity falling on them, God's anger remained unpeased, (dissatisfied) for all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still.

II. The Lesson: Israel's Watchmen are Blind and Mute!

1. v.9. A call to predators

Come, all you beast of the field, come and devour, all you beasts of the forest. The passage begins with an invitation to the beasts of the field, and beast in the forest to come and devour God's people. These beasts symbolize foreign enemies and hostile nations that are allowed to attack because the people are no longer protected by their leaders.

2. v.10. “Dumb dogs” (Mute)

a) Blind Watchmen

Israel’s watchmen are blind; they all lack knowledge; they are all mute dogs, they cannot bark. A guard dog’s primary duty is to bark at approaching threats. By calling leaders, “dumb dogs that cannot bark,” Isaiah points to their failure to speak out against sin or warn of coming judgement. They have lost their prophetic voice and “cannot bark” because they have no spiritual discernment.

b) Sleeping and dreaming

They lie around and dream, they love to sleep. Instead of standing alert on the walls, these “dogs” are lying down, loving to slumber. This signifies a preference for ease, comfort, and a rosy fantasies over difficult reality of the nation’s spiritual decay.

3. v.11. “Greedy dogs”

They are dogs with mighty appetites; they never have enough. They are shepherds who lack understanding ; They all turn to their own way, they seek their own gain. Isaiah pivots from their laziness to their active corruption. These dogs have mighty appetites and are never satisfied. While they are too lazy to guard the flock, they are highly energetic in pursuing their own gain, scavenging for personal profit.

4. v. 12. Indulgence and presumption

Come, each one cries, let me get wine! Let us drink our fill of beer! And tomorrow will be like today, or even far better. The passage concludes with the leaders encouraging one another to

indulge in wine and strong drink. They falsely presume that tomorrow will be like today, and much more abundant”, ignoring the imminent judgement.

a) Self-Indulgence leadership

They abandoned their duty to care for the flock, prioritizing their own desires and indulging in strong drink.

b) False Security and Denial

The phrase , “tomorrow will be like today, only far better,” reflects an arrogant confidence that no judgment or consequences will ever come, despite warnings from God.

c) Blindness of Danger

These watchmen are described as blind and mute, failing to warn the nation of coming destruction, because they are too focused on their own pleasure.

d) Moral Failure

Their profound moral failure of leadership, showing that when leaders prioritize comfort and gain over their calling, It results in the vulnerability of those they should protect.

III. Conclusion.

God warns against the princes and spiritual leaders of Israel for neglecting their duties as shepherds to God’s flock.