

“MY HOLY MOUNTAIN”

Isaiah 56-57

Introduction

- 1) All those who would seek God must come unto Him and His holy mountain
 - a) God’s “**mountain**” represents His high rule and sovereign authority over all things
 - i) The “mountain of the Lord’s house” would be established on the top of the mountains and exalted above the hills, and all nations would flow to it (Isa. 2:2; fulfilled in the Messiah)
 - b) Those who would dwell in God’s holy hill must do right and avoid evil (Psa. 15)
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- 2) God speaks of His holy mountain in **Isaiah 56:7** and **57:13** as a place for His righteous people

I) **Those Who are Faithful will be Blessed (56:1-2)**

- A) *Previous context*: Those who accept God’s gracious invitation and seek the Lord will be blessed (55:1-13)
- B) Those ready for God’s coming salvation and righteousness will be blessed (vv. 1-2)
 - 1) Keep justice and do righteousness, and keep from defiling the Sabbath and hands from doing any evil
 - a) Keeping the Sabbath was an important symbol of OT obedience (but is not now a part of NT worship – Col. 2:16-17)
 - 2) “Holding fast” to God’s covenant is always key to enjoying God’s blessings (56:4, 6)
 - a) Forsake evil and do righteousness (Jas. 1:21-22; 1 Jn. 2:29; 3:7)

II) **Foreigners and Outcasts Welcomed into God’s House (56:3-8)**

- A) Foreigners and eunuchs who are faithful will have a prominent place in God’s house
- B) **Eunuchs** (vv. 4-5; Deut. 23:1) – will be given a place and an everlasting name in God’s house (cf. Matt. 19:12)
- C) **Foreigners** (vv. 6-8; Ex. 12:48-49 proselyte) – accepted in God’s house with joy
 - 1) Sacrifices accepted on God’s altar (alongside those of everyone else)
 - 2) House of God a place of prayer for all nations (cf. Mk. 11:17)
 - 3) Gentiles are welcomed into the messianic kingdom of Jesus Christ as “fellow-citizens” (Jn. 10:16; Eph. 2:11-22, 36)
- D) God’s spiritual house today is open to all “less desirables” (Lk. 14:15-24; Jas. 2:1-5; Col. 3:11)

III) **Israel’s Failed Watchmen/Shepherds (56:9 – 57:2)**

- A) Israel was doomed to be devoured because of its irresponsible leaders (56:9-12)
 - 1) Israel’s watchmen were blind and ignorant, and likened to dumb [mute] dogs that cannot bark who love to lie down and sleep
 - a) A faithful watchman will warn of danger (cf. Ezek. 3:16-19; 33:1-9)
 - 2) Israel’s leaders were greedy “dogs” that could not be satisfied, and shepherds who were only interested in their own gain and pleasure
 - a) A faithful shepherd will watch over the flock (cf. Ezek. 34:1-31; Jn. 10:1-29)
- B) The righteous and merciful perish and evil society doesn’t notice that these good people are disappearing (57:1-2)
 - 1) The godly dead enjoy peace as they pass from the scene before destruction (cf. Phil. 1:21)

IV) **Israel’s Futile Idolatry (57:3-13)**

- A) God calls idolaters “sons of the sorceress” and “offspring of the adulterer and the harlot” (v. 3; committed infidelity against God)
- B) Why do they mock God’s faithful when God sees all their transgressions (vv. 4-6)?

- 1) Worship idols under green trees, slaying the children in the valleys
- C) Forsook God and made alliances with others (vv. 7-10)
 - 1) Why did they turn from God? Because He “held His peace” – showed longsuffering (v. 11)
- D) God will bring judgment to the idolaters, and the idols will not deliver them (vv. 12-13a)
- E) He who trusts in God will “possess the land” and inherit God’s “holy mountain” (v. 13b)

V) Healing for the Humble and Contrite Spirit (57:14-21)

- A) God will dwell with and revive those who have a humble and contrite spirit (vv. 14-15; cf. Psa. 34:18; 51:10, 16-17; Matt. 5:3)
- B) God is longsuffering and seeks reconciliation (vv. 16-18)
 - 1) Will heal, lead, and restore comforts to those who are humble and contrite (cf. Jas. 4:7-10; 1 Pet. 5:5-6)
- C) Contrast between the destiny of the righteous and the wicked (vv. 19-21)
 - 1) Healing vs. trouble, peace vs. no rest
 - 2) Two major directions and destinies of life – right way vs. wrong way (Matt. 7:13-14)

Conclusion

God is seeking those who will seek Him, and He will bless them richly, yes, even those considered foreigners and outcasts. There are wonderful blessings for the righteous, while there is only trouble for the wicked who reject God and His way.