

Isaiah 56-66
Lecture Notes—OT 761
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→ Isaiah 56-58

--56:1-8

--ISA 56:1 This is what the LORD says:

"Maintain justice and do what is right,
for my salvation is close at hand
and my righteousness will soon be revealed.

ISA 56:2 Blessed is the man who does this, the man who holds it fast,
who keeps the Sabbath without desecrating it,
and keeps his hand from doing any evil."

--The new section of Isaiah, usually called "Third Isaiah" or "Trito-Isaiah," begins with a theme common in Isaiah 1-39 but lacking from Isaiah 40-55. That theme is "justice" and "righteousness." Throughout Isaiah 1-39 the prophet constantly berated the people of Judah for failure to practice justice and righteousness.

--Scholarly consensus would place this section of Isaiah in the post-exilic period, in the late 6th or 5th century BC. The readers will note several reasons for this conclusion as they proceed through the text. Among them are the return to prophetic themes, the apparent presence of the temple in Jerusalem, and the emphasis on post-exilic issues such as keeping the Sabbath.

--"Close at hand"

--This phrase sounds more like Isaiah 40-55 than 1-39. While Isaiah 40-55 describe the judgment that has already happened in Judah and the hope for a deliverance, this phrase sounds like an oracle of promise for deliverance. The point may be that the "salvation" is not completely realized. In fact, many in the post-exilic community felt strongly that the community in Judea lacked the glory of pre-exilic Judah. Certainly, this renewed community did not live up to the grandiose descriptions of Isaiah 40-55. As Christians we know that Jesus offered a greater salvation, which in the NT is often described with the same language and images as Isaiah 40-55.

--Sabbath

--Keeping the Sabbath is a frequent theme in Isaiah 56-66, but was only used in 1:13, in which the prophet told the people to *not* keep the Sabbath any longer because the people were keeping it insincerely.

--In the present verse, the key to blessing is no longer simply trusting the Lord, but keeping the Sabbath. Sabbath was a key issue in the post-exilic period, when Judaism was in its formative stage.

ISA 56:3 Let no foreigner who has bound himself to the LORD say,
"The LORD will surely exclude me from his people."
And let not any eunuch complain, "I am only a dry tree."
ISA 56:4 For this is what the LORD says:
"To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths,
who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant--
ISA 56:5 to them I will give within my temple and its walls
a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters;
I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off.

--This passage is a powerful statement concerning the universal nature of the LORD's covenant people. The eunuch and at least some foreigners were expressly forbidden from being a part of the LORD's community in Deuteronomy 23. How does this correlate with the present text in Isaiah?

DT 23:1 No one who has been emasculated by crushing or cutting may enter the assembly of the LORD.

DT 23:2 No one born of a forbidden marriage nor any of his descendants may enter the assembly of the LORD, even down to the tenth generation.

DT 23:3 No Ammonite or Moabite or any of his descendants may enter the assembly of the LORD, even down to the tenth generation. ⁴ For they did not come to meet you with bread and water on your way when you came out of Egypt, and they hired Balaam son of Beor from Pethor in Aram Naharaim to pronounce a curse on you. ⁵ However, the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam but turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loves you. ⁶ Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them as long as you live.

DT 23:7 Do not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother. Do not abhor an Egyptian, because you lived as an alien in his country. ⁸ The third generation of children born to them may enter the assembly of the LORD.

--As Jesus would later promise, people of faith always have hope. In the most hopeless of situations, hope still exists. As Oswalt stated, the message to the foreigner and eunuch is that they are not "lifeless and fruitless."¹ Jesus had an attitude of openness and mercy toward all who would come to Him. His kingdom was indeed something new. Is that the message Isaiah 56-66 is displaying as well. Perhaps it is the beginning of that message.

LK 17:11 Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance ¹³ and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

LK 17:14 When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.

LK 17:15 One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice.

¹⁶ He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him--and he was a Samaritan.

LK 17:17 Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?" ¹⁸ Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹ Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

--The phrase "memorial and name" is the Hebrew *yad-vashem* (יָד וַשֵׁם), which is the name of the Holocaust Memorial & Museum in Jerusalem. It was the memorial for those left without posterity.

¹ Oswalt, vol. 2, 457.

--The eunuch who has God's blessing is the one that keeps the Sabbath, chooses what pleases the LORD, and holds fast to the covenant. Are these three equivalent in importance? Certainly items other than keeping the Sabbath were also "pleasing" to the LORD, and many covenant requirements existed other than Sabbath keeping. Nonetheless, Sabbath was an early requirement, and perhaps significantly it was constituent to post-exilic formative Judaism.

ISA 56:6 And foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to serve him,
to love the name of the LORD, and to worship him,
all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant--
ISA 56:7 these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer.
Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar;
for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations."

--The foreigner, who had once been excluded from the people of the covenant, can be accepted on the "holy mountain" and in the LORD's "house of prayer." This would mean that they were accepted in the temple, i.e. in the presence of the LORD. Are they accepted because of their sacrifices? No, they are accepted because they "bind themselves to the LORD," keep the Sabbath, and hold fast to the covenant. In other words, accepting and committing themselves to the covenant requirements of the LORD is the secret to acceptance as part of God's people.

--They will "bind themselves to the LORD" in order to "serve him," "love the name of the LORD," and to "worship him." All of these terms have some cultic emphasis. In Deuteronomy, the "love" the LORD is to obey him and keep his covenant. The Hebrew term translated "serve" in NIV is translated "minister" by Oswalt² (שָׂרַת, *sharat*).

--The phrase translated "to worship him" in NIV is literally, "to be for him servants," in other words "to be his (the LORD's) servants." Thus the emphasis has changed from the "Servant of the Lord" in Isaiah 40-55 to "servants of the lord" in 56-66. Those who faithfully follow the LORD are his servants. In Isaiah 40-55 the "Servant" had particular roles, culminating in a vicarious death. In Isaiah 56-66 the "servants" are called to faithfully live out their covenant relationship with God.

--The Christian reader will notice the use of "house of prayer" as a description of the temple. This suggests that the message of Isaiah 56 is no longer to the exiles, but to a people settled in the land. Jesus quoted this verse in Matthew 21:12-13 after clearing the temple.

ISA 56:8 The Sovereign LORD declares--he who gathers the exiles of Israel:
"I will gather still others to them besides those already gathered."

--This verse would seem to suggest that a portion of the people had been "gathered," but others were still to be gathered. This interpretation has led to the Trito-Isaiah theory. The exiles have returned, but much remains to be accomplished. Are those to be gathered more of Israel or those from the nations, foreigners, and eunuchs? The latter would seem

² Oswalt, vol. 2, Oswalt, vol. 2, 451, 459-460.

to fit the context of the passage. Thus the remnant that remains to be gathered is a spiritual, rather than a strictly physical and genealogical, remnant.

--58:3-9a

ISA 58:3 `Why have we fasted,' they say, `and you have not seen it?

Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?'

"Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers.

ISA 58:4 Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists.

You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.

ISA 58:5 Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for a man to humble himself?

Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes?

Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?

ISA 58:6 "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:

to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke,

to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?

ISA 58:7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter--

when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

--This paragraph consists of several movements. First, the people have complained that their prayers have gone unanswered. They argue that they have fasted and "humbled themselves," but God has failed to take notice of them.

--Second, God condemns their fasting as hypocritical and ineffectual. Hypocritical fasting allows the one fasting to continue greedy business practices and exploitation of workers. This fasting leads to divisions and conflict. Fasting that God desires is a fast that produces humility. This fast includes generosity to those in need and justice to the oppressed and helpless. Only the latter fast will produce the desired result—namely the recognition of and answer from the LORD.

ISA 58:8 Then your light will break forth like the dawn,

and your healing will quickly appear;

then your righteousness will go before you,

and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.

ISA 58:9 Then you will call, and the LORD will answer;

you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.

--Only when the people practice the fast that the LORD desires will the "light break forth" and the people find healing. God will indeed hear them when they live a life of righteousness, here expressed in fasting. The point, however, would seem to go far beyond fasting. It is the life of faithfulness to the covenant. Does this mean that hypocritical abuse of religious ritual can indeed hinder the prayers of God's people? The text would seem to say, "yes."

--The "glory of the LORD" will now be their "rear guard." In Isaiah 52:12, the prophet had said that the LORD would be their "rear guard" when they return from exile. Here the phrase from the earlier section of the book is somewhat reinterpreted. Even when deliverance from exile is not needed, the presence of the LORD is still necessary.

→ Isaiah 59-62

--59:1-4

ISA 59:1 Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save,
nor his ear too dull to hear.

ISA 59:2 But your iniquities have separated
you from your God;
your sins have hidden his face from you,
so that he will not hear.

ISA 59:3 For your hands are stained with blood,
your fingers with guilt.
Your lips have spoken lies,
and your tongue mutters wicked things.

ISA 59:4 No one calls for justice;
no one pleads his case with integrity.
They rely on empty arguments and speak lies;
they conceive trouble and give birth to evil.

--Human nature tends to blame outside forces for problems. The problem of God's silence is no different. When the people did not hear from God and did not experience the full salvation that He had promised, they questioned His ability and willingness. In these verses the prophet sets the record straight. The problem is not with God, but with their sins. The message, "your iniquities have separated you from your God," is the basis of the Gospel message, even in the New Testament (i.e. Romans 3).

--Their guilt separates them from the LORD. Could this allude to the initial response of Isaiah before the LORD in Isaiah 6? He said, "'Woe to me!' I cried. 'I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips'" (Isaiah 6:3).

--As in Isaiah 1-39, the issue is social justice and integrity.

--The reader should note the childbirth images at the end of the passage. The verbs used here are the same as those used for physical conception (*harah* הָרָה) and childbirth (*yalad* יָלַד). Just as sexual intercourse brings human conception and birth, so sinful behavior conceives and brings forth trouble or sorrow (*'amal* עָמַל) and evil or wickedness (Hebrew *'aven* עָוֶן). This trouble and wickedness then separates one from God's presence and voice. One can find an interesting parallel in the Book of James.

JAS 1:13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴ but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

--61:1-7

ISA 61:1 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives

and release from darkness for the prisoners,
ISA 61:2 to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
ISA 61:3 and provide for those who grieve in Zion--
to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD
for the display of his splendor.

--Some has called this passage a fifth servant song, even though the term “servant” is not used. The message and mission of the servant in Isaiah 40-55 is quite similar to the mission here. However, most scholars would still deny the connection, especially given the multiple Isaiah theory, which would make the identification of this as a “servant song” questionable. One might wonder, however, if the “servant songs” were not so much a genre as a presentation of a theological theme and person. In that case, this passage could indeed be a development of that theme.

--Jesus quoted this passage (as well as possibly a fragment from Isaiah 58:6) in Luke 4:

LK 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed,
LK 4:19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

--Jesus/Luke quoted from the LXX, which explains especially the use of “blind” for “prisoners.”³ Jesus would seem to be placing himself in the line of (or as the identification with) the servant/messiah of Isaiah, especially given the verbal connections between Isaiah 11 and 61 (i.e. the “Spirit” and the focus upon justice and mercy for the oppressed).

--As Oswalt argues, only the Lord Himself, or direct messianic representative, can “announce” freedom, release, favor, and vengeance.⁴ For a person to make those claims would be presumptuous at best, foolish and dangerous at worst.

--This person (seen in the messianic mission of Jesus in the NT) will accomplish great deeds. He will “bind up” or “bandage” the wounds of the people (as compared to the healing of Isaiah 53?). He will completely alter the position of the poor, wounded, broken-hearted, and captive people.

--Ashes become beauty!

³ See John Nolland, *Luke 1:-9:20* in *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 35A (Dallas: Word, 1989): 193, 196-198, and Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* in *The Anchor Bible*, vol. 28 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981): 532-533, for textual discussions of Jesus' quotation from Isaiah.

⁴ See Oswalt, vol. 2, 563-567.

--Mourning becomes gladness!

--Despair becomes praise! In fact, the once all-encompassing “spirit of despair” that accompanies pain and suffering will be replaced with a “garment of praise.” God will completely make life new. The theme of change is common in the Bible, and in fact the theme of clothing is used several times in scripture to represent the change that God makes.

--Joseph goes from a beautiful coat, to servant’s clothes, to prison clothes, and finally to royal robes.

--Let us put aside the deeds of darkness and **put on** the armor of light (Romans 13:12).

--You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and **to put on** the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4:22-24).

--But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and **have put on** the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator (Colossians 3:8-10).

--Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! (2 Corinthians 5:17)

--God did, and indeed still does, come to those in need who cry out to Him. Whether they be “righteous” Jews, eunuchs, foreigners, broken-hearted, or captive, the LORD desires to rescue, heal, and save them. As the apostle proclaimed, “Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” (2 Corinthians 9:15)

→ Isaiah 63-66

--65:1-25

ISA 65:1 "I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me;

I was found by those who did not seek me.

To a nation that did not call on my name,

I said, 'Here am I, here am I.'

ISA 65:2 All day long I have held out my hands to an obstinate people,
who walk in ways not good, pursuing their own imaginations--

ISA 65:3 a people who continually provoke me to my very face,
offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on altars of brick;

ISA 65:4 who sit among the graves and spend their nights keeping secret vigil;

who eat the flesh of pigs, and whose pots hold broth of unclean meat;

ISA 65:5 who say, 'Keep away; don't come near me, for I am too sacred for you!'

Such people are smoke in my nostrils a fire that keeps burning all day.

--Here God displays His intense desire that His chosen—Israel—seek Him and know Him. In fact, even in the face of their obstinate rebellion, idolatry, and self-sufficiency, He continued to reveal Himself to them and “held out [His] hands” to them.

--God’s intense longing for people to come to Him is echoed in its most universal example in 2 Peter 3:9, “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” In the NT, God’s mission and call is extended to include not only Jews, but Gentile as well. Isaiah is certainly an important step in the extending bridge of God’s call for people to come to Him—from particular (Israel/Judaism) to universal.

--“Here am I”—Literally, this is “behold me!” It is a terse Hebrew phrase (*hineni*’, הִנְנִי) used often to express immediacy, as if God is standing in clear sight but is not seen. Thus He cries, “Look here!” God is expressing not only His availability, but also His proximity. He is not hiding where a person must hunt Him down and seek Him out. He is there, in the open, crying loudly to be heard.

--Unfortunately, His call has gone unheeded. He has earnestly sought to be heard by a people that ignored His continual call. They have rejected Him and worshipped idols. They have ignored Him and sought out other gods. They have neglected Him and claimed self-sufficiency and self-righteousness (“I am too sacred for you!”).

--Their sin has made them like “smoke in [His] nostrils.” Like the person standing near a fire, only to have the wind suddenly change and the smoke fly into his face, choking him, gagging him, and nauseating him, the LORD has experienced the rejection of His people. The “fire” of the last line may refer to divine anger, although the first line does not seem to carry that connotation.⁵ Because of their rejection of Him, the LORD will ultimately reject them, as noted in the following verses.

ISA 65:6 "See, it stands written before me:

I will not keep silent but will pay back in full;

I will pay it back into their laps--

ISA 65:7 both your sins and the sins of your fathers," says the LORD.

"Because they burned sacrifices on the mountains and defied me on the hills,

I will measure into their laps the full payment for their former deeds."

--God will repay “in full” the people, as they deserve. The people’s sin will not go unnoticed and unpunished.

--As suggested by Oswalt, “laps,” or “bosom,” may carry a double meaning. The “bosom” of the robe was used to carry grain or other purchased goods. Thus, the image here could be that the punishment will fill up their robe, like a load that can no longer be carried. But the “bosom” is also the very center of life, suggesting that the repayment of the sin will not be peripheral, but very real.⁶

--Of course, the NT also picks up on the theme of judgment and repayment. In Romans 6:23, the apostle Paul states, “the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.” The reality of divine judgment of sin is taught as a reality in the NT, but the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ and His atoning work (as taught in Isaiah 53?) removes that guilt for the faithful.

⁵ See Oswalt, vol. 2, 639-640, for a discussion of these possibilities.

⁶ Ibid., 640-641.

ISA 65:8 This is what the LORD says:

"As when juice is still found in a cluster of grapes
and men say, 'Don't destroy it, there is yet some good in it,'
so will I do in behalf of my servants; I will not destroy them all.

ISA 65:9 I will bring forth descendants from Jacob,
and from Judah those who will possess my mountains;
my chosen people will inherit them, and there will my servants live.

.....
ISA 65:13 Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says:

"My servants will eat, but you will go hungry;
my servants will drink, but you will go thirsty;
my servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame.

ISA 65:14 My servants will sing out of the joy of their hearts,
but you will cry out from anguish of heart and wail in brokenness of spirit.

ISA 65:15 You will leave your name to my chosen ones as a curse;
the Sovereign LORD will put you to death,
but to his servants he will give another name."

--Here is a contrast between unfaithful Judah and the faithful remnant, called "my servants." The image of a cluster is picturesque. The image is a farmer ready to destroy the remainder of the seemingly worthless grapes, but another points out that juice remains in some of the grapes. On account of those few grapes with juice remaining, the grapes are allowed to survive. The remnant consists of those grapes with remaining juice. The reader is reminded of the intercession of Abraham for Sodom (Genesis 18) and Moses for the Hebrews in the wilderness (several times).

--God's desire is to allow His people to survive and to bless them. In fact, He will bless the remnant mightily, even bestowing upon them a new name. This suggests much of the same theology as the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Ezekiel 36:24-32. God will reward obedience and faithfulness to His covenant.

On the other hand, he will also punish unfaithfulness by His covenant people. The disobedient have made their name a curse, in other words a name not to be uttered. Thus a new name is necessary.

--If the interpreter understands the "servants" to be the descendants, or seed, of the Servant, then a Christian interpretation is tempting. The New Testament did indeed pick up on these ideas of remnant and apply them to the Christian church as the remnant, or true Israel. In the New Testament, the people (or in Jesus' terms, the Kingdom) of God consists of those who seek the Lord, trust in Him, and follow His words, which is basically equivalent to Isaiah 65.

--66:1-24

ISA 66:1 This is what the LORD says:

"Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.

Where is the house you will build for me? Where will my resting place be?

ISA 66:2 Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?"
declares the LORD.

--The LORD is here expressing His utter control over all things. No human building can hold Him. The Creator cannot be contained in the creation. Of course, Solomon himself acknowledged this fact at the celebration of the completion of the temple.

--1KI 8:27-30 "But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built! Yet give attention to your servant's prayer and his plea for mercy, O LORD my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day. May your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, this place of which you said, 'My Name shall be there,' so that you will hear the prayer your servant prays toward this place. Hear the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive.

--Indeed, the attitude of Solomon, if maintained, would have solved the quandary of Israel in the days of Isaiah (or any age). An acknowledgement of dependence upon the LORD for all things and of His total sovereignty, along with a cry of humility and repentance was the very need of the audience of the Book of Isaiah. Unfortunately, in all ages, the tendency of God's people is to build buildings for Him, perform rituals unto Him, offer sacrifices to Him, utter words of commitment before Him, and then to move forward in self-sufficiency without acknowledgement of or faith in Him and His abilities! Modern Christians **must** heed these words as well!

ISA 66:2b "This is the one I esteem:

he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.

ISA 66:3 But whoever sacrifices a bull is like one who kills a man,

and whoever offers a lamb, like one who breaks a dog's neck;

whoever makes a grain offering is like one who presents pig's blood,

and whoever burns memorial incense, like one who worships an idol.

They have chosen their own ways, and their souls delight in their abominations;

ISA 66:4 so I also will choose harsh treatment for them and will bring upon them what they dread.

For when I called, no one answered, when I spoke, no one listened.

They did evil in my sight and chose what displeases me."

--Who will the LORD "esteem"?

--"Esteem" might be better translated as "look upon," "pay attention to," or "consider." In English, "esteem" may have too strong a connotation of building up, while the Hebrew word refers more to "looking" (Hebrew *nabat* נָבַת).

--He will "look upon" those who are "humble" & "contrite," and who "tremble" at His word. What God desires in a servant is one who submits to His leadership (just expressed in terms of creation power) and acknowledges his total dependence upon the LORD. In face of God's power and transcendence, His followers should find no alternative other than bowing down in humble obedience. Unfortunately, human pride often constrains humanity to self-reliance and rejection of God's authority.

--Many scripture texts refer to the need for humility, submission, and repentance before God.

-- PS 51:15-17 O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;

you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;

a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

--PS 147:5-6 Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit.

The LORD sustains the humble but casts the wicked to the ground.

--JAS 4:4-10 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely? But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:

"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

--Those who maintain their pride and disobedience before the LORD will be judged in the severest of manner. These are the ones who continue to worship false gods and rebel against God's law and authority. They will indeed be judged.

ISA 66:22 "As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me," declares the LORD, "so will your name and descendants endure. ²³ From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me," says the LORD. ²⁴ "And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind."

--The Book of Isaiah concludes with a promise of blessing for all those who follow Him and a word of judgment for those who rebel. Isaiah 66 continues the theme of Isaiah concerning the universal desire of God for all people. He will bless all who come and seek Him. In the same way, those who reject Him—even those of His original promised people—will be judged and destroyed.