

Isaiah Chapters 59-60 Summary - John Karmelich

Title: God's perspective on why sending Jesus into our world was necessary!

First, I know I'm preaching to the choir when I discuss the necessity of Jesus. I always assume those of you who read this, accept the fact God's perfect so therefore we must be "made perfect (sinless)" as His requirement to be with Him forever! I noticed a long time ago the Old Testament highlights our failure to please God based on what He requires to be with Him. We can only live as He desires with the Holy Spirit to guide us. We required a perfect human and still be fully God to pay for our sins. (Since God is perfect, He can pay it Himself). Jesus must also be fully human so we can relate to His sacrifice! Yes, I realize most of us know this, so why bring it up? We got the "cross" sermon in Chapter 53. That led to Chapters 54-58 which gave some key points on what all that means for believers, as well for those who choose to ignore God. Here, we learn why God's bothering with the whole "shooting match", and what that means for us. This lesson asks from God's perspective of why He is bothering!

The chapter opens with a lecture by God through Isaiah how sin has separated us from God. I realize it is old news for us, but it helps to see it in writing. Chapter 59 goes on to give examples of how those called to serve God are messing up! As I preach a lot behavior matters, not in terms of salvation but to be a good witness for God! After a bunch of verses listing examples of sins (showing God notices how we are living!) the topic jumps to how we're suffering, not due to bad luck or the fact we did something wrong, but to show that our sins make us bad witnesses for God! When things go wrong, I'll ponder if I have any sins to confess. I realize not every problem is spiritual. Self-examination's a step to deal with any problems. God doesn't expect perfection, but He does expect us to let the Spirit to guide us so we'll use our lives to make a difference for Him!

The verses talk about the fact our sins are multiplied before Him! The texts talk about nonbelievers as they can't help doing what's wrong simply because they don't have His Spirit to guide them! There's a number of references to darkness and light which obviously speak about turning either to or from God for guidance. That's why Verse 14 switches to the topic of the necessity of a redeemer (i.e., Jesus) as a payment for our sins! In effect, Chapter 59 has double-references to His First and Second Coming for the payment for sin and to keep God's promise that Jesus will rule the world from Jerusalem one day!

That leads me back to the text. The text talks about the necessity of sending Jesus into the world to pay for all sins. Again, I'd like us to think about this from God's perspective. Of course, He could think that human existence is a waste of time, so I'll start over again! The reason God bothered is to show us that by trusting in God Himself as full payment, we can be perfectly forgiven. I realize that's old news. The question is why did He bother in the first place? God's NOT lonely that He wants company! He wants to share the joy of eternity in His presence with those who willfully chose that option! The reason God also wants us to be a good people to work through us to draw others closer to Him! I realize we are not perfect, and acting morally isn't enough for salvation! Again, it's about being a good witness for Him!

In other words, I don't know why God chose humans for that eternal blessing as opposed to angels! We must accept He's in charge and this is the "game plan", deal with it! Meanwhile back to Chapter 59: It becomes in the middle of the chapter a lesson on what God the Father does by sending Jesus. We get a reference to parts of what Christians call the "Armor of God" (Ephesians 6) and now we know Paul got part of that image from here in Isaiah! The last few verses of the chapter focus on the long-term aspect that part of His plan is for Jesus to rule the world from Jerusalem. Like I argue, God's in charge, this IS His plan, deal with it! In specific, the last part of the chapter talks about Jesus ruling from Israel which

is why Israel must exist as an entity then and believe in His existence! That's why the text discusses the fact that those who believe and trust in Him will benefit and those who don't, well will suffer eternally.

I realize all too well, this is old news for believers but we're usually so busy focused on the problem of the moment, we rarely spend time thinking about the big picture. First, this text is here to remind us of the fact that no matter what we're dealing with it will only last a lifetime! Of course, it does NOT mean we should kill ourselves to speed that up. God gave us life to be a witness for Him! I know we all have our issues to deal with. Still, that should never stop us from being a witness for HIM through life!

That leads me to Chapter 60. (Isaiah has 66 chapters, the finish line is in sight!) It focuses on how the nation of Israel will be blessed in that day! In other words, if God chooses to bless those who make the commitment to trust Jesus and use our lives for His glory, here's a brief description of how God's going to bless us one day. Short version, whatever we're dealing with now is "worth it" for eternal blessings!

A common theme is God saying, "Hang in there, I know times are tough, but I got great eternal plans if you will simply trust Me!" Chapter 60 fits that pattern well. I realize all too well, that hope for a great eternity in heaven doesn't help whatever we're dealing with at this moment! Still, we must have hope to get through whatever we're dealing with. He promises NEVER to leave nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). It is why He's so focused on hope on Chapter 60! The chapter is telling Israel despite all their suffering as a people it will all be worth it. Again, it's hard to do that when life gets hard, but life is about having hope in the worst of times! This gets back to my theme about why God is bothering. He is well-aware of our struggles and wants us to keep trusting Him through the best and worst times of life. Explaining how we who put our trust in God will win in the end is designed to strength us through tough times!

A lot of the text focuses on bringing gifts to Jerusalem. Isaiah's focused here on Jesus 1,000-year reign from Jerusalem. I realize Jesus will reign forever, but the focus is on life right after the Revelation "bad stuff" and rebuilding that city which will suffer from war damage. Jerusalem won't have God "waiving His finger" and it's magically rebuilt. The text discusses gifts from all over the world to honor Jesus as the LONG-PROMISED Messiah who will reign there forever. It is not that Jesus requires gold etc. It's about our gratitude for what God's done for us! This is why He desires that we give materially to Him, to express our gratitude for all He's done for us. Bottom line, Chapter 60 is a "be grateful for an eternal future where believers share in the glory of Jesus ruling from Jerusalem". If you wonder what life will be like after "Revelation", this chapter gives us glimpses of that!

Speaking of life then, other changes will occur. There will be no more sun nor moon. God Himself will provide light. If you wonder what will draw people to travel there, "seeing God as light" is motivation! Also notice Verse 21 says Your (God's) people will be there forever, (not just 1,000 years!) All of that sounds wonderful, how does it affect the problems I'm dealing with? Hebrews 13:5 which I mentioned a few paragraphs back reminds us that God will guide our lives for His glory if we let Him guide us. It reminds us God hasn't forsaken me, and I trust my readers feel the same way!

My final question is why us? Do we deserve the gift of eternal salvation? Of course not. For whatever reason God decided that people are welcome to be a part of His eternal plan to rule the world. Does He need to do this? Again, of course not. In effect God says, "This is My plan for eternity so whether we like it or not, so we might as well enjoy what will happen to be a part of the winning team!"

With that said, hope you like this study. I wrote a more detailed one some years back. If you want to read that, click on one of the links below. It is still a joy to study this stuff and again I'm grateful for

you reading this. The rest of this email is links to questions you may have. If you're new here, realize you're always welcome to e-mail me. Thanks again for reading and Merry Christmas everyone!