

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, December 31, 2023

Passage: Isaiah 56:9–57:13

Memory Passage: Isaiah 57:1–2

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Is. 56:9–57:13.** How do you account for the change of tone and mood in v. 9?
- (b) Why are the “beasts” summoned to “come to devour” (see Lev 26:22; Deut 28:26; 32:24; 2 Kgs 17:24–27)?
- (c) Who are “His watchmen,” what are they lacking, and what do they do (56:10–11b)?
- (d) Who are the “shepherds,” what are they lacking, and what do they do (56:11c–12)?

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Is. 56:9–57:13.** Isaiah 56:9–12 describes wicked leaders, while life in the world they lead is described in 57:1–21 (which we will cover this week and next). These poor leaders rule over both the righteous and the wicked. What is said about the righteous and devout people in 57:1–2? Are these truths intended to bring comfort or warning? Explain your answer.
- (b) Is Isaiah’s description of wicked Israelites in 57:3 literal or a metaphor? Explain what he means by this description.
- (c) To whom and why are these idolatrous people commanded to “draw near” (57:3a)?
- (d) Isaiah asks rhetorical questions in v. 4a–c. Who are the people mocking, and how are they doing so?
- (e) What are these rebellious children of Israel doing in 57:5 (see Lev. 18:21; 2 Kgs 23:10; Ezek 16:20–21; Jer 32:35)?

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Is. 56:9–57:13.** In 57:3–5, Isaiah uses second-person plural masculine pronouns and verbs, but in 57:6–13c, Isaiah uses second-person singular feminine pronouns and verbs. What does this tell us about the metaphor he uses and its meaning?
- (b) What type of idolatry is Mother Israel accused of committing in 57:6, and what is Yahweh’s response?

- (c) Is Mother Israel accused of sexual immorality or idolatry in 57:7–8? How do you know from the text?
- (d) What should Israel’s doorposts and memorials have contained in place of this idolatry (see Deut 6:6–9)?

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Is. 56:9–57:13.** Of what sin is Israel accused in 57:9?
- (b) What happened to them on this journey (57:10a), what should they have done (57:10b), what did they do (57:10c, d), and why was this foolish (see 40:28–31)?
- (c) What are the correct answers to the questions Yahweh asks of his people in 57:11?
- (d) How will Yahweh vindicate himself and judge his people (57:12), how will they respond (57:13a), and what will be Yahweh’s response (57:13b–d)?

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Is. 56:9–57:13.** By way of application for this week, write at least three applications of the truths found in each of the following verses: one for yourself, one for our church, and one for our nation. (1) 56:9 (judgment for neglect of God’s law); (2) 56:10–12 (identification of false leaders); (3) 57:1–2 (truth about the death of the righteous).
- (b) (4) 57:3a, b (mocking God); (5) 57:5 (idolatry of slaughtering innocent babies); (6) 57:6–9 (idolatry, sexual immorality, hidden sins, neglecting God’s word);
- (c) (7) 57:10 (seeking rest in all the wrong places); (8) 57:11a–d (fearing men rather than God); and (9) 57:12 the reality of judgment.

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The Righteous and the Wicked in a Fallen World (Part I)