



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V21 N47 December 1, 2019

ALL IS WELL

“Falling to Peaces”

Isaiah 59:1-21

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Humanity

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

John 3:16



What does humanity need for Christmas?

At Christmas we celebrate the giving of God’s gift to humanity – his incarnate Son, Jesus Christ. Giving loved ones something they truly need for Christmas is what motivates us to either go out or go online to do our holiday shopping. It’s also what motivated God on that very first Christmas. He gave us his Son, so that we might have what we desperately need, namely, forgiveness, righteousness, and life in his kingdom and in a new earth, all of which come through faith in him.

We all know the way the world is isn’t the way it should be; neither is it the way we would like it to be. About this year’s Advent series, *All is Well*, Pastor David Daniels writes: “Our world has been continually turned upside down by political, racial, ethnic and moral conflict. More serious than our opposition toward one another is our opposition toward God. It was into this war-torn creation that God sent Jesus, the Prince of Peace. This Christmas at Central Bible Church, we remember how Jesus brings inward and outward peace so that his people, no matter what darkness or difficulty they face, can say with confidence, ‘All is Well.’”

Our high-tech world is little different from the ancient world of Isaiah’s day – at least as far as God’s expectations and humanity’s failure to meet them is concerned. The prophet laments that even in the covenant community of Israel truth is nowhere to be found, and there is no justice. And appallingly, there is no one able to step up and actually do something about it (59:14-15). What God expected of his people is what he expects of all people, namely, obedience to two great commandments. Jesus

identified them this way: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments” (Mt 24:37-40).

But when the LORD looked at Israel, all he saw according to Isaiah was religious observance and injustice. So God asked his people, “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? 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 them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?” (58:6-7). Then he told them based on the Mosaic Covenant, which promised blessings for obedience and cursings for disobedience (Dt 28), “If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday” (vv. 9b-10).

Unfortunately, this they were unable to do; they were unable to meet God’s righteous demands. No one, neither Jew nor Gentile, neither then nor now, can. Nobody’s perfect. People need the LORD to send a Redeemer – someone to provide salvation for humanity, Jew and Gentile alike, and to secure fulfillment of his promises to Abraham, David, and Jeremiah regarding his future kingdom.

Read Isaiah 59:1-21
Verses 15b-21

15b *The LORD looked and was displeased
 that there was no justice.*

16 *He saw that there was no one,
 he was appalled that there was no one to intervene;
 so his own arm achieved salvation for him,
 and his own righteousness sustained him.*

17 *He put on righteousness as his breastplate,
 and the helmet of salvation on his head;
 he put on the garments of vengeance
 and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak.*

18 *According to what they have done,
 so will he repay
 wrath to his enemies
 and retribution to his foes;
 he will repay the islands their due.*

19 *From the west, people will fear the
 name of the LORD,
 and from the rising of the sun, they will
 revere his glory.*

*For he will come like a pent-up flood
 that the breath of the LORD drives along.*

20 *"The Redeemer will come to Zion,
 to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,"
 declares the LORD.*

21 *"As for me, this is my covenant with them," says
 the LORD. "My Spirit, who is on you, will not depart from
 you, and my words that I have put in your mouth will
 always be on your lips, on the lips of your children and on
 the lips of their descendants – from this time on and forev-
 er," says the LORD*

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle "justice" in v. 15b.
- Underline "no one" (2x) in v. 16.
- Box "so" indicating *result* in v. 16.
- Underline articles of clothing namely, "breastplate," "helmet," "garments," and "cloak" in v. 17.
- Circle "islands" in v. 18.
- Box "like" indicating *comparison* in v. 19.
- Circle "covenant" in v. 21.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What is one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. In Isaiah 59:1-15, the prophet repeatedly laments there is “no justice” in Israel’s society. What does “no justice” in society look like?
 2. How does *contemporary* society compare with Israel’s *ancient* society?
 3. According to 59:16a, the situation seems hopeless. How so?
 4. Describe the LORD’s *response* to his people’s hopeless situation.
 5. Who would you say are the *objects* of the LORD’s “wrath” and “retribution” in verse 18?
 6. The execution of judgment will have *positive* consequences according to verse 19. Describe them.
 7. Explain the *comparison*, “like a pent-up flood” in verse 19.
 8. Has the promised Redeemer come to Zion? Explain.
 9. Identify the “covenant” referred to in verse 21 and where to find it.
 10. **Discussion:** For what *purpose* does the Lord give his people his Spirit and his words? Talk about verse 21.
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Commentary On The Text

Isaiah 59 cannot be rightly understood apart from its context. *Historically*, the prophet ministered during the reigns of these kings (including coregencies): Uzziah (790-39 B.C.), Jotham (750-32), Ahaz (735-15), and Hezekiah (715-686), and likely into the sole reign of Manasseh (697-42). According to one commentator, “These years in Israel’s history were a time of great struggle both politically and spiritually. The Northern Kingdom of Israel was deteriorating politically, spiritually, and militarily and finally fell to the Assyrian Empire in 722 B.C. . . . Isaiah was aware (from Deut. 28:49-50, 64-67) that Judah was destined for exile as had recently befallen the Northern Kingdom. His book, then, was direct to two groups of people: (a) those of his generation who would who strayed from the covenantal obligation given them in the Mosaic Law, and (b) those of a future generation who would be in exile. Isaiah was calling the first group back to holiness and obedience, and he was comforting the second group with the assurance that God would restore the nation to their land and would establish His kingdom of peace and prosperity” (John A. Martin, “Isaiah,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 1029, 1031). *Contextually*, the same author writes: “In this final nine-chapter section of the book, Isaiah looked to the present and the future. In his day most of the people were not righteous (chap. 58). Because of their depravity the restoration of the nation must be God’s initiative (chap. 59). Eventually peace and prosperity will come to Israel and the whole world (chap. 60). Isaiah wrote of the coming of the Messiah and of the Father (61:1-63:6) and of the nation’s prayer and the Lord’s response (63:7-65:25). In conclusion the prophet wrote again that God will fulfill His promises to Israel as well as the entire world (chap. 66)” (Martin, 1113).

Chapter 59 opens with Isaiah’s continuing indictment of his people. It is the worst of times in Israel. “Your iniquities have separated you from your God,” he tells them. “Your sins have hidden his face from you” (v. 2). “No one calls for justice; no one pleads a case with integrity,” he complains (v. 4). In fact, he laments the lack of justice repeatedly in the chapter (vv. 4, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15). People are simply not doing what is right in their everyday social interactions. There is a thoroughly evil society in which the truth is nowhere to be found. That displeased the LORD. To make matters worse, there is “no one to intervene” (v. 16). In other words, everyone is part of the problem; there is no one on hand to remedy it. So

what is to be done? Isaiah 59:15b-21, which concludes not only 59:1-15a but also the extended passage beginning in 56:1, provides the answer.

Seeing no one to intervene to save his people from their desperate circumstances, the LORD himself decides to intervene (vv. 17-19), for “the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear” (v. 1). When used with respect to Israel, “save” has both *corporate* and *individual* connotations. Corporately it refers to the rescue of the nation Israel, God’s covenant people, including the keeping of his promises for their future, which were made to Abraham (Ge 12:1-3, 7; 15:4-5, 9-19), David (2Sa 7:1-17; Ps 89:3-4, 28-37), and Jeremiah (Jer 31:31-37). Individually it refers to the personal salvation of members of that community who repent, as well as to all Gentiles who believe (Ge 12:3; cf., Gal 3:8).

Like a warrior, Isaiah says, the LORD will forth to fight for his people. According to verses 17-19, “God will take vengeance on His enemies and on those forces that opposed His people. He will pay them back according to their dealings. While the context refers to deliverance from sin in a general sense, the reference to the coastlands [islands NIV] suggests that the Lord will also defend and deliver Israel from Gentile opponents (at His second coming). Ultimately, of course, the Lord will subdue every enemy of His” and in the end, “God’s deliverance of His people will result in the whole world fearing Him for this display of His glory. His coming deliverance will be swift and forceful (cf. Rev. 6:15-17; 16:17-21). Water rushing down a wadi may be in view” (Constable, 410).

In the closing verses of chapter 59, Isaiah prophesies that “the Redeemer will come to Zion” and that the Lord will make a new covenant with his people, which entails giving them the Holy Spirit and writing his law on their hearts (Jer 31:31-33). As elsewhere in the Old Testament, the prophet appears to conflate the two advents of Messiah, which are distinguished in the New Testament. Christ has come at his first advent, and the promised Holy Spirit has been poured out on a believing remnant of Jews (Ac 2:1-18) and later on Gentiles added to their number (Ac 10:44-48). Christ will come again, this time in judgment at his second advent, to fulfill his promise to the entire nation, “the people of Israel and the people of Judah” (Jer 31:31), when “all Israel will be saved” (Ro 11:25-27) in connection with Christ’s coming kingdom.

Word Studies/Notes

v. 15b *no justice* Cf., “Maintain justice and do what is right” (56:1). “Justice . . . and righteousness are respectively moral action arising out of moral principle (e.g. as in 1:21; 56:1). Society, however, repels the one (*driven back*) and marginalizes the other (*distance*). This applies, first (14cd), to public life (*in the streets*), where truth—integrity, reliability, probity—has collapsed (*stumbled*, ‘tripped over’) and *honesty* (‘uprightness’) finds no entrance. Secondly, the same is true (15ab) of individual life (*whoever*). Truth (as in 14c) is *nowhere to be found*—the verb *ādar* means ‘to be missing’: personal probity is the missing ingredient—and forces at work in society set out to ruin (*prey*) anyone who *shuns evil*. Things have gone beyond merely acting against the person who seeks to stand up for what is right (Am. 5:10). Even to avoid wrong on a personal level makes one a marked man. This is a very adequate summary indeed of society as seen in 56:12-59:9” (J. Alec Motyer, *Isaiah*, TOTC, 368).

v. 16 *no one* “Because of her depraved condition (vv. 2-15a), no one but **the LORD** could save the nation. Being **displeased** with her injustice (cf. vv. 4, 9, 11, 14), He realized **there was no one to intercede** on her behalf. Isaiah was not saying that the Lord did not want to get involved, but that Israel was totally incapable of helping herself. Only God could help her. This is true of salvation in any era. No one can save himself. Only God can forgive sin and change a person’s heart” (John A. Martin, “Isaiah,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 1114).

v. 17 *breastplate . . .* Once he determined to intervene on behalf of a sinful people, the LORD dresses for the task. “Righteousness (17) is the moral integrity of all the Lord will do, *salvation* is the deliverance of his people, *vengeance* is the just requital of his foes, and *zeal* the determination which will bring the work to completion. Worldwide (18) this work will be done with exact justice (*what they have done . . . their due*)” (Motyer, 369).

v. 18 *islands* “God would take vengeance on His enemies and on those forces that opposed His people. He would pay them back according to their dealings. While the context refers to deliverance from sin in a general sense, the reference to the coastlands [*islands*] suggests that the Lord will also defend and deliver Israel from Gentile opponents (at His second coming). Ultimately, of course,

the Lord will subdue every enemy of His” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Isaiah,” 2019 ed., 410, plano-biblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf).

v. 19 *like* “The coming of the Lord will be irresistible, like a ‘rushing torrent’ (30:28) that overwhelms the enemy” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Isa 59:19).

v. 20 *covenant* “In closing, God promised with a covenant promise that He would not withdraw His Spirit or His Word from His people on whom He would place them (cf. Jer. 31:31-44). This is a reference to the New Covenant. The Spirit would abide on His people forever, and His Word would remain in their mouths so they could be the witnesses to Him that He created them to be. Since this has not yet happened, it appears that it will happen at the Lord Jesus’ second advent (v. 18)” (Constable, 410-11).

Other Texts to Consider

Romans 11:25-27

“I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in, and in this way all Israel will be saved. As it is written:

“The deliverer will come from Zion;
he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.
And this is my covenant with them
when I take away their sins.”

4

APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Jesus Christ, The Redeemer (who provided the benefits of the new covenant to believing Jews and Gentiles alike at his first advent) will fulfill the Lord's new covenant promise made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah (when all Israel is saved at his second advent).

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The "Living Questions" are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

Thanksgiving is here, and the Christmas countdown has begun. So many times we are ruled by the calendar as we celebrate the holiday season. There are classroom parties, choir or orchestra recitals, neighborhood get togethers, office celebrations and the list goes on... This year before it all begins, can I encourage you to ask your kids what brings them peace during the holiday season? You'll probably discover peace means curling up with a hot cup of cocoa or snuggling with a warm blanket for a family movie night. Perhaps peace is listening to Christmas music or reading a book. Listen and be purposeful to carve out time to plan these moments with your kids. Not only should you carve out time but prayerfully protect it. While you're spending time as a family, talk about the peace that only God brings: the peace of knowing what it means that Jesus is our Savior or the peace that comes from knowing God is in control and loves you deeply, so much so that He sent His Son for you. We're told all our kids want is the new, latest and greatest toy, but I beg to differ. I think all our kids want is a little time, a little cocoa, a little Christmas movie and lots of snuggles. Even that big, giant, stinky preteen of yours! Parents, I am praying for you and your family to fully realize the peace that comes from abiding in Christ this season.

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Isaiah 59:1-2, 20

1. What are iniquities?
2. Why do they separate us from God?
3. Who is the Redeemer (v 20)?

What Do You Think?

Read Luke 1:26-38. How is Jesus described in these verses? How does knowing "nothing is impossible with God" (Lk 1:37) make a difference in your life?

What Do You Do?

Read Philippians 4:4-7. How is peace from the Bible different from peace the world offers us? Draw a picture of chaos on one side of paper and peace on the opposite side. Bring it into the KidPix store for an extra token.

CORE COMPETENCY: Peace

I live without worry because things are good between God, myself and others.

MEMORY VERSE: Luke 2:14

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests.

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- I completed my Bible Study
- I memorized this week's verse
- I brought my Bible to church
- I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME _____

GRADE _____

PARENT SIGNATURE _____

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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