

## HEAP IT UP! HEAP IT UP!

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**Isaiah 57:14-21**

### **Healing for the Backslider**

And one shall say, "Heap it up! Heap it up! Prepare the way, take the stumbling block out of the way of My people." For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. For I will not contend forever, nor will I always be angry; For the spirit would fail before Me, and the souls which I have made. For the iniquity of his covetousness I was angry and struck him; I hid and was angry, and he went on backsliding in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will also lead him, and restore comforts to him and to his mourners. "I create the fruit of the lips: Peace, peace to him who is far off and to him who is near," says the Lord, "and I will heal him." But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, Whose waters cast up mire and dirt. "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

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No matter where you're at in your Christian walk, no matter where you're at in you're living as a human being on this earth there is something in Isaiah for everyone. From the most religious, faithful, and devout Christian to the most depraved, godless, and wretched of sinners, there is a Word for us in the words that Isaiah wrote down in what we now call the book of Isaiah. What we find in our passage of Scripture today is the secret to receiving the blessings of God, revival of the spirit, revival of the hurting or broken heart, healing, and comfort, and peace. Counter to the blessings of God is for the wicked, "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked." Praise God, the mystery has been revealed to us in how to find the hope that we are looking for, or at least we should be, and how we CAN overcome all things of this world-to HAVE a hope, to find the joy that comes from the Lord, and to have the peace of God that surpasses all understanding, that we can and want to shout, as Job did in the midst of his suffering, "My Redeemer Lives!"

Isaiah was a prophet of the Lord. He was primarily a prophet to the nation of Judah although God had him speak to the nation of Israel and the other surrounding nations, warning them of God's coming judgment. Isaiah was what is called a preexilic prophet, meaning his tenure was during the time prior to when Judah was taken into captivity by the Chaldeans, who were also referred to as Babylonians, which was a reference to their captial city of Babylon. Isaiah warned

God's people of their failures and what it would mean if they didn't repent. God wasn't bluffing then, and He isn't now, when He warns His people. Within the next generation, after Isaiah, God's people found out that God meant what He said through His prophets. Jerusalem was destroyed, Solomon's temple was destroyed, and the people of Judah went through incredible suffering in their captivity, being taken from their homes and led as slaves to a foreign land, not to mention other horrible atrocities that they suffered at the hands of the Babylonians.

Most preexilic prophets preached the same message. Perhaps it could be said that they were the first preachers to preach the 3-point message. **1.** You have sinned against God and need to repent. Repent meaning "have a change of mind", turn from your former ways and look to God for restoration and forgiveness. **2.** If they would not repent then judgment is coming. That is God's way of saying, "you are My people and I will not stand for you acting like all of the other foolish nations. I have chosen YOU to be my people." Then **3.** There is still hope beyond God's judgment. There will be a future restoration to His people, there will be a new heaven and a new earth. After all, His kingdom IS an everlasting kingdom." He will reign for all of eternity and so will all of His chosen people. But just as we have heard it quoted, perhaps many times, Jesus said, "**many are called but few are chosen.**" (**Matthew 22:14**) Hopefully all of you will say with me today, "yes Heavenly Father, I want to be your people, I want to be a child of God. Lord I want to be in that number when the saints go marching in!"

"And one shall say, "Heap it up! Heap it up! Prepare the way, take the stumbling block out of the way of My people."" Yes Lord, Heap it up! Let your Spirit fall upon your people. Let Your Spirit bring forth healings, salvations, and deliverances, in the mighty and glorious name of Jesus! A New Testament similarity is in looking to what the prophet Joel wrote that the Apostle Peter quoted as it is recorded in the book of **Acts 2:17-21**, "'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord Shall be saved.'" Yes, Holy Spirit of God, fall fresh on us! The Apostle Paul noted in 2 Corinthians 3:17, "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." Jesus said, "**Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son**

belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:34-36)

"For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Contrite means to have a sincere remorse, in other words a repentant heart. When the Holy Spirit is speaking to us, are we convicted of our sin? Do we have it in our hearts to get right with God or do we brush it off and say, "meh!" Blessings awaits the former and judgment awaits the latter. The nation of Israel and then later the nation of Judah found out what happens when you say "meh" to God when He is calling for repentance. Sin ultimately and eventually leads to death and eternal judgment but turning to God in repentance leads to life and peace which eventually leads to eternal life and eternal peace.

**"I dwell in the high and holy place, with him** who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Woe is man, woe is us! We keep needing to be reminded of Who God is and what we are not. He reminds His people that He is the High and Lofty One, He inhabits eternity! He told the people of Judah, the Israelites, His people, that only through Him are we anything. That's just the way it is. We are born into sin, with a sinful nature, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) Yes, the Apostle Paul reminded the Romans that, after the death and resurrection of Christ, but God's prophets were telling God's people that hundreds and hundreds of years before Christ. But praise be to God, the mystery of our salvation has been revealed to us. "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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." (John 3:16-17) Yes, Jesus died on the cross for our sins, He took our sins upon Himself, so that we can be forgiven of sins and be reconciled to God so that we have have fellowship with the Father, and He is God Almighty, He is the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy! Praise His Mighty Name! I just can't do it, you may say. I can't be a good person, I can't be righteous, I can't be holy as He is holy. That's right, but He can! Of God "you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption— that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:30-31) Believing in the promises of God, turning to God, and repenting of our sins-**WE CAN AND WILL OVERCOME IN CHRIST JESUS!**

In the following chapter of Isaiah, in chapter 58, which is a chapter that one can use to do a true fast that honors God, God speaks to His people of their phoniness in the practicing of religion. Listen to

what God says to them, "Tell My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek Me daily, and delight to know My ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and did not forsake the ordinance of their God. They ask of Me the ordinances of justice; They take delight in approaching God. 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and You have not seen? Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?'" (**Isaiah 58:1-3**) God goes on to say that acting pathetic and as though one is suffering (in other words, letting everyone know they were fasting) and then doing whatever they felt like doing was not honoring God, and therefore God was not honoring them. Throughout the Old Testament, and a large part of the prophets of the Old Testament's messages, meaning what was most important to God was two things. Righteousness and justice. An interchangeable word for justice can be mercy. Showing justice for, or maybe better said, showing mercy to others who are in need. Living righteously according to God's commandments and then as Jesus summed it up, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" (**Matthew 22:37-39**) Why? That is who God is. He is Righteous and Holy and He is Justice (or Mercy) and He is perfect in all His ways, and as His children, we are to emulate our Heavenly Father. We after all are being made into the very image of Christ. When we follow God, when we follow Jesus, and start obeying Him, He begins to work in us His righteousness, His Sanctification (meaning setting us apart, from the ways of the world, in His holiness). That is where we begin to recognize as Jesus said, "to whom the Son sets free is free indeed!"

"For I will not contend forever, nor will I always be angry; For the spirit would fail before Me, and the souls which I have made. For the iniquity of his covetousness I was angry and struck him; I hid and was angry, and he went on backsliding in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will also lead him, and restore comforts to him and to his mourners." In **Isaiah 35** God speaks of the Highway of Holiness that God's people will take on their way to Zion. That is God's kingdom that will be established on this earth where Jesus will reign as King. Zion is the New Jerusalem that will be brought down when God establishes a new heaven and a new earth. We are being called onto that Highway of Holiness. Yes, even now. Similarly, Jesus said, "Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." (**Matthew 7:12-14**) Jesus also said in **Luke 6:38**, "Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

That is enacting the justice of God. The golden rule as we call it. Do unto others as you would want them to do to you.

But wait, we are told that "there is none righteous, no not one." (**Romans 3:10**) That is very true. All of our righteousness is as filthy rags as it is written in **Isaiah 64:6**. Yet in Christ we become a new creation. (**2 Corinthians 5:17**) Likewise Jesus told the Jewish ruler Nicodemus that one must be born again. (**John 3:3**) Here is where it all becomes to come together to make sense for us, hopefully. We want to have victory in our lives? We want the good things of God, the blessings from God. God said to his people in Isaiah 58, "Yet they seek Me daily, and delight to know My ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and did not forsake the ordinance of their God. They ask of Me the ordinances of justice; They take delight in approaching God." Jesus said, "These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me." They were seemingly doing all the right religious things. Going to church, praising God during worship, shouting Hallelujah and Praise the Lord, giving the preacher an amen every so often, and even praying for God's blessings. "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Likewise Peter said in **Acts 5:32**, "And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him." Jesus said as much in **John 14:23**, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." He will work "in you both to will and to do according for His good pleasure. (**Philippians 2:13**) "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up." (**James 4:10**)

Yes "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." God has not changed. He still seeks those who will humble themselves, let God be The God Almighty that He is, that He may work in His people His Righteousness, His Wisdom, and His Redemption. "I create the fruit of the lips: Peace, peace to him who is far off and to him who is near," says the Lord, "and I will heal him." But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. "There is no peace," says my God, for the wicked." Let us humble ourselves before God, live in His Righteousness and His Justice (which can be described also as His mercies-for other people), that we can come boldly before Him on His throne and say, "Heap it up! Heap it up!"