

Isaiah 59

Is. 59:1 Behold, the Lord's hand is not so short That it cannot save; Neither is His ear so dull That it cannot hear.

In Isaiah 59:1-8, we find what sin has brought about within Israel. This is quite a contrast to the blessings the nation could be receiving had she obeyed (the notes associated with Isaiah 58:8-14 address this same issue). Instead of knowing Jehovah's heart through loving and enjoying Him, their sin results in unjust accusations against the God who is always just. Certainly *the Lord's hand is not so short That it cannot save*, for He has proven many times over that He has no equal. Only through confessing their sin, and becoming intimate with the Creator, will they comprehend that God's power is anything but inadequate.

Their sin also deceives them into believing that He has lost His ability to hear—*Neither is His ear so dull That it cannot hear*. No wonder so many Jews in Israel today are agnostic. Their view of Jehovah is so distorted that they no longer view Him as adequate to fulfill His original promises to the nation.

Is. 59:2 But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear.

Israel's sin not only separates her from Jehovah, but also causes Him to hide *His face* from the nation. In fact, *He does not hear* when their unrepentant hearts cry for help. This will change at the end of the Tribulation, for every Jew on the earth will repent and call Christ back, resulting in His well-timed return to save them. They will then know that it was their unrepentant hearts, not a loss of hearing on God's part, that had caused Him to disregard their earlier requests.

Is. 59:3 For your hands are defiled with blood, And your fingers with iniquity; Your lips have spoken falsehood, Your tongue mutters wickedness.

Their sin causes their *hands* to be *defiled with blood*, their *fingers with iniquity*. They lie, and out of their mouth flows *wickedness*.

Is. 59:4 No one sues righteously and no one pleads honestly. They trust in confusion, and speak lies; They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.

They are dishonest, confused, and *speak lies*. They also plan evil.

Is. 59:5 They hatch adders' eggs and weave the spider's web; He who eats of their eggs dies, And from that which is crushed a snake breaks forth.

Their deeds are not only evil, but also worthless, resulting in death.

Is. 59:6 Their webs will not become clothing, Nor will they cover themselves with their works; Their works are works of iniquity, And an act of violence is in their hands.

Their worthless *works*, *works of iniquity*, are equivalent to attempting to make *clothing* out of spider *webs*. How absurd!

Is. 59:7 Their feet run to evil, And they hasten to shed innocent blood; Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; Devastation and destruction are in their highways.

Paul quotes this verse in Romans 3:15-17 to describe the depravity of the unredeemed, be they Jew or Gentile. For sure they love *evil*, *shed innocent blood*, consistently entertain *thoughts of iniquity*, and experience uninterrupted companionship with *Devastation and destruction*. Note: The unredeemed respond as such so long as they refuse to submit to Christ. Once they are convicted of sin, however, and choose to accept Christ as Savior, they are unleashed from their corrupt state and ushered into the family of God.

Is. 59:8 They do not know the way of peace, And there is no justice in their tracks; They have made their paths crooked; Whoever treads on them does not know peace.

The unredeemed Jews *do not know the way of peace*. Neither does *justice* follow them due to their twisted *paths*. No one who *treads on such paths* will ever *know peace*. No wonder the writer of Hebrews encourages his readers to *make straight paths for their feet* (Hebrews 12:13). (Read Psalm 1:1; 16:11; 27:11; 119:35; 139:3; Proverbs 1:15; 4:14, 18, 26; 5:6; 10:17; 15:19, 24; Isaiah 30:11; Romans 3:17 for more input relating to the subject.)

Is. 59:9 ¶ Therefore, justice is far from us, And righteousness does not overtake us; We hope for light, but behold, darkness; For brightness, but we walk in gloom.

We found that Isaiah 58:1-59:8 not only describes Israel's sin, but also explains its devastating effect on the nation. In Isaiah 59:9-15, we find a prayer of repentance expressed by the nation as she realizes the price of her disobedience. Consequently, the first word of Isaiah 59:9 is "*Therefore.*" We will discover that this prayer is prayed at the end of the Tribulation when every Jew on the earth is facing extinction at the hands of the Antichrist.

Note the pronouns *us*, *we*, and *our* in Isaiah 59:9-15. In Isaiah 58:1-59:8, the pronouns *they*, *their*, *you*, and *your*, are used as Israel's sin is addressed in much detail. This means that in verses 9-15, the nation's prayer of repentance, they will finally admit that their legalistic system of worship has failed. Their superficial temple rituals, their fasting to be seen of men, as well as their abuse of the sabbath, will finally be recognized as useless.

In Isaiah 59:9, the Jews admit that their sin has caused *justice* and *righteousness* to flee from the nation. Instead of walking in *light* and *brightness* (in the presence of God's glory, a subject addressed in much detail in Isaiah 60:1), they walk in *darkness* and *gloom*. In other words, spiritual blindness has suppressed their ability to find the peace and fulfillment that inhabits the redeemed. Is it not amazing the degree of *gloom* that hovers over the unredeemed of mankind?

Is. 59:10 We grope along the wall like blind men, We grope like those who have no eyes; We stumble at midday as in the twilight, Among those who are vigorous we are like dead men.

Sin has blinded the nation spiritually, causing her to *stumble* due to a loss of vigor.

Is. 59:11 All of us growl like bears, And moan sadly like doves; We hope for justice, but there is none, For salvation, but it is far from us.

The nation lives in a state of misery because *justice* and *salvation* are unattainable to those who bask in sin.

Is. 59:12 For our transgressions are multiplied before Thee, And our sins testify against us; For our transgressions are with us, And we know our iniquities:

Israel, as a nation, finally confesses her sin. She admits that all of her religious activity has been for naught, for it was performed to exalt self rather than to glorify God. This confession will occur at the end of the Tribulation.

Is. 59:13 Transgressing and denying the Lord, And turning away from our God, Speaking oppression and revolt, Conceiving in and uttering from the heart lying words.

Their religious activity has caused them to deny and turn away from...*the Lord*. That which comes forth from their mouths is of no value.

Is. 59:14 And justice is turned back, And righteousness stands far away; For truth has stumbled in the street, And uprightness cannot enter.

Their rejection of the *truth* causes *justice* and *righteousness* to take flight.

Is. 59:15 Yes, truth is lacking; And he who turns aside from evil makes himself a prey. ¶ Now the Lord saw, And it was displeasing in His sight that there was no justice.

As a result of a deficiency of *truth* within Israel, the Jew *who turns aside from evil makes himself a prey*. In other words, the believing remnant of Jews at the end of the Tribulation will be severely persecuted by the unredeemed Jews and Gentiles. It will greatly displease the Lord when He observes such injustice.

Is. 59:16 And He saw that there was no man, And was astonished that there was no one to intercede; Then His own arm brought salvation to Him; And His righteousness upheld Him.

When God sees that the Jewish remnant at the end of the Tribulation is suffering unjustly, and that *no man* is available to provide deliverance, *His own arm* will be the liberating force that sets them free. “*His own arm*” is Jesus Christ, *the arm of the Lord* of Isaiah 53:1, the Servant of Jehovah, who delivers the remnant from the fast approaching armies of the Antichrist. (For more input relating to this *arm*, you can read the comments associated with Isaiah 51:5, 9, 53:1 and 13). In Isaiah 34:1-7 and Isaiah 63:1-6, we find similar accounts linked to Christ’s Second Coming at this most critical time in Israel’s history.

Is. 59:17 And He put on righteousness like a breastplate, And a helmet of salvation on His head; And He put on garments of vengeance for clothing, And wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle.

In this verse we discover how the *arm* of Isaiah 59:16 will prepare Himself for His conflict with the Antichrist. He will put on *a breastplate* of *righteousness* as well as *a helmet of salvation on His head*. Based on what is recorded in Ephesians 6:14b and 17a, Paul must have had Isaiah’s words in mind as he wrote his epistle to the Ephesians. In fact, Ephesians 6:13-17 confirms that the *armor* of the believer is the truth of God’s word. There is no doubt that Jesus relied on the

power of God's word when tempted by the devil during His First Coming (read Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13). Therefore, it is not coincidental that the *arm* (Isaiah 59:16), who is Jesus Christ, will *slay* the Antichrist and his armies with the *sword* (the truth) coming forth from *His mouth* (Revelation 19:15; 2Thessalonians 2:8) at His Second Coming. No wonder Isaiah states that *He put on garments of vengeance for clothing, And wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle* (Isaiah 59:17). One thing is certain: He will attack with much *vengeance* and *zeal* as He takes on the Antichrist and his forces.

So what should the believer take away from this verse? The need to comprehend, through a thorough understanding of the truth, the power that is available to the redeemed through Jesus Christ!

Is. 59:18 According to their deeds, so He will repay, Wrath to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies; To the coastlands He will make recompense.

Jesus will *repay* the wicked for *their deeds* at His Second Coming. He will also display *Wrath to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies*, which lines up well with the last two phrases of Isaiah 59:17. They will die, be sent to hell, and later judged at the *great white throne* and cast *into the lake of fire* (Revelation 20:11-15).

Is. 59:19 So they will fear the name of the Lord from the west And His glory from the rising of the sun, For He will come like a rushing stream, Which the wind of the Lord drives.

This verse is rendered as follows in King James Version:

So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.

Before attempting to interpret the last three verses of this chapter, we must first know how they fit into the chronology of events relating to the national regeneration of Israel and Christ's Second Coming.

It is the adverse conditions of the Tribulation that will bring Israel to repentance. After all, the Antichrist's goal during the second half of the Tribulation will be to exterminate all the Jews. As he prepares to attack the Jews at Bozrah (located in modern day southern Jordan), every Jew on the earth will repent of his or her sin and accept Jesus as Messiah; and *all Israel will be saved* (Romans 11:26). They will call Christ back in the process (Hosea 5:15), after which He will return at His Second Coming (Isaiah 34:1-7; 63:1-6) and defeat the Antichrist and His armies (Revelation 19:15; 2Thessalonians 2:8). With this backdrop we are more adequately equipped to interpret Isaiah 59:19-21.

The phrase, "*So shall they fear*" (Isaiah 59:19—KJV), probably points to the enemies of the Lord addressed in Isaiah 59:18. It is hard to imagine the *fear* that will grip them when Christ's *glory* appears at the Second Coming. According to Matthew 24:29-30, His *glory* will emerge when *darkness*, a *darkness* that can be felt, has overtaken *the heavens* and the earth. This *darkness* is also addressed in Isaiah 60:2.

The phrase, "*the enemy*" (KJV), in the second half of Isaiah 59:19, points to the Antichrist and his armies. When the word "*flood*" is used symbolically in Scripture it always points to a

military assault, as in Daniel 9:26 and Nahum 1:8. Therefore, the military assault (invasion)

addressed in Isaiah 59:19 is that of the Antichrist as he seeks to destroy the believing remnant of Jews at the end of the Tribulation. The *standard* raised up *against him* will be the newly spiritually regenerated Jewish nation. In other words, the Holy Spirit's work in the hearts of every Jew alive at the end of the Tribulation will serve as a *standard* (or sign) to confirm that the Antichrist's efforts will be futile. How can the Antichrist possibly defeat the God who has brought the Jews through more adversity than any nation in the history of mankind—most of the adversity having been generated by the father of the Antichrist, Satan himself? Consequently, if Satan failed to exterminate the Jews through his multitude of efforts in the past, how can the Antichrist, Satan's son, hope to exterminate the Jews at the end of the Tribulation? This sign, therefore, the spiritually regenerated Jewish nation, will cause the Antichrist to tremble in his boots. Truly, what a mighty God we serve!

Is. 59:20 "And a Redeemer will come to Zion, And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob," declares the Lord.

After Jesus, the *Redeemer*, defeats the Antichrist and his armies at His Second Coming, He *will come to Zion*, *Zion* pointing to Jerusalem. He will do so for the purpose of reigning from there throughout the Millennium (also read Isaiah 24:23 and Zechariah 14:16-17).

The last half of Isaiah 59:20, *And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob*, can be viewed as follows. Jesus' Second Coming will occur shortly after all the Jews on the earth have repented of their sin, accepted Him as Messiah at the end of the Tribulation, and called Him back (fulfilling Romans 11:26). Therefore, it is this believing remnant alive at the end of the Tribulation, the *one-third* of the nation that remains (*two-thirds* of the Jews will die during the Tribulation according to Zechariah 13:8-9), that is described as *those who turn from transgression in Jacob*.

Is. 59:21 "And as for Me, this is My covenant with them," says the Lord: "My Spirit which is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring's offspring," says the Lord, "from now and forever."

When all the Jews alive at the end of the Tribulation repent of their sin, they will be spiritually regenerated as a nation and partake of God's *covenant*. (This spiritual regeneration of the nation is also addressed in Joel 2:28 and Zechariah 12:10.) The *covenant* mentioned here is the *new covenant* of Jeremiah 31:31-34. It is also the *covenant* referred to by Jesus in Luke 22:20. Both Isaiah 59:21 and Jeremiah 31:31-34 confirm that once God's *Spirit* regenerates the nation at the end of the Tribulation, all Jewish offspring from that point will become believers. This means that it will be offspring from among the Gentiles who rebel at the end of the Millennium (Revelation 20:7-10). No Jew will participate in this revolt. (Remember that there will be both Jews and Gentiles living in their physical bodies throughout the Millennium who will bear children).