Isaiah 57

“War & Peace!”

1. Intro:
   1.1. Outline: At War with God (1-13); At Peace with God (14-21).

   1.2. Lord Byron abandoned himself to the pursuit of pleasure; yet at the age of 35 he wrote, “My days are in the yellow leaf, The flowers and fruits of love are gone; The worm, the canker, and the grief Are mine alone.” Compare those lines with the words of Adam Clarke, a Christian saint and biblical expositor. At 84, he said, "I have passed through the springtime of my life. I have withstood the heat of its summer. I have culled the fruits of fall. I am even now enduring the rigors of its winter, but at no great distance I see the approach of a new, eternal springtime. Hallelujah!”

   1.2.1. Q: Are you at War with God or at Peace with Him?

   1.2.2. Out of the mouth of babes! – (SS teacher) Nanette Cook relayed a story in her 3rd grade class to me. Regarding a students 2 yr old sister Maile. At the Harvest festival her ballon got away & her mother said “oops there it goes to heaven” Maile said, "I get it later"

2. WAR & PEACE! (1-17)
   2.1. AT WAR WITH GOD! (1-13)
   2.2. The Good Die Young! (1,2)

   2.2.1. Because of the failure of these blind watchman & drunken leaders, righteous men perish, while none take it at heart.

   2.2.1.1. The people have now joined in & yielded to the evil influences.

   2.2.2. Q: What do we learn about dieing here?

   2.2.3. [1] Good people do die! (the righteous, the saints)

   2.2.3.1. See 1 reason why Jn.17:24

   2.2.4. [2] They are taken away from the evil of this world!

   2.2.4.1. They are spared future evil!

   2.2.5. [3] So they may enter ultimate Peace & Rest!

   2.2.6. Popular Proverb: “only the good die young.”

   2.2.6.1. We sang along w/the catchy Billy Joel song back in 1977 – His (appalling) words sum up the 1st ½ of our chapter. {Read}

   2.3. Their Wickedness! (3,4)

   2.3.1. They are offspring of adulterers & prostitutes, children of sinners & liars.

   2.3.2. Anytime there is a rejection of God & His ways the floodgates of sin fling wide open!
2.4. **Their Worship! (5-11)**

2.4.1. (5) The climax will come in the terrible days of King Manasseh who made his son “pass through the fire” (2 Kings 21:6) for the god Molech.

2.4.1.1. That event was prophesied back here by Isaiah.

2.4.2. (6) (Message) “You take stones from the creek and set up your sex-and-religion shrines. You’ve chosen your fate. Your worship will be your doom.”

2.4.3. It became an age of **sexual immorality & religious idolatry**.

2.4.3.1. Very often these 2 go together.

2.4.3.2. **Idolatry** is always easier than **faith** in the true God, because it makes no moral demands. Man made gods cannot **do** anything, nor do they **demand** anything.  

2.4.4. This description of the godless in society in Judah seems quite **contemporary**.

2.4.4.1. Read article [Palmdale School Dist & Sex-Survey to 1st 3rd 5th grades]

2.4.5. (9,10) They relentlessly searched for more pagan gods to worship!

2.4.6. (10) The way of **Wickedness**, leads to **Weariness**, which ends in **Restlessness**!(20)

2.4.7. Sin does not satisfy & yet they still won’t turn back.

2.4.8. The prodigal didn’t turn back right away!

2.4.8.1. He wasted his possessions w/wasteful(prodigal) living & didn’t return home. - He spent all & didn’t return home. - A famine came & didn’t return home. – he gets a job feeding swine & didn’t return home. – He eats the swine food(carob pod diet) & didn’t return home. – It said, “no one helped” & didn’t return home...THEN he came to himself!

2.4.8.2. Often time one goes further & further down, until he can go no further…then comes to his senses! [How low can you go?]

2.4.9. (11b) Israel **forgot** God, & since He was silent they **failed to fear** Him!

2.5. **Their Hope! (12,13)**

2.5.1. Nothing can save them but trust in God.

2.6. **AT PEACE WITH GOD! (14-21)**

2.7. **Clearing the Way! (14)**

2.7.1. God clears the way for His people to return from captivity.

---

1 Philip Hacking; Isaiah; pg.179
2.8. **The Person of God! (15a)**
   2.8.1. Jehovah declares Himself to be the One inhabiting eternity, & yet dwelling w/the contrite & humble in spirit.
   2.8.2. What a triumph of Grace...God, dwell with us?
      2.8.2.1. What a great God to condescend to care for lowly people.
   2.8.3. Here we have both the **Transcendence** of God & the **Immanence** of God.
      2.8.3.1. Transcendence - that God is exalted above His creatures & distinct from them.
      2.8.3.2. Immanence [Latin “to dwell w/in”] - teaches that God also condescends to fellowship w/those who are contrite & lowly of spirit.

2.9. **The Promise of God! (15b-19)**
   2.9.1. Contrite = crushed or broken!
   2.9.2. Ps.51:17 “A broken and a contrite heart - These, O God, You will not despise.”
   2.9.3. Ps.34:18 “The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.”

2.10. What a special relationship that is offered to those who are **broken**?

2.11. If you want to learn what a person is really like, ask **three questions**:
   2.11.1. What makes him laugh? What makes him angry? What makes him weep?

2.12. What we need today is not anger, but anguish!
   2.12.1. The kind of anguish that Moses displayed when he broke the two tablets of the law, and then climbed the mountain to intercede for his people.
   2.12.2. Or that Jesus displayed when He cleansed the temple, and then wept over the city.
   2.12.3. The difference between anger and anguish is a broken heart.
   2.12.4. It’s not easy to get angry, especially at somebody else’s sins; but it’s not easy to look at sin, our own included, and weep over it.²

2.13. When God wants to do an impossible task, He takes an impossible man and breaks him!
   2.13.1. Charles Spurgeon said, We are but men, frail, feeble, & apt to faint.
   2.13.2. It is not until the pride of our heart is shattered that we will begin to understand the deep things of God.

2.13.3. **The shattering** and the **bruising** are so designed by God for the preparation of his spokesman.

2.13.4. All of God’s giants have been **weak men**.

2.13.5. The greatest gift you can give your family/church/community is a genuine model of your humanity.

2.13.6. Admit your weakness, or your unresolved conflicts, and then let yourself be broken about it by God.

2.14. **5 broken things** in the Bible and the results achieved by them:

1) Broken **pitchers** (Judges 7:18,19) and the **light shone out**.
2) Broken **Box** (Mrk 14:3) and the **ointment was poured out**.
3) Broken **Bread** (Mt 14:10) and the **hungry were fed**.
4) Broken **Body** (I Cor 11:24) and the **world was saved**.
5) Broken **will** (Psa 51:17) and a **life of fulfillment in Christ**.

2.15. **Q:** What type of Christian do you like to hang out with?

2.15.1. Here is the kind of person God likes to hang out with.

2.16. **Q:** Does God feel at home in your heart?

2.17. Here is God’s relationship with repentant & humble individuals:

2.17.1. [1] To safely regather the contrite.
2.17.2. [2] To revive their spirits.
  2.17.2.1. He refreshes them & gives them courage.
2.17.3. [3] To never accuse them of sin.
  2.17.3.1. He does not fight against them forever.
2.17.4. [4] To heal, lead, & comfort them.
2.17.5. [5] To impart to them His peace.

2.18. (19) **Peace, peace to him who is far off** & to him who is **near**.

2.18.1. **Read** Eph.2:14-18.
2.18.2. This became the inspiration of Paul in Acts 2:39 “For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” Paul saw Jew & Gentile at peace w/one another because they were at peace with God.
  2.18.2.1. It takes **vertical** peace for **horizontal** peace!

2.19. **The Wicked!** (20,21)

2.20. **Peace is** in contrast to the **Restlessness** of the wicked!

2.20.1. **Restless** is the opposite of **peace/restful**.

2.21. What a solemn warning against wickedness!