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SAD GRAVESTONES

Isaiah 57

INTRODUCTION

We are looking at the closing scenes on the earth - the true king is on his way.

The prophet writes a message for the tombstone of the righteous, one for the sons of apostasy, and one for the wicked.

Gravestones in Isaiah 57. Here we find headstones or markers.

OUTLINE:

- I. Shocking Silence - V. 1-2.
- II. Shameful Sons - V. 3-19.
- III. Sad Entombment - V. 20-21.

I. Shocking Silence - V. 1-2

V. 1 - He speaks of the marker in his day raised over a righteous man. Death of the good.

Christians are the salt of the earth - must die! They are accounted as righteous and merciful.

Death to them is a blessing.

- 1. They are to be with Christ.
- 2. They are delivered from the evil days to come.
- 3. They rest in peace.

From another direction it is a loss.

- 1. Loss to the public - influence - character.
- 2. Loss to the church - hard to replace, many good works.

*Honour - Father - says long!
To Solomon
"If Walk in My way &
Keep commandments
lengthen thy days"*

(Hebrews) expected long life to be given the righteous. Ex. 20:12, I K. 3:14.

Exceptions - Ahab - Jezebel - Cut off the righteous. 2 K. 24:3., Ecc. 7:15.

Isaiah suggests, not that some were cut off, but some died a pre-mature death.

Perisheth - Taken from the earth before normal time.

No man - layeth to heart - ask what means this? No one is grieved, or disturbed.

Idea of indifference or even relief, satisfaction with his death. Sad Gravestone

set up un-noticed. *Gen 50:1-49:33 - Death of Jacob - Joseph wept - embalmed - 40 day mourning -
Pharaoh - helped Burial - Trip Canaan - great company - Mach - pe - tah -*

The world does not understand this loss of love and the true contribution made by the righteous.

Death of a good man ought to be laid to heart - at least we can search for a good lesson! Some of God's choice blessings are ministered through good men. A minister, an

influential Christian man, a godly parent. Here are men right in moral character, in action, habit, in life. John 3:7.

He is a merciful man - man of kindness, forgiving offenders, helpful to the weak - those in need.

They walk in uprightness - no crooked path.

His life is not sentiment but practice.

"Faith without works is dead" -- Whole life is filled with righteousness.

This is a sad gravestone - no man layeth it to heart! Majority (soon forget) - the best are forgotten.

How do you account for this? The saintly Mother soon forgotten!

Not like to think of death -- selfish concerns of life, taken up with your own little world.

Tells of our ingratitude - good men are benefactors.

Tells of our lack of moral concepts - a calamity to love men who give strength to the nation.

The state of the righteous.

✓ A. Taken away from the evil - delivered from the miseries of sin and evil that goes on in the earth. Taken away - gathered in - as the phrase often used in the Scripture "gathered to his fathers". Num. 27:13, Judg. 2:10. Out of the way of evil, from the temptation of evil.

V. 2 - B. Enter into peace - stillness.

Contrast of the awful troubles the survivors will have to encounter.

But - I believe it is in a positive sense - perfect peace.

✓ C. Rest upon their beds.

Calm rest of their bodies in the grave. 2 Chro. 16:14; Isa. 14:18.

Imply rest - enjoyment of it.

Rest from sorrow, sin, strife - "Former things done away". Rev. 14:13.

Not one note of trouble shall enter Heaven.

✓ D. Walking in uprightness - Defines the character of those who rest in their beds. Prospects of the good. If you would die the death of the righteous, you must

live the life of the righteous.

II. Shameful Sons - V. 3-17.

V. 3 - 1. Indictment against apostasy.

Sons of the Sorceress - Transgressed - Adulteres - Contrast to "The Righteous".

Be wretched her children with idolatrous practice. 2 Chron. 33:6.

Seed of - connected with idolatry - False worship - 2 K. 21:6.

Spiritual adultery is here meant. Mat. 16:4.

Draw Near - I will read your doom.

V. 4 - What have they done?

A. Make sport - scorners - making merry.

You think this is against the righteous man - against the prophet - it is against God!

Mocking the messenger of God is to mock at God and open your soul to Judgment.

2 Pet. 2:7.

B. Criticize the righteous - Open wide your mouth and thrust out your tongue.

Against the right - good - man. Lam. 2:16.

Ridicule the word of God. J. W. Mac Gorman, Father a Pastor leaving one church - "I will leave enough enemies in this place to be assured that my labours for God have not been in vain".

C. Life of falsehood - Seed of falsehood. Isaiah judged idols as lies. Rom. 1:25.

Rev. 22:15 - Men who put their trust in falsehoods.

V. 5 - D. Slaves of idolatry. Inflaming.

Lust - Rom. 1:27. Unlawful, unnatural lust - violent passion to worship idols.

Passion so great that --

First, Had an idol under every green tree.

Sacred groves - huge trees burnt with the offerings. In the open - out-doors before all.

Second, Slaying of children.

Sacrifice and pleasure for the idol. Thrown from great height into the valleys and under the cliffs.

Excitement - enflaming - a child was put in the heated arms of a statue (Moloch).

Men deprived themselves of manhood and often would lacerate themselves.

Violence keeping step with corruption.

V. 6 - Third Had idols in every valley.

Smooth stones among the streams - Pour drink offering and offer meat sacrifices on the stones.

Called them Bethels or houses of God. Gen. 28:18.

Can Jehovah be comforted or look upon this in complacency? How can they expect God to deliver them? Shall "I delight" in these things.

V. 7 - Fourth Had idols on every mountain.

Every hill top has been turned into some sacred memorial to an idol.

Not in a corner or behind the door - but a prominent place. Here they carry on the vilest impurity - Bed - refers to spiritual unfaithfulness - to the divine husband. I K. 12:3, 14:4, 15:4.

V. 8 - Fifth Had household idols.

They hung up household idols behind the doors and on the gate post.

Set up remembrances - Talisman.

Law - Deut. 6:9, 11:20.

Curse to put up image in secret place.

Enlarged thy bed - multiplied thy idols. Exceeded the heathen in idoltary.

Place where they were to remember the Lord they had put an idol. Kept to remind others and self.

Religion of convience - hardened - openly - in view of all - impudent harlot takes pride in making proselytes - enlarged bed. 2 K. 16:10--they love to enter the presence of idols.

V. 9 - Sixth Maintained a search for new idols. Lust so great she lowers herself to go abroad to Assyria and seek Moloch shrines -- The King Molok or Meleck - Amos. 5:26.

Put on perfumes - ointment - as practice of lewd women. Prov. 7:17 - Jer. 4:30
- Ezek. 23:16, 40.

Debased Thyself even into Hell. Lowest point conceivable making alliances with
heathen gods, dishonouring your children, your God.

McGorman - University Chapel, Small crowd hear "Justification by Fatih." Few weeks
later students filled large ball room, same campus - rank heresy "The Death of God"
- Loud applause. Want to identify with the world.

V. 10 - What is the outcome?

First, They were weary.

Traveled far from God seeking aid from foreign gods and foreign rulers. You have
traveled a weary road - false hope - not finding satisfaction.

Sodomites - Gen. 19:11. *Blindness*

Sin never satisfy - idols never blessed their lives.

There is no hope!

Still you search - some seeming prosperity - pleasure goes on in its way. Attempts
to get on without God. Not wanting to confess failure.

Dispair of hope for the sinner is the first step towards God.

V. 11 - Second, lived a life of falsehood.

You make a covenant with death and made a lie your falsehood, shewn theyself to
be a lair.

Implied that they feared him! He has done nothing to justify fear. He has been
slow to send judgment - held his peace! Patience.

V. 12 - Third, their works destroyed.

God will expose publicly their hypocritical righteousness. Vain works wasted upon
foreign powers. Unfruitful works.

Not profit. According to real value.

V. 13 - Fourth, their idols are vanity - helpless.

One puff of wind blows them away - like straw. Idols unable to save or give
assistance

Key to help - trust in me - those that do not relie upon idols shall possess
the land.

V. 14 - Fifth, God's highway is being prepared - remnant.

Cast ye up - make a highway to the holy mountain of God. Heap up the materials.
Remove every stumbling block. Let the righteous people travel in the right direction.

V. 15 - What God has to say

Moving of the Spirit of God.

Very mouth piece of God - prophet is giving true conception of God.

God's glory appears:

High and lofty - Exalted one - High above all - exalted above creation. No one
on his level. Absolute Lord.

Holiness - majesty beyond the hills, valleys, the little idols hanging in the
house. Controls the riches of the universe.

"I Dwell in Eternity" - Liveth - eternally. I K. 8:27.

Man lives the space of Threescore and Ten years. God's dwelling is from everlasting
to everlasting. Endless duration.

God has one other dwelling place. In the humble, contrite heart.

This will be a revival of true life. No priest can keep him out - no church can
keep him out of the contrite heart!

He comes to the bruised, crushed, humble sprit, brings comfort.

This is the way you can prepare your heart for God to come in.

John 12:41.

V. 16 - He will not wait forever on the sinner. Those who trust he receives - revives.
I Pet. 1:6.

Not content.

V. 17 - Covetousness is condemned.

Besetting sin that led to other sins. Greed - unjust gain - stripped the weak of
their inheritance.

Heart-sin, displeased Jehovah.

Frowardly- in his evil way - felt smart - more eager to go on in worldly pursuits.

In the way of the haart.

V. 18 - Mercy is offered.

1. God sees.
2. God heals.
3. God leads.
4. God comforts.

He has seen the wanderings and will heal and lead. Give grace, heal corrupt life.

Restore comfort that he had forfeited.

V. 19 - Fruit of the Lips - I will speak by the mouth of faithful ministers.

Thanksgiving come from their lips.

Cessation of troubles.

Peace, peace - Promise from God's mouth. To him that is far off (Gentiles) to him that is near (Jews).

The world say peace, peace, but there is no peace -- method of world: Gratify your desires.

Method of Christ: Master your desires. Put under discipline of cross.

Does your soul struggle for peace - alienation of guilt?

Come in obedience - Keep his commands.

Heart is restless - Gal. 5:17.

Power of memory to recall the past with remorse. The ship sinks, but the planks line the shore tell the tale.

III. Sad Entombment - V. 20-21

Prophet began the Chapter with the gravestone of the righteous. The conclusion is the sad gravestone of the wicked - two words - "No Peace".

V. 20 - Unhappiness of sinners.

Illustration: Surging Sea - Troubled Sea cannot rest, can have no rest - storm

tossed not able to rest.

The waters are ever upheaving.

Upheaving mire and the dirt.

Ladies and gentlemen here is the situation of the wicked!

Jude 13 - Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame;

Isaiah and Jude are the only two, who use the sea to portray the wicked - unquiet, troublesome, cast up the mire, terrors of temptations, upheaving blasphemy out of men's hearts.

"The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days". Job 15:20.

Reason Prov. 4:14 "Enter not into the path of the wicked and go not in the way of evil men.

Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away".

Wicked - state of restlessness - uncertainty - conscience filled with terror - distrust. Paul - Rom 7:24 *Wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death - War of flesh & Spirit -*

In his impurity - cast up mire - foam - weed. All upon the shore of your mind.

Sea - heave waves upon the shore.

Never have a good conscience - passion may delight for moment, there is a corrupt.

World has no pity for the wicked - the world will shun and not help.

Troubled by a hurting conscience and unwelcome thoughts of death.

Cannot conceal his sensual passion - scandals in paper shock society every day.

Cannot conceal his disappointments - below the surface there is a war of the flesh. Gen 4:16 - "And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord And dwelt in the land of Nod"

Ocean responds to the wind.

Hear responds to restless wickedness - outside of Christ.

Sea may seem calm today, but wait - like wicked - no rest.

V. 21 - Sad Gravestone - No peace to the wicked.

Who says this? Prophet? Church? - God. In the way he is going and his condition peace will never be found.

Righteous goes to rest.

Wicked never find peace - why?

1. World never satisfied. Man, image of God. He may get all the visible things his heart desires - not satisfied.
2. Corrupt passions never satisfy - bring more misery.
3. Wave of an accusing conscience - distress - folly of continuing in known sin. It will not keep silent. May escape it short time.
4. Wave of approaching death - wicked man knows he is not ready.
5. Wave of coming judgement. Wicked scoffed at this as superstition, but when death puts a hand on a man where is his peace?

Publican in temple became righteous

Pharisee in temple remained wicked

Prodigal son became righteous

Elder brother remained wicked.

Self-righteous - complacent religious.

Chalmers - My worst mistakes have been mathematical - 2
Dimensions Time, so short & Eternity, so long.

We need a sense of true values - do you estimate the true value of
Eternity?

Bye & Bye you will be able to say, I earned much money,
I dressed well, I ate well, - These belong to the passing
moment.

What is it that preoccupies my thoughts from day to day?
Is it the trifling, frothy things that soon must pass away?
O help me, dare to look beyond the transient scenes of earth,
and give my lips, with all its powers, the things of endless
worth!