

Saturday, September 28

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Isaiah 54:1 - 57:14

54 1 “Sing, O childless woman, you who have never given birth! Break into loud and joyful song, O Jerusalem, you who have never been in labor. For the desolate woman now has more children than the woman who lives with her husband,” says the LORD . **2** “Enlarge your house; build an addition. Spread out your home, and spare no expense! **3** For you will soon be bursting at the seams. Your descendants will occupy other nations and resettle the ruined cities. **4** “Fear not; you will no longer live in shame. Don’t be afraid; there is no more disgrace for you. You will no longer remember the shame of your youth and the sorrows of widowhood. **5** For your Creator will be your husband; the LORD of Heaven’s Armies is his name! He is your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, the God of all the earth. **6** For the LORD has called you back from your grief— as though you were a young wife abandoned by her husband,” says your God. **7** “For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with great compassion I will take you back. **8** In a burst of anger I turned my face away for a little while. But with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,” says the LORD, your Redeemer. **9** “Just as I swore in the time of Noah that I would never again let a flood cover the earth, so now I swear that I will never again be angry and punish you. **10** For the mountains may move and the hills disappear, but even then my faithful love for you will remain. My covenant of blessing will never be broken,” says the LORD, who has mercy on you. **11** “O storm-battered city, troubled and desolate! I will rebuild you with precious jewels and make your foundations from lapis lazuli. **12** I will make your towers of sparkling rubies, your gates of shining gems, and your walls of precious stones. **13** I will teach all your children, and they will enjoy great peace. **14** You will be secure under a government that is just and fair. Your enemies will stay far away. You will live in peace, and terror will not come near. **15** If any nation comes to fight you, it is not because I sent them. Whoever attacks you will go down in defeat. **16** “I have created the blacksmith who fans the coals beneath the forge and makes the weapons of destruction. And I have created the armies that destroy. **17** But in that coming day no weapon turned against you will succeed. You will silence every voice raised up to accuse you. These benefits are enjoyed by the servants of the LORD ; their vindication will come from me. I, the LORD, have spoken!

55 1 “Is anyone thirsty? Come and drink— even if you have no money! Come, take your choice of wine or milk— it’s all free! **2** Why spend your money on food that does not give you strength?

Why pay for food that does you no good? Listen to me, and you will eat what is good. You will enjoy the finest food. **3** “Come to me with your ears wide open. Listen, and you will find life. I will make an everlasting covenant with you. I will give you all the unfailing love I promised to David. **4** See how I used him to display my power among the peoples. I made him a leader among the nations. **5** You also will command nations you do not know, and peoples unknown to you will come running to obey, because I, the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, have made you glorious.” **6** Seek the LORD while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near. **7** Let the wicked change their ways and banish the very thought of doing wrong. Let them turn to the LORD that he may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God, for he will forgive generously. **8** “My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,” says the LORD . “And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. **9** For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts. **10** “The rain and snow come down from the heavens and stay on the ground to water the earth. They cause the grain to grow, producing seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry. **11** It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it. **12** You will live in joy and peace. The mountains and hills will burst into song, and the trees of the field will clap their hands! **13** Where once there were thorns, cypress trees will grow. Where nettles grew, myrtles will sprout up. These events will bring great honor to the LORD ’s name; they will be an everlasting sign of his power and love.”

56 **1** This is what the LORD says: “Be just and fair to all. Do what is right and good, for I am coming soon to rescue you and to display my righteousness among you. **2** Blessed are all those who are careful to do this. Blessed are those who honor my Sabbath days of rest and keep themselves from doing wrong. **3** “Don’t let foreigners who commit themselves to the LORD say, ‘The LORD will never let me be part of his people.’ And don’t let the eunuchs say, ‘I’m a dried-up tree with no children and no future.’ **4** For this is what the LORD says: I will bless those eunuchs who keep my Sabbath days holy and who choose to do what pleases me and commit their lives to me. **5** I will give them—within the walls of my house— a memorial and a name far greater than sons and daughters could give. For the name I give them is an everlasting one. It will never disappear! **6** “I will also bless the foreigners who commit themselves to the LORD, who serve him and love his name, who worship him and do not desecrate the Sabbath day of rest, and who hold fast to my covenant. **7** I will bring them to my holy mountain of Jerusalem and will fill them with joy in my house of prayer. I will accept their burnt offerings and sacrifices, because my Temple will be called a house of prayer for all nations. **8** For the Sovereign LORD, who brings back the outcasts of Israel, says: I will bring others, too, besides my people Israel.” **9** Come, wild animals of the field! Come, wild animals of the forest! Come and devour

my people! **10** For the leaders of my people— the LORD 's watchmen, his shepherds— are blind and ignorant. They are like silent watchdogs that give no warning when danger comes. They love to lie around, sleeping and dreaming. **11** Like greedy dogs, they are never satisfied. They are ignorant shepherds, all following their own path and intent on personal gain. **12** “Come,” they say, “let’s get some wine and have a party. Let’s all get drunk. Then tomorrow we’ll do it again and have an even bigger party!”

57 **1** Good people pass away; the godly often die before their time. But no one seems to care or wonder why. No one seems to understand that God is protecting them from the evil to come. **2** For those who follow godly paths will rest in peace when they die. **3** “But you—come here, you witches’ children, you offspring of adulterers and prostitutes! **4** Whom do you mock, making faces and sticking out your tongues? You children of sinners and liars! **5** You worship your idols with great passion beneath the oaks and under every green tree. You sacrifice your children down in the valleys, among the jagged rocks in the cliffs. **6** Your gods are the smooth stones in the valleys. You worship them with liquid offerings and grain offerings. They, not I, are your inheritance. Do you think all this makes me happy? **7** You have committed adultery on every high mountain. There you have worshiped idols and have been unfaithful to me. **8** You have put pagan symbols on your doorposts and behind your doors. You have left me and climbed into bed with these detestable gods. You have committed yourselves to them. You love to look at their naked bodies. **9** You have gone to Molech with olive oil and many perfumes, sending your agents far and wide, even to the world of the dead. **10** You grew weary in your search, but you never gave up. Desire gave you renewed strength, and you did not grow weary. **11** “Are you afraid of these idols? Do they terrify you? Is that why you have lied to me and forgotten me and my words? Is it because of my long silence that you no longer fear me? **12** Now I will expose your so-called good deeds. None of them will help you. **13** Let’s see if your idols can save you when you cry to them for help. Why, a puff of wind can knock them down! If you just breathe on them, they fall over! But whoever trusts in me will inherit the land and possess my holy mountain.” **14** God says, “Rebuild the road! Clear away the rocks and stones so my people can return from captivity.”

Ephesians 6:1 - 24

6 **1** Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. **2** “Honor your father and mother.” This is the first commandment with a promise: **3** If you honor your father and mother, “things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the

earth.” **4** Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord. **5** Slaves, obey your earthly masters with deep respect and fear. Serve them sincerely as you would serve Christ. **6** Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. As slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart. **7** Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. **8** Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free. **9** Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Don’t threaten them; remember, you both have the same Master in heaven, and he has no favorites. **10** A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **11** Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. **12** For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. **13** Therefore, put on every piece of God’s armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. **14** Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God’s righteousness. **15** For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. **16** In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. **17** Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. **18** Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere. **19** And pray for me, too. Ask God to give me the right words so I can boldly explain God’s mysterious plan that the Good News is for Jews and Gentiles alike. **20** I am in chains now, still preaching this message as God’s ambassador. So pray that I will keep on speaking boldly for him, as I should. **21** To bring you up to date, Tychicus will give you a full report about what I am doing and how I am getting along. He is a beloved brother and faithful helper in the Lord’s work. **22** I have sent him to you for this very purpose—to let you know how we are doing and to encourage you. **23** Peace be with you, dear brothers and sisters, and may God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you love with faithfulness. **24** May God’s grace be eternally upon all who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

Psalm 70:1 - 5

70 1 Please, God, rescue me! Come quickly, LORD, and help me. **2** May those who try to kill me be humiliated and put to shame. May those who take delight in my trouble be turned back in disgrace. **3** Let them be horrified by their shame, for they said, “Aha! We’ve got him now!” **4** But may all who search for you be filled with joy and gladness in you. May those who love your

salvation repeatedly shout, "God is great!" **5** But as for me, I am poor and needy; please hurry to my aid, O God. You are my helper and my savior; O LORD, do not delay.

Proverbs 24:8

24 8 A person who plans evil will get a reputation as a troublemaker.