

The Sovereign Conqueror – Isaiah 59:15b-21; 63:1-6

How well you'll listen to this message will depend on what you think of the world?

You can think of the world and particularly humanity as being good and making progress. Or you can think of the world as being essentially bad including humanity. If you think humanity is bad then you will listen carefully to this message. In Isaiah 59 & 63 we are told a conqueror comes and does something about the problem of the world which is humanity. God is God does something about sin and injustice in judgment.

This is a new section that starts and finishes talking about the conqueror so we are looking at these 2 parts and will come back to the middle over the next couple weeks.

In Isaiah 56-66 we learn how to live as we wait for Christ's return. God's people have the promises of God. They had the start of the promises but not the fulfilment. So for us we have the promises of Jesus and we live in the last days as wait for the fulfilment of those promises when Jesus returns.

So firstly let's see the Sovereign Conqueror as the...

1. The Righteous Judge

Read: 15b-16

Here we get God's view of things. What does he see? What is his view of the world? He is displeased v.15 and appalled v.16.

Why? There was no justice. As well as that there is no one doing anything about it. Everyone is so caught in the injustice. This is good news for us. As we experience and see injustice in the world we can know that God is not indifferent. He sees it and thinks it is wrong.

So what does he do?

Read: 16-18

The picture is of God getting ready for battle. At the same time he brings judgment is also bringing salvation. He comes to repay his enemies. To bring vengeance. Notice he is responding to their deeds. *"According to what they have done so he will repay."* v.18 *He will repay the islands their due."*

When I was growing up my mum never let me have lollies. I remember begging her at the shops for a small bag of mixed lollies and don't remember her ever saying yes. It is a different story now with our girls and she is the grandma.

Parenting is a tough job. My thoughts go to mums who do it as a full time role. What does it mean to parent? To love. Love has two arms to it. Tender arm and the tough arm. You may have heard of the saying: "You have to be cruel to be kind." Not quite true but we all get the point. The tough arm of love is just as much an expression of love as the tender arm is. So the tough arm of God's love expressed in judgment is necessary to show his love.

You may respond to the judgment with horror. You may even be angry. You may even be tempted to dismiss this because it is in the Old Testament. You might think well that is the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament is different. There is as much about the love and compassion of God in the Old Testament as there is in the New Testament. There is as much about the anger and judgment of God in the New Testament as there is in the Old Testament. Jesus talks more about Hell in the New Testament than anyone else.

You may ask the question how can a loving God judge? It is out of his love that he acts in this way. If you love someone and see someone else doing some injustice to them you will want justice.

So if God is angry. It is because he is responding to injustice. Injustice that we are causing. If God judges it is because we deserve it. It is because of our rejection of him shown in our injustice towards each other.

"God is fully aware of the human propensity to scheme to exclude him. He has a plan to come and do something about it." Kirk Patston

DOES GOD SEE? Yes. DOES GOD CARE? Yes. WILL THERE BE AN END? Yes.

Now let's see the Sovereign Conqueror as the...

2. Redeeming Rescuer

Read: 63:1

What are Edom and Bozrah? Edom is the land south of Israel and Bozrah was the capital. Edom was a longstanding enemy of Israel. Edom hated Israel. Edom became representative of humanity against God. Humanity in contempt for God. Representative of all those who stood opposed to God. We are either represented by Edom or not. Which side are we on?

We have this figure coming out of Edom. See the way he is described.

Read: 2-3

Who is it? Why is his clothing splattered red? Has he been at the winery? No the explanation comes that he has been fighting for freedom. Fighting for redemption. He's been fighting on his own. We don't help him. We don't even see him until it is over.

There has been a judgment but he brings salvation. He is mighty to save. For the nation of Israel salvation couldn't come without the defeat of their enemies.

This is a vision of Jesus. John has a similar vision.

Revelation 19:11-16

This is not a picture of gentle Jesus meek and mild in the manger. It is a picture of strong and angry riding on a horse.

For every mention of the first coming of Jesus there are more for his second coming in judgment.

Read: 63:4-5

There is a day of vengeance but it is also the time of God's redemption.

At the cross we have Jesus doing his work until it is finished. He defeats our enemies of sin, death and satan.

This is the way God in his sovereignty chose to work in human history to achieve a rescue for humanity. I may not understand why it had to be this way. I may not like it. I might be repelled by the violence involved. I may wish there is some other way. But at some point we have to stand back from our questions, criticisms or complaint and receive God's Word. God has to act in judgment to bring justice and salvation.

Also let the death of Jesus help you understand. The death of Jesus also involved the most horrific and evil human violence which also included God's judgment on human sin. There is a difference. In Isaiah God poured out his judgment on a wicked society who deserved it, at the cross God took on himself the judgment on human wickedness, through his own sinless Son Jesus, who did not deserve one bit.

3. So this means the Sovereign Conqueror is either your judge or redeemer?

Read: 20-11

We will face him as his enemy or his friend. Isaiah 59:20 tells us that rescue from judgment comes only to those who repent. Only to those who turn from their wickedness and turn to God.

If you are Christian? Know you have the blessing of no judgment, his Spirit and His Word. But also it is impossible to think you can take your sin lightly. We also must repent.

Feel the weight of God's judgment not only for ourselves but especially for those who are facing it. This should give you a sense of urgency because you have the Words that give them the opportunity to escape that judgment.

My dad had an Uncle who lived in Papua New Guinea with his family. They have in a grass that was on stilts next to the water. One day they had some friends over and the house caught on fire. The children jumped out of the windows of the house into the water. In all the commotion my great uncle thought there was a child still in the house and so went back into the house to rescue them. There was not a child still in the house and he ended up dying himself. What he did is what you do when you know someone is in danger. You do everything you can to

rescue them. We know people are facing God's judgment and we have what they need to be rescued. We know the Gospel of Jesus.

You maybe the only person who will pray for the people in your life. Those at your work or uni or school. You maybe the only Christian they know who can tell them about Jesus.

The Sovereign Conqueror judges and rescues. He sees, cares and acts as he sees the world we live in.