

ISAIAH, PART 2 (COMFORT FOR HIS PEOPLE)  
PROGRAM 28 (#911143)  
WEEK 6 (#911329) (Guest Teacher David Arthur)  
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The following is an actual transcript of the PRECEPTS FOR LIFE Broadcast. For the purpose of filling transcript requests quickly, they have received only light editing. If you have questions concerning the material covered in this broadcast, Kay has published a number of books explaining the Scripture in depth. These books may be ordered by contacting the telephone number or address printed above.

**SERIES: Isaiah, Part 2 (Comfort For His People)**

**TITLE: Program 28 – A House Of Prayer For All Peoples  
(Guest Teacher David Arthur)**

**WEDNESDAY**

**INTRO**

**Kay:** Don't you love the sovereignty of God! Don't you love seeing in the book of Isaiah? Do you know what God has done in His sovereignty? God has called our son David Arthur as Vice-President of Teaching and Training at Precept Ministries. And this means that while I was in Greece he was able to teach the book of Isaiah, not all of it, but just stepped in for me. I'll be back to teach you more on Isaiah. But enjoy him today.

**OPEN**

**David:** Do you find yourself not fitting in with the Christian world? Do you look around and realize there's a big difference between the others and you? Is that what Christianity is about? Looking the same, acting the same, being the same kind of people, or is that really a cult? Today in our text we're gonna see God's definition of who can be a Christian, of who are those that

He invites to His temple, to His family. What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus Christ?

## **PART ONE**

**David:** Hello. My name is David Arthur and I am so glad you've come to join me in studying God's Word for yourself. We are looking at the book of Isaiah. We've seen over the past couple of episodes that God has made a generous offer to His people. He has done it at the expense of His Son Jesus Christ known in Isaiah as "My Servant" or the "Messiah". Today we're looking at chapter 56, and today we're going to focus on who makes up the body of Christ. Who is it that makes up those who will be God's people? There are some surprises for us in the text. Look again at Isaiah chapter 56 beginning in verse 1. **"Thus says the LORD, 'Preserve justice and do righteousness, for My salvation is about to come and My righteousness is [about] to be revealed. How blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who takes hold of it; who keeps from profaning the sabbath, and keeps his hand from doing any evil.'"** (Isaiah 56:1-2) What are we to be about if we're to follow God in His Word? He says we're anticipating His coming righteousness, His coming salvation. But in light of that we are to do this: we are to, verse 1, **"...Preserve justice and [to] do righteousness...."** (Isaiah 56:1) There's a call to action here for the people of God. He's saying, "Listen, I'm coming. I am bringing with Me My salvation. But I don't want you to sit back on your laurels and to relax and simply just to wait, just to simply stay out of trouble, perhaps circle the wagons, go to a cave and just wait it out. I want you to be about My business. What is that? He says, **"...preserve[ing] justice and doing righteousness...."** (Isaiah 56:1) I want to show you this from a New Testament perspective in 2 Peter chapter 3. Now here we have in 2 Peter, we have him writing to a people reminding them of the day of the Lord, of the end times, of the coming of the Lord. And he says this in verse 1. **"This...now, [my] beloved, [is] the**

second letter I'm writing to you in which I[']m stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets...." (2 Peter 3:1-2) Now that's what we're studying back here in Isaiah 55, it's the holy prophets. Peter's saying, "I want to remind you, I want to stir you up by having you recall what the prophets spoke." He then says this, **"Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following...their own lusts,"** and this is what they're **"...saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming?'"** Where is it? We don't see it. **"...For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."** (2 Peter 3:3-4) He's says there will come a time when you will be encountered by the watching world who listens to what you say about what God promises, specifically in His return, in His coming with His righteousness, and they're mocking. Say: "I don't see it. Where is it? Nothing's changed since the beginning. Time just goes on." And they mock you. And he says, "But beware, they forget that His patience," he says, "is their salvation." Look how he describes it. Verse 5, **"...that by the word God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men."** (2 Peter 3:5-7) He goes on to describe what this is gonna look like, he tells them it's things like the very elements; the very core of the earth will be destroyed. They'll burn up. (See 2 Peter 3:10) So here comes the application. In 2 Peter 3, verse 11 he says this, **"Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,"** verse 12, **"looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God...."** (2 Peter 3:11-12) Here's the application. In 2 Peter 3 he says, "Listen, when you go back to the prophets, when your mind is stirred and you recall the promises of God and you're mocked by

those around you saying, ‘Where is this promise? We don’t see it,’ remember that with Him— He is bringing it.” And that literally His patience is their salvation. His holding back the coming of the day of God will work out for their salvation. In other words, He’s giving them time to return to Him. But He says in the meantime this is what I want you to be about. I want you to be the kind of people who are marked by **“...holy conduct and godliness.” (2 Peter 3:11)** That’s what we see in verse 1 of chapter 56. Back to our text in Isaiah 56, He says, **“...My salvation is about to come...My righteousness [is about] to be revealed.” (Isaiah 56:1)** So what should you be about? Should you be about, just waiting for it, simply hiding from the enemies? No, He says [I want you to be engaged in preserving justice and doing righteousness.] (PARAPHRASE Isaiah 56:1) Now this is gonna show itself as to who this promise is for. And there are some surprises here in chapter 56. For example, the first group that we see is mentioned in verse 3. It says, **“Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say, ‘The LORD will surely separate me from His people.’” (Isaiah 56:3)** Let not the foreigner, now the foreigner— if you understand the context of the Old Testament, God had chosen the people of Israel. He had created them and He says in Deuteronomy that He set His affection upon them. Not because of anything they brought, anything that they had, but because of His love and affection He made them set apart to use, to demonstrate His holiness and His goodness to all the earth. They were to be a light, to be a blessing to the whole world. And so He says here in in Isaiah, He says, the foreigner wants to come and say, “Listen, are You going to separate me from Your people?” The question really is this: Is there a place for me in Your family? “As I watch and see the people of God, as I see the love that they have for one another, as I see their devotion to You, Lord, and their sacrifices and the way they treat the foreigners, the way they’ve treated me as an outsider, is there a way for me to be a part of that? I know I’m not a Hebrew. I know I’m not from one of the tribes of Jacob. But is there a place

for me inside Your family?” He then brings up another voice there at the end of verse 3. Here comes the other voice. He says, “**...Nor let the eunuch say, ‘Behold, I am a dry tree.’ For thus says the LORD, ‘To the eunuchs who keep My sabbaths, and choose what pleases Me, and hold fast [to] My covenant,’**” He says, “**“To them I will give in My house and within My walls a memorial...a name better than that of the sons [of] daughters; [and] I will give them an everlasting name which will not be cut off.”**”

(Isaiah 56:3-5) Now this is fascinating. Here He has the foreigners who have been separated by God because they’re not part of the people. But here’s a way for them to come in. But here He brings up another group called the “eunuchs”. Now because of God’s law, they were not allowed inside the assembly. For example in Deuteronomy 23, verse 1 you would read that [those who were eunuchs were not allowed to come inside the assembly or inside the house of God]. (PARAPHRASE, Deuteronomy 23:1) We find out in Leviticus 21:20, they were not allowed to bring sacrifices to God. Now this is not man’s laws. This is not a Jewish addition to the law of God. This is God’s design. But here He’s speaking of the future of His coming salvation and He says even the eunuch is allowed to come. Look what He says. “**...To the eunuchs who keep My sabbaths, and choose what pleases Me, and hold fast My covenant, to them I will give in My house and within My walls a memorial...a name [that is] better than that of sons [of] and daughters; [and] I will give them an everlasting name [that] will not be cut off.**” (Isaiah 56:4-5) Now you see, a eunuch wasn’t able to reproduce. He wasn’t able to have sons and daughters. And so God is saying “In My new covenant, in the promises that I’m bringing here through Isaiah, I want you to know there’s a place for the foreigner and there’s a place for the eunuch. But what are these like? Is it just all foreigners allowed, all eunuchs allowed? Is God simply just setting His rules aside and allowing all to come in? No. Look how they’re described. First with the foreigner, verse 3, “**...the foreigner who has joined himself to the**

**LORD....**” With the eunuch it says, “**...To the eunuchs...,**” verse 4, “**...who keep My Sabbaths, [who] choose what pleases Me, and hold fast [or cling to] My covenant.**” (**Isaiah 56:3-4**) This is the ones who brings. Now it’s not just that God has let down the standards or God has simply just opened up the gates and said it’s a free-for-all. Anyone who wants to come, come. He also keeps the laws here. For example, the foreigners and the eunuchs were to recognize God’s design of the sabbath. The sabbath was one day a week taken off from work, absolutely no work done and the day devoted to rest and to being with the Lord. He said, “If you want to follow Me it doesn’t matter if you’re a foreigner now. It doesn’t matter if you’re a eunuch. In My new covenant, in the offer that I’m bringing here in Isaiah 55, in My coming salvation there’s a place for everyone. But you must adopt My ways.” Literally “your calendar must change”. Your calendar that once said all the days of the week are for work or all the days of the week are for production He says, “Now I want you to be dependent on Me. Give Me back a day. Give Me back the sabbath day. ‘**...Hold fast to My covenant.**’ (**Isaiah 56:4**) Make your choices and your decisions based on things that will bring Me pleasure.” This is the offer that He gives to them. This is the offer of those who will be called the people of God. It’s an engrafting. So we’re to see according— so far in our study, we can see very clearly that God is telling His people “While you wait for My salvation: 1) I want you to be about justice and righteousness. Be active and engaged. But secondly I want you to know this is one for everybody. Perhaps you feel like there’s not a place for you, that you somehow are on the outside. Here’s an offer from God to say to you, let those who will cling to My ways come to My house and become My people.

## **PART TWO**

**David:** The offers get better and better, don’t they? Welcome back. We’re looking here at Isaiah 56. We’ve already seen a God who is generous, a God

who has said, “Come to Me you who are thirsty.” (See Isaiah 55:1) But here in this text it gets even better. He opens it up by telling us that this is for those who will join themselves to God, even if you’re on the outside, even if you’re not a part of the people of God. This is fascinating study and it’s part of the study that helps us study Scripture for ourselves. We begin to compare Scripture to Scripture. I want you to go to [preceptsforlife.com](http://preceptsforlife.com) and there you will find a free download and you can study along with me. You’ll find cross-references and other exercises that will deepen and enrich your study. Let me just challenge you. If you’re really getting into the study and you feel like you want to share it, think about maybe asking some friends over to your house and starting a Bible study, and download the studies for them and walk them through this. I think you’ll find great treasure as you mine out the truths for yourselves. Now in 56 we pick up in verse 6 our text. He says this, **“Also the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to Him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants, every one who keeps from profaning the sabbath and holds fast My covenant.”** (Isaiah 56:6) We’ve already seen that is how He describes those who are welcomed into His house He says this, verse 7, **“Even those I will bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all...peoples.”** (Isaiah 56:7) Now what does this house of prayer that He mentions— is that another house? Is there the house where the tabernacle is and the sacrifices and now this is an additional house? Is this a temple? What is this? This “house of prayer.” I want to take you back to the beginning of it in 1 Kings chapter 8. Now we have here in 1 Kings 8, this is the pinnacle of the history of Israel. And it starts with lowly ’ol Abraham. Not much, right? An old man and an old woman, who seem to be barren, yet they have a son named Isaac. And from him comes the nation of Israel. And as it progresses in history, 1 Kings 8 is the high point of the people of Israel. And it’s the high point because

King Solomon is on the throne and God has given him wisdom beyond comprehension. It's more wisdom given to any man before him as well as after him. There will never be one like Solomon. And so Solomon is so wise. He's so godly that nations flock to him. And here we have in 1 Kings 8 the building of the house of God and he's, in a sense, dedicating it to God. But I want you to listen to how he describes this house as a "house of prayer." So listen for "prayer". If you're marking along in your text you might want to mark the word "prayer" and the word "supplication" simply just circle it. Now verse 27 says this, **"But will God indeed dwell on...earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built!" (1 Kings 8:27)** We understand that, right? I mean the house that he's building he realizes this is more symbolic than anything. "This is not really where God dwells because there's nothing that can contain You God. You dwell in the heavens itself." But then he says this, **"Yet have regard..."** this is verse 28, **"[Yet have regard] to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which Your servant prays before You today." (1 Kings 8:28)** So very clearly prayer is being mentioned. Here's the prayer in verse 29. **"That Your eyes [God] may be open toward [His] house night and day, toward the place of which You have said, 'My name shall be there,' to listen to the prayer which Your servant shall pray toward this place. Listen to the supplication of Your servant and...Your people Israel..."** Here's the phrase again. **"...When they pray toward this place; hear in heaven Your dwelling place; [listen] and forgive."** (1 Kings 8:29-30) What we have here is Solomon is saying to God, "Listen, we're gonna build this house, and Your people, when they want to communicate with You, wherever they are (he's gonna later on say, when they're off in exile, when they're in other lands), he says I want them to do this. I want them to turn their posture and I want them to pray wherever they may be. Their focus is on the temple of the Lord. And when



they pray to You they are going to point themselves towards the temple.” And you say, now that’s superstition. I mean isn’t that another religion where they have to pray always towards some location? Is that what Christianity is described here in the Old Testament? No it’s not superstition. It’s not tradition or ritual. It’s an inclining of your heart. He’s saying, “When you want to talk to God,” that “right now you need to think of this house as the channel through which you will talk to God. It becomes the vehicle through which you pray to God.” And so over and over again he says when they turn and they bring supplication they will pray toward this place. Look at verse 41. **“Also concerning the foreigner who is not of Your people Israel, when he comes from a far country for Your name’s sake.” (1 Kings 8:41)** I love 42. It’s in brackets. **“For they will hear of Your great name and Your mighty hand, and of Your outstretched arm; [and] when he comes and prays [to this house] towards this house, hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls...You, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name, to fear You, as do Your people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by Your name.” (1 Kings 8:42-43)** Isn’t that a great picture there? Even the foreigners when they want to come, ’cause they’re gonna come he says. It’s gonna be like 1 Kings 8. It’s coming back. And when the peoples of the world come to the people of God, because they’ve heard of what God has to offer, when they understand the generosity of this God and His goodness and the deal that He has for them is beyond anything they can muster on their own. What we have here is the people of God coming back and it says they want to pray towards this house. This is the house of prayer. Now the house of prayer, you might as you picture that, you might think of, “Oh yeah, I remember a little bit about that. Isn’t that like in the gospels like in Mark 11 where Jesus walks into the temple and He takes out an instrument and He begins to whip the money changers?” He begins to flip over their tables. (See John 2:15) And He cries

out from Isaiah, “My Father’s house is to be a house of prayer, but you have turned it into a den of robbers.” (See Mark 11:17) Is a house of prayer some reverential place where only those who know the right prayers and only those who know the right recipes in order to talk to God and the right traditions and they go into their ritualistic mindset and they pray to God, is that what the house of prayer is? No, in Isaiah 55 what we have is God is describing for us a house that He is opening up. He says, “I want to open up this house to foreigners and to eunuchs. I want to open up to anyone who will join themselves to Me by taking on My ways and making them their own. This is a house of prayer. I want to open the doors to you.” (See Isaiah 56: 4-7) And He’s saying to you, My Friend, “I want to open the doors to you so that you can talk to Me, so that you can see who I really am.” I want to invite you into a dynamic relationship with Me and I want to present to you My generous offer.” An invitation that says to you, “You who are thirsty, you who are hungry, you who are desperate, will you come to Me? I’ve opened up the doors. It is through Jesus Christ that I spread these doors wide open and here I ask, ‘Come, come to the house of prayer all peoples.’” My Friend, this is an offer from a generous God, an offer from which you can accept.