

Introduction

“The prophet Isaiah addressed “a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity” who had “forsaken the LORD” (Isaiah 1:4). To those persisting in arrogance, he promised sure judgment. However, to all who would turn from pride and unbelief to trust in the Holy One of Israel, he trumpeted the good news that “God reigns” and that salvation is possible.”

Gary V. Smith

“Isaiah,” *What the Old Testament Authors Really Cared About*, p. 292

This year we are memorizing Isaiah 40. This week’s verse is Isaiah 40:21...

“Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been declared to you from the beginning?

Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?”

Day One

NOTE: Days One and Two will cover selected references from Isaiah 1–5, and it would be helpful to read completely through those chapters during the week.

*Read Selected Scripture from Isaiah 1–5; **The Impending Judgment and Future Hope***

1. From your own knowledge or using the study notes in your Bible or other reference, summarize background information on the author of Isaiah and the time during which the book was written.
2. In Isaiah 1:9, what is the source of hope? Can you find a similar passage in the New Testament?
3. According to Isaiah 3:1–7, what punishment did the Lord warn Israel about in response to their sin?
 - a. How did this promise of judgment seemingly contradict the covenant promises given to David in 2 Samuel 7?
4. Although God confirmed the reality of exile, His judgment on Israel would not be final. From Isaiah 2:1–4 and 4:2–6, describe God’s greater plan for Jerusalem that was consistent with His promises.
 - a. How does thinking on the new Jerusalem affect your outlook on the circumstances of your life today? Take time to meditate on the final fulfillment of God’s covenant promises presented in these chapters of Isaiah.

Day Two

*Read Selected Scriptures from Isaiah 1–5; **Isaiah’s Name for Yahweh***

1. In Isaiah 1:1–4 and 5:18–25, what name is attributed to God in both these passages? Why do think that might be significant?
 - a. In both these texts, how is Israel’s attitude towards God described when He was called by this name, and what did this reveal about their character?
2. As you consider God’s holiness, read Isaiah 1:21–26 and describe the present and future reality for the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

- a. In the first 5 chapters of Isaiah, the prophet uses “holiness” five times, always in reference to God—with the exception of Isaiah 4:3. How does this unique usage in 4:3 give emphasis the reality of 1:21–26, and hope to God’s people?
3. According to Isaiah 4, what kind of hope seems to be offered to the people of Israel?
4. In the first five chapters of Isaiah, what characteristic of God stands out to you? What do these chapters teach about God’s character?
5. Imagine that you’re in a conversation with a non-Christian and write a brief explanation about what it means that God is holy.
6. As you consider God’s character, write a brief prayer thanking God for how His holiness impacts your daily life, and share that with your group.

Day Three

Read *Isaiah 6; Isaiah’s Vision*

Note: Isaiah’s vision in chapter 6 acts as a bridge text—summarizing the theology in chapters 1–5 and preparing the reader for the rest of the book. It also resolves the apparent tensions of the opening chapters.

1. From 2 Chronicles 26:16–23, what was Uzziah’s sin and its consequences? (Remember that Uzziah was Judah’s king when God called Isaiah to prophesy.)
 - a. What differences do you see between Uzziah and the divine King in Isaiah’s vision in 6:1–4.
2. What similar theme or outlook do you see in Isaiah 2:1–4 and 6:1? What detail would Isaiah’s vision in chapter 6 add to Israel’s hope?
3. From Isaiah 6:8–13, how would Isaiah’s call to ministry have been used to facilitate the hardening of the nation and move them towards exile?
4. Using your Bible’s study notes or other commentary, what is the meaning of the “holy seed” in verse 13?
 - a. How would that reference have given Israel hope?

Day Four

Read *Selected Scriptures from Isaiah 7–10; The Coming King*

Note: In Isaiah 7, note that King Ahaz represented the house of David (verses 1–2) and his false humility in verse 12 would not stop the Lord’s revelation of His plans for David’s line.

1. In Isaiah 7:13–14, what additional information about the promise of hope was given?

- a. How does that hope connect to the vision of Zion's future exaltation in chapters 2, 4, and 6?
2. In Isaiah 9:1–5, what effect would the arrival of the prophesied Messiah have on the people?
3. In verses 6–7, what information is given about the virgin's child that distinguishes this King from all others?
 - a. Think through the implications of Jesus Christ as King. How would a deeper understanding of the four titles given to Christ in verses 6–7 affect your personal relationship with Him? Be specific.
4. How will the coming King fulfill aspects of both the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants?
5. From Isaiah 10:20–23, what practical hope did God give the people in exile?
 - a. In verse 20, what indication is given of a spiritual transformation and not just a physical return?

Day Five

Read Isaiah 11 and Selected Scriptures; ***The Kingdom to Come***

1. From Ruth 4:18–22 and Isaiah 11:1, describe the lineage of the prophesied King. How does that connect with God's promise to David in 2 Samuel 7:8–16?
2. According to Isaiah 11:2–5, what characteristics indicate this King will rule well and effectively?
 - a. Contrast this King's reign in Jerusalem with the description of the city given in Isaiah 1–2.
3. Considering the nature of the kingdom in redemptive history, how does the description in Isaiah 11:6–9 relate to the narrative of creation and the fall in Genesis 1–3?
4. Describe the connection between Isaiah 2:1–4, 6:3, and 11:9–10 and what this communicates about Israel's relationship with the rest of the world.
5. Take time to thank God for what you have learned in your study this week and share how it's expanded your understanding of His glorious plan of redemption.