

summer
bible study

isaiah.

trusting amid
the tension

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Isaiah: Trusting amid the Tension: We must trust God even when things don't look like we think they should

The book of Isaiah is considered a literary masterpiece, but often when we read it we are confused, struggling to see application to our daily lives. We get stuck and frustrated by the unfamiliar culture, people, and style.

However, when we see the big picture of Isaiah, we see a beautiful picture with glimpses of God's coming salvation through His seed, a stump, and a remnant. And we start to see incredible application to our lives in the themes of rote religion, misplaced trust, rebellion, suffering, steadfastness, salvation, and hope. Ultimately, we find confidence as we see God's surprising plan to redeem His people through the unlikely suffering of a coming conqueror. Nowhere in the Old Testament do we see such a clear picture of Jesus.

Reading Strategies

- Keep your head up (don't get lost in the weeds)
- Look for the savior (seed, stump, servant,...)
- Read through the lens of NT
- Embrace your inner poet
- Look at the horizon (prophetic horizon)
- What's the principle beneath the proclamation?

Repeated Themes

- Israel's Holy One
- Zion/Jerusalem
- Day of the Lord
- Vineyard
- Branch/Stump
- Remnant
- Servant/Messiah
- Raised up/down
- Justice & worship
- Nations

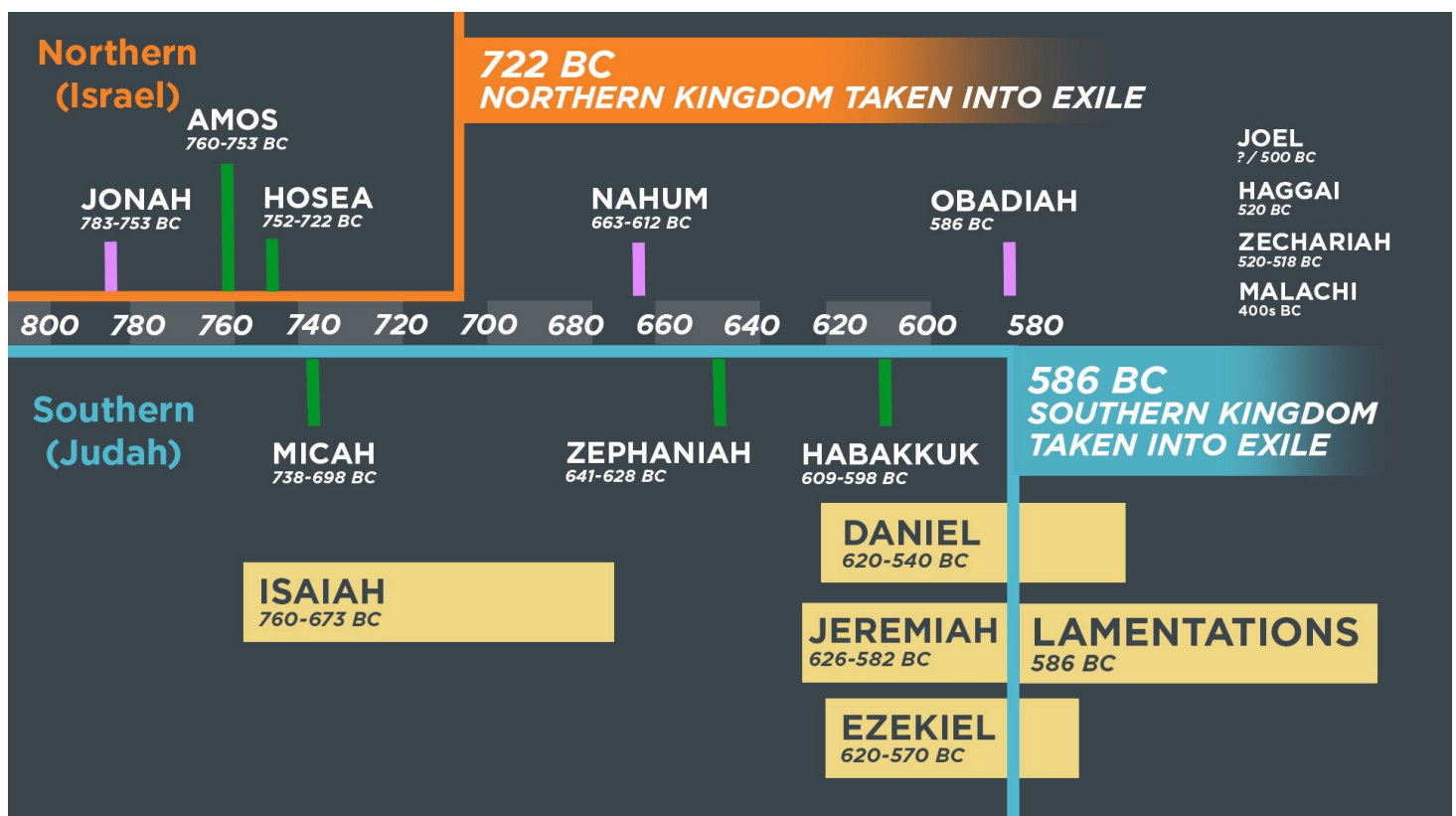
The Messiah

- Branch (4:2, 11:1)
- Immanuel (7:14)
- Stone of stumbling (8:14)
- Root of Jesse (11:10)
- Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (9:6)
- Suffering Servant (42:1, 49:3-6, 50:4-7, 52:13-53:12)
- Light (42:6, 49:6)
- Redeemer (59:20)
- Anointed One (61:1)

History

The people of Israel as we left them last summer were one people divided into twelve tribes geographically. However, the people didn't follow the Lord and eventually a coup took place against the king of Israel, Rehoboam, who was Solomon's son. The man who rebelled, Jeroboam, eventually won the allegiance and became the first king of the northern ten tribes, who would still be called Israel, and King Rehoboam remained the King of the Southern two tribes, who would now be called Judah. You can read about the coup and resulting division of the tribes in 1 Kings 12.

- **739 BC: King Uzziah dies.** Isaiah 6 describes Isaiah's vision of God in the temple and his commission to "go and tell [the people]" (6:9). This is often called Isaiah's call, but its position in the book suggests his ministry may have begun before this event. The vision took place "in the year that King Uzziah died", which was 739 BC. Uzziah's reign had been long and prosperous (he reigned 791- 739). But now Tiglath-Pileser III, the king of Assyria (emerging as the regional superpower) was threatening Judah.
- **734 BC: Israel and Aram threaten Judah.** Isaiah ministered at a time when the twelve tribes of Israel had split into two nations: the ten northern tribes, who were known as Israel or Ephraim, and the two southern tribes, who were known as Judah (where Isaiah was active). Isaiah 7 describes the alliance between King Pekah of Israel and King Rezin of Aram against King Ahaz of Judah. Isaiah exhorts Ahaz (who reigned 735-715) to trust in God, but instead Ahaz looks to Assyria.
- **701 BC: Sennacherib besieges Jerusalem.** Isaiah 36 - 39 describes the attack on Jerusalem by Sennacherib, the king of the Assyrian Empire. By then the king of Judah was Hezekiah, who reigned 729-686. King Hezekiah turns to God in prayer, and Jerusalem is dramatically delivered.
- **587 BC: Exile into Babylon.** In time the Assyrian Empire gave way to the Babylonian Empire. The Babylonians would defeat Judah and destroy Jerusalem in 587 BC, leading many of the people away into exile (including Ezekiel and Daniel). Isaiah predicts this exile and the Babylonian captivity of Judah in 587 BC. In chapters 40 - 66 Isaiah addresses these exiles - speaking into a situation two centuries after his day. But these chapters also look beyond this judgment to offer the hope of a new exodus through which God will gather his exiled people home to a restored land.



Ancient Israel & Judah



Isaiah Outline

THE OVERALL DESIGN OF ISAIAH

	GOD PURIFIES A REMNANT OF HIS APOSTATE PEOPLE THROUGH JUDGMENT				GOD CONSOLES HIS DISCOURAGED PEOPLE IN EXILE				GOD PREPARES HIS TRUE PEOPLE FOR HIS PROMISED SALVATION															
	Introduction: "Ah, sinful nation!"	God saves a remnant by grace: "Your guilt is taken away."	God governs the nations, preserving his own: "We have a strong city."	God confronts unbelief: "Ah, stubborn children."	Transition: "In whom do you now trust?"	God will free his people from oppression: "Go out from Babylon!"	God will free his people from sin: "The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all."	God applies his messages of confrontation and comfort on his own: "Keep justice, and do righteousness."	1	5	6	12	13	27	28	35	36	39	40	48	49	55	56	66
SETTING	The eighth century B.C., the Assyrian threat								The sixth century B.C., the Babylonian exile				All times until the end											
AUDIENCE	God's rebellious people craving worldly security								God's defeated people under worldly domination				All who hold fast to God's covenant											
MESSAGE	"In returning and rest you shall be saved; ...but you were unwilling" (30:15)								"The glory of the Lord shall be revealed" (40:5)				"I will gather yet others" (56:8)											



ISAIAH IN REAL TIME



ISAIAH IN FUTURE TIME

Chapters	Initial Audience and Historical Context	Threat or Empire	Central Message
1-6	The "overture" - a medley of key themes.		The Holy King judges fruitless Jerusalem, but will renew her.
7-12	Isaiah invites King Ahaz to trust God rather than form an alliance with Assyria.	Aram & Israel	The LORD Almighty promises a new King.
13-27	Isaiah addresses the nations.		The LORD Almighty will rule the nations through his King.
28-39	Isaiah invites King Hezekiah to trust God rather than form an alliance with Egypt.	Assyria	Human help is useless, but the Holy One of Israel gives rest.
40-55	Isaiah looks ahead to the exile in Babylon.	Babylon	I AM will redeem his people in a new exodus through the sufferings of the Servant.
56-66	Isaiah looks ahead to the return from exile.	Persia	The Warrior-God will gather his people from all nations through the mission of his servants.

Bible Study Schedule

Week	Date	Teaching	Reading for the Next Week
1	June 4	Intro	Isaiah 1-6
2	June 11	Case and Call (Isaiah 2-6)	Isaiah 7-12
3	June 18	Compromise of the King / Promise of the Stump (Isaiah 7-12)	Isaiah 13-23
4	June 25	Judgment of the Nations (Isaiah 13-23)	Isaiah 24-29
5	July 2	Tale of 2 cities / 3 woes (Isaiah 24-29)	Isaiah 30-39
6	July 9	In whom do you Trust? (Isaiah 30-39)	Isaiah 40-48
7	July 16	Hope in the Darkness (Isaiah 40-48)	Isaiah 49-55
8	July 23	Servant's mission (Isaiah 49-55)	Isaiah 56-66
9	July 30	God's Servants Inherit the Kingdom (Isaiah 56-66)	Selected Readings
10	August 6	Putting it all Together	

As you read through the whole book of Isaiah during this study, you will notice how the Lord will ultimately save Judah, Israel, and the entire world through Jesus.

Transcendent - God is completely other than the things of this world. In John 8:23 Jesus says, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world."

Because God is transcendent, God is holy, infinite, omnipotent, omnipresent, among others. God doesn't think like we do (Isaiah 55:8 - 9) because, while He is active in His creation, God is not like anything else in the world.

Infinite - God is infinite. We typically think of this in terms of time, and that is correct, for the Psalmist says, "Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God." (Psalm 90:1 - 2) Yet God is also infinite in space, capacity, power, etc. Because God is infinite, he is above and without time, space, or any other limitation we feel as humanity.

Imminent - God is active and present within nature, human nature, and history. We see this throughout Scripture, from Genesis (God makes all things) to Revelation (God redeems all things) as we see God interact with the natural world (the flood, stilling the storm) to meeting with His people. In Matthew 10:29 - 30, Jesus says, "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered." Colossians 1:17 says, "He is before all things, and in him all things hold together." God is active in His creation, intently sustaining all things, knowing the dynamic number of hairs on our heads.

Immutable - God does not change. God directly states this in Malachi 3:6, "I, the Lord, do not change." His character and nature have been and will be the same for all eternity.

Omnipotent - God is all-powerful. Job says, "I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted." (Job 42:2) In Genesis, God says, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Genesis 18:14) God displays His power throughout the pages of Scripture.

Omnipresent - God is present everywhere at all times. The Psalmist declares, "Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast." (Psalm 139:7 - 10) God says, "'Am I only a God nearby,' declares the Lord, 'and not a God far away? Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them?' declares the Lord. 'Do not I fill heaven and earth?' declares the Lord." (Jeremiah 23:23 - 24)

Omniscient - God is all-knowing. "The omniscience of God comprehends all things—things past, things present, and things future, and the possible as well as the actual. Psalm 139 is a beautiful confession of the comfort of God's omniscience. In Isaiah, God says of Himself, "...I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.'" (Isaiah 46:9b - 10)

Sovereign - God's authority is universal and absolute. In God's ultimate wisdom, He is the ruler of all, holding all authority to govern as He sees fit. In His love, God uses his sovereignty for our ultimate good. In His holiness, His sovereignty means that He alone is ruler, the One true God. In Deuteronomy 10:14, God says to Israel via Moses, "Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it." The heavens, earth, and every created space and thing belong to the Lord. He is in and above all. See also Psalm 24:1, 1 Timothy 6:15, Acts 4:23 - 31, among others.

God Is...

Holy - God calls us to be holy as He is holy in Leviticus 19:2 and 1 Peter 1:15 - 16. God's holiness is what separates Him from His creation, for He is perfect and set apart. We, too, are called to be holy as God is holy.

Just - In her study on 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Kelsey Hency says, "God's justice is the loving action of an all-powerful God to right what is wrong. God's justice always brings about equality, punishes rightly, and vindicates the offended." Moses says, "For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing." (Deuteronomy 10:17 - 18) God's care for all people, especially the marginalized in our society, is evidence of His justice; every member of humanity are loved equally, uniformly deserving of forgiveness and redemption.

Love - 1 John 4:8 says plainly that God is love. We use the word 'loving' to describe Him, but the text itself says that God is love. We might feel affection for our family, spouses, friends, and others, but that love isn't the essence of who we are, yet it is how God chose to describe Himself. Romans 5:8 tells us that God demonstrates that love for us by sending Jesus to die for us. 1 Corinthians 13 speaks a lot of love, and Jesus told His followers in the sermon on the mount to, "...love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:44 - 45a)

Merciful - God's mercy protects us from deserved punishment. Several times in the book of Isaiah, God will explain or highlight His mercy. Romans 6:23 tells us that the wages of sin is death, so what we deserve is death and eternal separation from God. Yet, God in His mercy withholds that punishment so that we might be able to live and know God. See also Exodus 34:6 - 7 and 2 Corinthians 1:3.

Patient - Throughout the Biblical story, we see God's patience. However, some verses point it out specifically. Psalm 145:8 says, "The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love." Peter also calls God patient in 2 Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."

Good - The definition of the word good can be tricky. We call events 'good' when something is favorable to us. God's goodness, though, encompasses God's benevolence, love, mercy, and grace. Because God is true and only speaks truth, He gets to define goodness. When God made creation, He called it 'good' (Genesis 1). God said we're called to good works (Matthew 5:16, Ephesians 2:10), Jesus was called 'good teacher' (Mark 10:17), and God's ways are called good and right (1 Samuel 12:23).

Faithful - God keeps His promises, which are also sometimes called covenants. He cannot lie, so when He says He will do something, it will be accomplished. Deuteronomy 7:9 says, "Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations..." Lamentations 3:22-23 says, "The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." God is faithful to His people despite our failures.

True - God is the creator of all things. Thus, God determines what is good, bad, true, and false. "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life....'" (John 14:6) See also Psalm 12:6 and Numbers 23:19.

Week One - Isaiah 1-6

Day 1 - Read Isaiah 1

1. In 1:2-4, what are the primary “charges” against the people of Judah and Jerusalem?
2. Why is the Lord comparing Judah to Sodom and Gomorrah? (See Genesis 19:1-29)
3. What does God promise to do if His people are willing to repent and turn back to Him? How does this emphasize the importance of obedience and the consequences of disobedience?
4. What are the three names Isaiah uses for God in 1:24? Where else do you see any of these names in these two chapters?

The opening of Isaiah reads like a court case: the second verse of chapter one calls two witnesses, the heavens and the earth. Isaiah then presents his case against Judah (1:1 - 1:20) and Jerusalem (1:21 - 31) according to what God has revealed to him as prophet. The first chapter sets the tone for the rest of the book, though God’s judgment in Isaiah is not limited to Judah and Jerusalem, as you’ll see in upcoming weeks.

- Judah is the Southern Kingdom
- Israel is the Northern Kingdom
- Zion is Jerusalem

Isaiah 1:18-20 summarizes the terms of the covenant that God made with Israel in Exodus and Deuteronomy 28. The phrase, “Come, let us reason together...” in 1:18 means to come to a legal decision, not to negotiate or compromise.

If you would like to have more context into why the kingdoms were divided, please use this QR code.



Week One

Isaiah is called the “5th Gospel” because of the beautiful descriptions of Jesus.

The name Isaiah means “Yahweh is my salvation” or “Yahweh has saved.”

Chapter two introduces what many think of as a sermon that concludes with 4:6. “This sermon’s theological goal was to focus people’s attention on the necessity of exalting God and walking in his ways (2:5), rather than exalting themselves (2:22).”
- Gary Smith

“According to Isaiah, the outstanding characteristic of God that distinguishes Him from all false gods (idols) is that He has revealed Himself; He has spoken.”
- Dr. Thomas L. Constable

Day 2 - Read Isaiah 2

1. Another prophet to the Southern Kingdom (Judah) is Micah. Compare Micah 4:1-3 with Isaiah 2:2-4. In what ways are the messages from the two prophets similar, and what does that say about God’s care for His people? Have you ever had to hear the same thing from different people for the message to stick?

2. What does 2:7 tell us about the financial position of Judah at the time of Isaiah’s message?

3. Read Isaiah 2:22 in the NIV translation, and again in the ESV. In whom is God telling the Israelites to place their trust? And for what reason?

4. Where are you placing your trust?

Day 3 - Read Isaiah 3-4

1. In 3:1-4, God promises to remove support and supply from the city of Jerusalem and the region of Judah. What are the consequences of that lack of support and supply?

2. In 3:9, Isaiah again references Sodom. What is happening in Isaiah that also took place in Sodom? What was its significance?

3. Chapter three repeats some phrases from chapter two about infants and children oppressing the people of Judah or Jerusalem. Since Isaiah is, at least in part, poetry, what does this mean, since it's unlikely that infants will literally oppress the people?

4. In chapter one, Isaiah charged Judah and Jerusalem with rebelling against God and forsaking the Lord. Who does God say He will judge first in 3:14?

Israel and Judah had turned to everything but God for their protection: horses, chariots, silver, gold, and foreign gods. The people had wandered far from their God, but they were offered a chance to return. Do you see how God will humble and punish them so that they can learn that only He is to be exalted?

Notice the first seven verses of chapter three detail imminent future action, then verse eight turns the focus onto Israel's present time.

God uses images of high and lofty things to impress upon the Israelites that He has no equals.

Week One

“...God's judgment has the ultimate purpose of purifying his people, not destroying them.”

- Gary Smith

5. Lest any women think they won't be held responsible, God has strong words for them in 3:16-26. In what ways does this passage suggest women have been placing their trust instead of God?

6. Who is the “branch of the Lord” in 4:2? (See Jeremiah 23:5 and Zechariah 3:8, and 6:12)

The daughters of Zion in chapter three are the women of Jerusalem. The daughter of Zion in 1:8 is likely Jerusalem.

7. Isaiah 4:2-6 concludes what some believe to be a section of the book that began in 2:1. While 2:1-5 focus on the future glory of Jerusalem, 4:2-6 focus on the purification of those who remain, or the remnant, of Israel who will return after their coming captivity. How does verse four say these people will be cleansed? After the cleansing, what happens? What is the significance of the cloud and fire? (See Exodus 24:15-18)

Day 4 - Read Isaiah 5

1. The first six verses of chapter five read like a New Testament parable. The seventh verse holds the key to understanding this parable. Who does 5:7 say is the vineyard? See also Matthew 21:33, Mark 12:1, Luke 20:9, and John 15:5.

2. Knowing who the vineyard is, go back and re-read 5:1-6. What is the significance of verse two? What is the significance of verses five and six?

3. The next section introduces six woes (5:8-5:23).
To whom/what kind of people does each woe pertain?

Verse(s)	Woe	Moral Issue/Sin
5:8-10	Those who accumulate houses and land, until there is no room left for others	Greed
5:11-14		
5:18		
5:20		
5:21		
5:22		

4. How does God punish those listed in the woes (5:25-30)?

Chapter five is a carefully constructed judicial parable that would have resonated strongly with its readers, who were familiar with vineyards and the disappointment of a poor yield. The nation of Israel is compared to a vineyard and the people of Judah are the vines.

Woe means great sorrow or distress, and in this context means that judgment is coming.

Observe God's remarkable tolerance and patience towards Israel, haven given them multiple warnings and ample time to return to him; yet they refuse and willfully continue in their disobedience.

The word 'therefore' signals the consequence of the behavior described in the 'woes.'

To understand how accumulating land goes against God's law, see Leviticus 25:23-34.

Week One

Day 5 - Read Isaiah 6

1. This chapter begins by telling us that King Uzziah has died. King Uzziah's reign is summarized in 2 Chronicles 26:1-5. What does the passage in Chronicles tell us about what kind of King Uzziah was to his people?

2. What imagery is used to describe the Lord's kingship and majesty? Explain what each tells us about God.

3. What do the seraphim declare about God in verse 3? And what is Isaiah's immediate response in verse 5? How does that relate to the chart from yesterday's questions?

4. How is Isaiah's mouth cleansed? How does this relate to Isaiah 4:4?

5. What is the stump that remains called? What does this represent (see Isaiah 4:2, 10:21-22)? How does this give hope in the midst of significant punishment?

Notice the imagery: destroyed like a forest where all the trees are capped down to stumps. Only then, will they begin to grow again in the way of the Lord, through the seed of Christ.

Digging Deeper

1. In your own words, how will the people react to Isaiah's message directed by God in verse 9? In verse 10, what follows the "otherwise" or "lest" depending on your version?

2. Why would God send someone with a message that was only going to make the people more stubborn? Read Matthew 13:10-17, Isaiah 29:10, Romans 11:7-12, and 1 Corinthians 2:6-10 for additional context.

Week One

Week One - Wrap Up

1. What attribute(s) of God did you see this week?

2. What did you learn about God this week?

3. In what verses did you see Jesus foreshadowed this week?

4. What is one thing God is showing you to change or do based on what you learned?

Week Two - Isaiah 7-12

To find helpful background on the people mentioned in chapter 7, see 2 Kings 16 and 2 Chronicles 28

Context for Isaiah chapter 7: Two kings in the North, who were closer to Assyria, tried to take Jerusalem so that they had a bigger army with which to fight Assyria. They weren't able to take Jerusalem at that time, but they later would fall to Assyria.

Ahaz - King of Judah at this point in Isaiah

Rezin - King of Syria

Pekah - son of Remaliah - King of Israel (Northern Kingdom)

Ephraim - Israel

House of David - King of Southern Kingdom

Shear-jashub means, "A remnant will return."

The setting of chapter 7 is just prior to the Syro-Ephraimite War when Ahaz was preparing for an attack by Rezin king of Syria and Pekah king of Israel. Ahaz had just become co-regent with his father and was young and inexperienced. Verse 1 jumps ahead in time to give the reader the outcome: God already had everything under control.

Day 1 - Read Isaiah 7

1. According to 2 Kings 16:2-3, what kind of a king was King Ahaz?

2. Isaiah 7:1, the kings of Israel and Syria unsuccessfully try to defeat Jerusalem, but they fail. How did Ahaz and his people feel about that threat, according to 7:2? What is something in your life that makes you feel this way?

3. After Isaiah had a son, God told him to go meet with Ahaz and tell him that the plot against him will not stand (7:7b-9). In the time between 7:2 and 7:7 (in which Isaiah and his wife conceived and gave birth to a son), what did Ahaz do? (Read Kings 16:7-9 for the full story.)

4. Who does Isaiah address in 7:10? Who does Isaiah address in 7:13? Who will receive the judgments in 18-23 because of Ahaz's refusal to go before God? See 2 Chronicles 28:16-21 for further context.

God invited Ahaz to ask him for a sign, but Ahaz said he didn't want to test the Lord. The idea of a sign in this section is that, because the invitation comes from God, Ahaz wouldn't have had to test the Lord.

While Isaiah 7:21-22 might seem like a blessing, it's actually a sad sign because there will be so few people in the land, that those who are alive will have more than they can consume.

5. What is the significance of "shaving of the head and the hair of the feet"? What is the significance of these actions in the context of the passage?

Isaiah 7:12 is quoted by Peter in 1 Peter 3:14.

Day 3 - Read Isaiah 9

1. Look at the map of the twelve tribes of Israel. Where in the land (North or South) are Zebulun and Naphtali? Are they closer to Jerusalem or Assyria? Why do you think they were gloomy and in anguish?



Week Two

2. What important New Testament city is in the region of Zebulun? What important New Testament city is in the land of Naphtali? What great light would those inhabitants see first? See Matthew 4:12-16 for further context.

3. Read Luke 21:25-28 and Revelation 19:11-20:6. What do these New Testament verses tell us about the final fulfillment of Isaiah 9:1-7?

4. The next part of today's assigned reading contains judgment on Israel. Each of the four subsections from Isaiah 9:8-10:4 concludes with the same two lines. Write those lines below, and the corresponding sin God was condemning.

5. What imagery is used to describe wickedness as something small that rapidly increases? Spend time in prayer asking the Lord to search your heart and then repent for any small or large sin in your own life. Write a prayer out to the Lord below.

Day 4 - Read Isaiah 10

1. God clearly states His opposition to Assyria in Isaiah 10:12. Go back and read Isaiah 2:9-17, 3:16, 5:15, 9:9, and 10:12. What does God oppose? Since God never changes, how is that still true today? Ask God to examine your heart and reveal this particular sin to you, and repent from it if He does so.

2. Read Isaiah 10:5-10:12. Who is the godless nation that God will send oppression? Who will God use to do the oppressing? Who is speaking in verses 13 and 14 of chapter ten?

3. In the last chapter, we saw that our wickedness can be a flame that overtakes us. In 10:17, we see that God will use a flame to burn and devour. How is God's flame different from our wicked one?

The news that God will destroy Assyria (10:5–19) was probably heard with mixed feelings. On the one hand, Judah needed Assyria to defend it against Israel and Syria in the Syro-Ephraimite War, so many people in Isaiah's audience wanted a strong Assyrian nation. On the other hand, the Assyrian taxation and oppressive control of Judah that came after the war was not welcome. So the destruction of Assyria was a sign of deliverance from a "friend" who had turned out to be an enemy. Assyria's destruction is an amazing indication of divine grace to his undeserving people who chose to trust Assyria instead of God.
- Gary Smith

In the paired towns [in 10:9], the first in each pair is further south than the second. Thus, from Carchemish on the Euphrates in the far north of Palestine to Calno, and from Arpad fifty miles to the south to Hamath a hundred miles north of Damascus, and on to Damascus itself and then to Samaria, [the Assyrian] armies have proved invincible.

Week Two

We can now look back briefly over the ground covered so far: the Lord had a work to do at Jerusalem and he chose to use the Assyrian to do it. Furthermore, the work was done as exactly as when a master-tailor snips off his final thread. But there the identity between Sovereign and agent ended. The Lord had a holy purpose to fulfill, expressing his moral outrage —anger and wrath against godlessness (5-6); the Assyrian had a sinful purpose to fulfill: to manifest invincible military power, to assert an immoral right to rule the world, to give free rein to vainglory, arrogance and self-importance. The deed was just, the doing was morally outrageous.
- Alec Motyer

See Ezekiel 31:3 to understand why Lebanon is mentioned in this chapter.

4. Isaiah 10:22b references a righteous destruction. How is destruction righteous? What is God promising will happen in 10:23?

5. Verses 28-32 list cities or areas that suggest that the army of Assyria is getting closer to the city of Jerusalem, so close in fact that they're able to "shake [their] fist[s]...at the hill of Jerusalem." In 10:19, the Assyrian army is called a forest of trees. What is God going to do in verse 33-34 of chapter ten.

Day 5 - Read Isaiah 11:1-12:6

1. The branch referenced in 11:2 is also called a shoot. Who is the branch? See Matthew 2:23, 2 Samuel 7:12-16, and Revelation 22:16 for assistance.

Nazareth is literally translated "the branch town"

2. Isaiah 11:1-4 says that One will come from the shoot of Jesse (as did David, Solomon, Uzziah, Ahaz, and Hezekiah) and the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon Him with six descriptors. How do those descriptors help Him fulfill His mission in 11:3-4?

3. When the Shoot rules/judges, the world will look quite different, according to 11:6-9, and it sounds very similar to what will take place in Revelation 21:1-4. How will the world differ then from the world in which we live?

Week Two

4. Read through 12:1-6. What is true of a person God has saved?

5. What does it mean to draw water from the wells of salvation? (See Psalm 36:9, Jeremiah 2:13, and John 4:10, 13-14)

6. Summarize what you have learned about Christ from 7:14, 9:1-7, and 11:1-6.

Week Two - Wrap Up

1. What attribute(s) of God did you see this week?

2. What did you learn about God this week?

3. In what verses did you see Jesus foreshadowed this week?

4. What is one thing God is showing you to change or do based on what you learned?

Week Three - Isaiah 13-23

Day 1 - Read Isaiah 13-14

1. With these oracles, God is communicating that He is God of all; His power isn't just for Judah and Israel, but for the whole world. The oracles in these chapters are predominantly to the nations and kingdoms surrounding Judah and Israel.



Map Source: Kingdoms_of_Israel_and_Judah_map_830.svg; *Oldtidens_Israel_&_Judea.svg; FinnWikiNoderivative work: Richardprins (talk)derivative work: Richardprins, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

2. What happens when each nation doesn't trust God in these chapters?

3. In what ways do you see God's mercy and grace for each of these nations?

Week Three

4. In this passage, we see a lot of discussion about God's justice (13:3, 12:11-16, 14:27, etc.). When we come to passages like this, it's important to remember that God isn't punishing for the sake of punishment, but because He is just (14:20b). How does God's justice comfort you?

5. In 14:4b-21, who is speaking to whom?

6. Where else does God's power extend (13:10)? See also Matthew 24:29, Revelation 6:12, Revelation 8:12.

7. What three places received an oracle from the Lord in these chapters?

Day 2 - Read Isaiah 15-16

1. What happens when each nation doesn't trust God in these chapters?
2. In what ways do you see God's mercy and grace for each of these nations?
3. Yesterday we read about God's justice, What does God offer to the Moabites in 16:1-4b? What does that tell us about how God feels about refugees?
4. What is Moab's primary offense (16:6)? Where have we seen this same sin before in the study so far?

Zion is another name for Jerusalem, the capital of Judah.

Damascus is the capital of Aram/Syria

Week Three

Day 3 - Read Isaiah 17-18

Cush would have represented the end of the earth to those in Israel and Judah.

1. What happens when each nation doesn't trust God in these chapters?
2. In what ways do you see God's mercy and grace for each of these nations?
3. Most scholars believe that 17:1-14 refer to when Israel and Damascus/Syria have made an alliance. What is the result of that alliance for Syria (17:1)? For Israel (17:3a)? Yet, 17:3b discusses a remnant. What will happen to that remnant, according to 17:7-8? How does that contrast with the "strong cities" and why (17:9-14)?
4. The Cushites were called to go to a "mighty nation" (18:2b) and proclaim a message from there. What is the message God gave in 18:3-6? To whom is that addressed? What does that tell us about the breadth of God's rule and reign?

Day 4 - Read Isaiah 19-21

1. What happens when each nation doesn't trust God in these chapters?
2. In what ways do you see god's mercy and grace for each of these nations?
3. "In that day" in chapter nineteen is a future, yet certain, time. The phrase is repeated five times at the end of chapter nineteen. What will happen in each of these times? What does that tell us about God's character and heart?

Edom is another name for Seir. Edom is an enemy of God's people.

Week Three

4. What does 20:2 say that Isaiah did to communicate God's message? And, according to verse three, for how long?

The cities listed in chapter 21:13-17 are all border cities that controlled the trade routes throughout Arabia.

5. In whom were the Philistine's trusting, and what was the result (chapter 20)?

6. Isaiah 22:1-14 is known as the "Valley of Vision" and foretells of what will happen to Jerusalem if they do not repent. In verses 11-12, God called His people to repent; He offered them the opportunity to show remorse and to call to Him. What did they do instead in verse thirteen? What was the result in verse fourteen? Have you ever thought you'd gone too far to repent? How does this section of Scripture encourage you?

For some encouragement, read the linked article by scanning the QR code.



Day 5 - Read Isaiah 22-23

1. What happens when each nation doesn't trust God in these chapters?

2. In what ways do you see God's mercy and grace for each of these nations?

Digging Deeper

1. In Isaiah 22:15-23, who is in control of what is happening in the palace leadership?

2. The message to Tyre in chapter 23 of Isaiah is stern and somewhat difficult to read as a Christian today. Why does God say that He ruins Tyre (23:9)? What would be the point of ruining the earth's nobility?

"Chapters 1-12 reveal God's saving purpose for Judah and Israel. Chapters 13-27 reveal his saving purpose for the whole world."

- Raymond C. Ortlund Jr.

Week Three

Week Three - Wrap Up

1. What attribute(s) of God did you see this week?

2. What did you learn about God this week?

3. In what verses did you see Jesus foreshadowed this week?

4. What is one thing God is showing you to change or do based on what you learned?

Week Four - Isaiah 24-29

Day 1 - Read Isaiah 24

The previous days have had oracles for the nations surrounding Judah and Israel and one for Jerusalem itself. Now, though, in these four chapters, Isaiah says that God will destroy the whole Earth. This section of Scripture is often referred to as the "Apocalypse of Isaiah."

Ephraim is another name for the northern kingdom of Israel. Jerusalem is the capital of the southern kingdom, Judah. Assyria and Egypt are world superpowers at the time of this writing, through Assyria's powers are waning and Egypt's are strengthening.

If you have a parallel Bible or use an internet Bible like Bible Gateway or Blue Letter Bible, we would invite you to read this section of Scripture with the ESV and the NLT.

1. What do the first six verses of chapter 24 describe? And who will be affected by these events?
2. What is the rationale for these events?
3. In Isaiah 24:7-13, what will happen to the people who remain? What is their condition?
4. Isaiah 24:14-16a turns a page. What does these verses describe? See also Isaiah 2:1-5 and 11:1-11.
5. Then, in verses 16b-23, what did Isaiah see coming for the people of the earth that interrupted the praises with woes?

Day 2 - Read Isaiah 25

1. For what does Isaiah praise God in verses 1-5?
2. Note the words in this chapter that describe God. List them below.
3. Now read Revelation 20:1-15. Where will the Lord be? What will die according to Revelation 20:14 and Isaiah 25:8? What feelings does that evoke for you?
4. Read Isaiah 25:9. Is this verse true of your life? Have you waited for God? Are you thankful for His salvation? Spend some time praying for God to help make this verse true of your life, or thank Him for giving you a heart that rejoices in it already.
5. God has authority even over the death of death. Praise Him for His power, His authority, and the comfort that He'll bring to those who are His for eternity!

Week Four

Day 3 - Read Isaiah 26

1. Isaiah 26:1 says that the walls of Jerusalem are salvation. Do you think this is a near-future or eternal prediction? What other verses in the Bible (see Revelation) might support your theory?

2. What does it mean to have a steadfast mind, or a mind fixed on God? (26:3) What other action does it say a person with a steadfast mind does? How are you trusting God in your life right now? In what ways can you trust Him more?

3. According to 26:3-7, who does God oppose? Who does God deliver? How does this sound like the teachings of Jesus?

4. Compare Isaiah 26:7-11 and Psalm 1. What does each section of Scripture say about the righteous and the wicked?

5. To whom might Isaiah 26:13-14 be referring? What does it say about them versus God?

Day 4 - Read Isaiah 27

1. Isaiah 27 opens with, “In that day...”. Once you read the rest of the chapter, to what day do you think Isaiah refers?

2. Isaiah 26:20-27:13 discusses a future restoration of Israel through a remnant that God will bring back from captivity. You can read more about this restoration in Ezra and Nehemiah, but we also look forward to a future restoration of the whole Earth. What about this section of Scripture gives you the most hope?

3. How does Isaiah 5:1-6 compare with Isaiah 27:2-6? What happens to Israel as God’s vineyard during the course of the book of Isaiah (so far)?

4. What does God say He will use to judge His people in Isaiah 27:7-11?

5. How does your answer to the previous question affect you? Do you think that is fair or unfair? Why?

Scan the QR code for a helpful video by David Platt and Francis Chan about God’s judgment and the fulfillment of the Old Testament covenants.



Week Four

Day 5 - Read Isaiah 28-29

“These drunken leaders mocked Isaiah for the simplicity and repetition with which he presented the LORD’s messages.”
Dr. Constable regarding
Isaiah 28:9-10

**Ariel is another word for
Jerusalem. See 2 Samuel 5:9**

1. Isaiah compares Samaria, the capital of Ephraim (Israel) to a crown. What phrases repeat in 28:1-4?

2. In 28:5, who instead becomes the crown? And, to whom?

3. To whom is the speech in 28:15-29 addressed (see 28:14)? What is the tone of 28:22 in the midst of the speech? How does this speech conclude? What, then, is the overall tone of the words of Isaiah in 28?

Week Four

4. Chapter 29 can be broken up into four sections:

- 29:1-4 discusses the judgment of Jerusalem
- 29:5-8 references the deliverance of the Lord
- 29:9-14 considers the reasons for the judgment of Jerusalem
- 29:15-24 shows the remedy for spiritual blindness

If you consider the chapter outlined in this way, we see God judging and God's graciousness to His people. Who receives the grace throughout this chapter? Who receives the judgment?

"From the feared killer (Assyria) they seek help in the proved killer (Egypt)! It is ever so when alternatives to the Lord's salvation are chosen."

- J. Alec Motyer

Joan and Hanes are cities in Egypt.

Week Four

Week Four - Wrap Up

1. What attribute(s) of God did you see this week?

2. What did you learn about God this week?

3. In what verses did you see Jesus foreshadowed this week?

4. What is one thing God is showing you to change or do based on what you learned?

Week Five - Isaiah 30-39

Day 1 - Read Isaiah 30-31

Chapters 28-35 mainly take place after the previous chapters, chronologically, and highlight Hezekiah's reign. The temptation during Ahaz's reign had been for Judah to trust in Assyria. During Hezekiah's reign, they would face the temptation to trust in Egypt.

In this section of Scripture, your Bible might say, "Ah" or "Woe". The Hebrew word is *hoy*, which is translated correctly as both "Ah" and "Woe" in English.

"Woe is a term of lament and threat. It expresses emotion, summons others, and connotes sympathy."
- Dr. Constable

1. What does God accuse His people of in 30:1-2? What is the result (Isaiah 30:3-7)?
2. The rest of chapter 30 paints a picture of rebellious Israel. In what ways do you see your own sin in 30:8-17? Yet, what does 30:18-33 promise? Find a few verses in this last section to meditate on and thank God for as you study today.
3. What are the Israelites trusting that Egypt has (31:1)? What is the warning God gives through Isaiah (31:2)?
4. God also address Assyria in chapter 31. What does God say will happen to them?
5. As difficult as the ruin of the Assyrians and Egyptians will be, how is God described in the beginning of chapter 32? How can we make sense of the very different descriptors of God in chapters 31 and 32:1?

Day 2 - Read Isaiah 32-33

1. Chapter 32 presents a contrast in verses 1-4 and 5-7, with a conclusion in 32:8. How are those who follow God different from those who follow folly?
2. In Isaiah 32:9-20, we see an address to 'complacent women'. Isaiah also addressed women in 3:16-4:1. How are these addresses similar? Why do you think that God would see fit to single out women and give them a warning?
3. In that address to women in 32:9-20, we see a turning point at 32:15. What happens at that point, and what is the result? When do we see this happening in the New Testament?
4. Isaiah 33 returns to address Assyria. What does God say in 33:10? What is the result? How does this offer us security as we trust in God's character?
5. Chapter 33 ends with a description of the King of Zion. This is foreshadowing of the Messiah's universal rule. What gives you the most hope or brings you the most peace as you read 33:17 to the end of the chapter?

The section covers threats to Israel from both Egypt and Assyria. Assyria is a rising superpower of the day, and the threat to the Israelites is real, which makes turning to Egypt for deliverance that much more appealing. Though both nations are discussed in this section, the offer to trust in the Lord for salvation and deliverance is a theme that runs the length of these chapters.

**Regarding Isaiah 33 and the destroyer:
"...the background is Assyria's duplicity in seeming to accept Hezekiah's ransom-money."
- Alec J. Motyer**

Week Five

Day 3 - Read Isaiah 34-35

Edom is filled with the descendants of Esau (see Genesis 25 and 27 for more backstory) and consistently opposed the nation of Israel and Judah during the period of the divided monarchy, in which Isaiah is living.

1. Who does Isaiah address in 34:1? So, to whom does chapter 34 apply? What does Isaiah 34:1-4 predict?

2. As we close chapter 34, God has thoroughly destroyed the land of Edom. To what does Isaiah say the land belongs (34:11-15)?

Bozrah is the capital of Edom.

3. Isaiah 35:5-7 tell when this will happen. To whom does this passage refer? What verses and passages does this remind you of in the New Testament?

Carmel is a city in Judah. Sharon is a valley in western Israel.

4. Take time to reflect on Isaiah chapter 35. We have seen this foreshadowing of Jesus and the deliverance He promises several times in the book of Isaiah. Given that the people of Judah were facing literal threats to their well-being, how does a future promise offer hope?

Day 4 - Read Isaiah 36-37

1. Isaiah 36 turns from oracles to historical narrative. Summarize this chapter in a sentence or two. What is happening with Assyria's king, Sennacherib?

Libna and Lachish are both towns in the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

2. How does Hezekiah, King of Judah, respond (37:1-2)? How does Isaiah respond (Isaiah 37:6-7)?

3. Yet again, how does Hezekiah respond to God's response via Isaiah's answer (37:14-20)? What does this demonstrate about Hezekiah's faith at this point in history?

"Verse 6 clarifies that Hezekiah became mortally ill before God delivered Jerusalem from Sennacherib. Consequently the events of chapters 38 and 39 must predate those of chapters 36 and 37. Since the LORD added 15 years to Hezekiah's life (v. 5), and since Hezekiah died about 686 B.C., the time when he became mortally ill was evidently early in 701 B.C., the year in which Sennacherib threatened Jerusalem."

- Dr. Constable

4. Isaiah 37:33-38 describes God's response to Hezekiah's faith. What happens to the Assyrian army? Who is responsible?

Week Five

Day 5 - Read Isaiah 38-39

Babylon and Judah had a common enemy in Assyria at the point in time in which the Babylonians visited Hezekiah.

1. Hezekiah becomes deathly ill in Isaiah 38. What does Hezekiah pray, and how does God respond?

2. Then, what happens in chapter 39? Is Judah to make allies and agreements with other nations? The last verse of chapter 39 reveals Hezekiah's motivation behind his response to Isaiah. What do we learn about his heart and posture from Hezekiah's response?

Week Five - Wrap Up

1. What attribute(s) of God did you see this week?

2. What did you learn about God this week?

3. In what verses did you see Jesus foreshadowed this week?

4. What is one thing God is showing you to change or do based on what you learned?

Week Six - Isaiah 40-48

Day 1 - Read Isaiah 40-41

1. Given the information above, what did Isaiah supernaturally see that such exiles would need to know in order to maintain hope in the promises of God?

2. At what point in life is one in need of comfort?

3. In 40:5, who will see the glory of the Lord? To whom, then, does this passage of Scripture apply?

4. The cities of Judah (verse 9) have endured generations of evil kings. Why might they find 40:9 - 17 especially encouraging?

"The prophet Isaiah was writing to refugees in chapters 40 - 55; refugees who had seen their homeland torn apart; who had been dragged away into exile; who had wept by the rivers of Babylon; who had no heart to sing the songs of their homeland (Psalm 137:1 - 4). Isaiah wrote in 8th century BC. But here he looks forward 200 years to the coming exile in Babylon."
- Tim Chester

This section of Isaiah was written during the 8th century BC. The redemption God is discussing, and the hope of the future, won't take place until after the Babylonian Exile of 586 BC. That means that the events to which Isaiah refers will take place nearly 200 years after he writes about them! As Isaiah is writing, the Israelites are facing pressure from the Assyrian army. This is an example of predictive prophecy; the events will (and did) take place in the future, but the message was still relevant for the current situation. The people of Judah needed encouragement.

"If this is the first time you have studied these chapters, don't try to absorb every detail, and don't worry if the train of thought is sometimes unclear. Instead, try to let the character of God overwhelm you and alter your perspective on the world."
- Lifechange NavPress Isaiah Bible Study

Isaiah 40:6 - 8 is cited in 1 Peter 1:23 - 25.

Week Six

1. In Isaiah 40:12 - 17, God asks ten things. What point do you think God is making with these ten inquiries?

2. Isaiah 40:18 - 26 reiterates the foolishness of idolatry. What does Psalm 135:15 - 18 say about those who make idols?

3. Chapter 41 of Isaiah has several "I" statements by the Lord. What verse in the chapter is a good summary of the "I" statements God makes?

Day 2 - Read Isaiah 42-43

1. Isaiah 42:1 - 4 foretells of the Messiah, Jesus. Verse three describes some of how Jesus related to people while He was on earth. What stories and people can you think of who were treated this way by Jesus?

2. What word is repeated in 41:21 - 24, 41:25 - 29, and 42:1? What or who is contrasted in the two passages in chapter 41 with chapter 42? And what adjectives are used to describe the object of each passage?

3. Isaiah 42:10 says that the inhabitants to the end of the earth will praise God. Then, Isaiah's focus shifts in 42:18 - 25. The language in the last half of chapter 42 can be confusing because it's the words used to describe Jesus in verses 1 - 4 of the same chapter. What do verses 21 and 22 tell us about the group of people Isaiah is referencing in 42:18 - 25? And what is the overall message to this people group?

Isaiah 42:1 - 4 represents the first of four "servant songs". These "songs" describe the office of the Suffering Servant, foretelling of the Messiah usually by first presenting a need for a Savior.

Matthew 12:18 - 21 quotes Isaiah 41:1 - 4 to describe Jesus' earthly ministry.

Week Six

4. Isaiah 43 opens with a call to Israel. How did God describe Israel in 42:18, 19, and 24? Yet, what does God say about the same people in 43:4? What does that tell us about God's love?

5. Isaiah 43:8 begins another court case. What is God trying to prove? Cite the verse(s) you're using to support your claim. And who are His witnesses? Why does God choose them to be His witnesses?

6. Isaiah 43:14 begins a section of Scripture (43:14 - 28) in which God foretells of capturing and exiling the Babylonians who did the same thing to the Israelites. This is called the "new exodus" and concludes the court case. How does God find Israel: innocent or guilty? And what does He do about it?

Day 3 - Read Isaiah 44-45

1. Isaiah quotes God at the beginning of chapter 44 by saying God will renew Israel. In what season of your life have you needed renewal like the one God describes here?

2. Isaiah 44:6 - 8 sets up the next section of text by communicating that God is unlike any other. Then, what does God address in 44:9 - 20?

3. Isaiah 44:9 - 10 and 44:12 both describe men "fashioning" something. What is each creating? And of what use is each of those things?

4. In Isaiah 44:21b, God fashions, or forms, something. What does God form, and what is the result in 44:23?

5. God uses Cyrus, the future King of Persia, to eventually defeat the Babylonians. However, this would not take place for over one hundred years. How does the fact that God calls Cyrus by name here inspire you? What does it tell us about God?

Week Six

Day 4 - Read Isaiah 46-47

The Chaldeans are a people group who live in Southern Babylon. Their king, King Nebuchadnezzar, was responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the Judeans.

1. Look back at Isaiah 45:9 - 13. How does Isaiah 46:1 - 13 compare? What's different about each passage? What does God say He will do with the remnant of Israelites after the Babylonian captivity?

2. From the first seven verses of chapter 46, compare the relationship of the Babylonians with their gods to the Israelites and her God.

3. In Isaiah 47:1 - 5, describe what will happen to the people of Babylon. Why do you think that Isaiah calls Babylon "virgin"?

4. In 47:6, who delivered the Israelites into the hands of the Babylonians? What does that say about God's power?

5. What are Babylon's failures, as listed in chapter 47?

Day 5 - Read Isaiah 48

1. During this week of reading, the Lord speaks to both Israel and the surrounding nations. What key truth is God trying to convey to both parties? See 43:11, 44:6, 45:5 - 7, and 48:12.

2. In Isaiah 48:1 - 11, in what ways did Israel fall short of their profession of faith? Do you relate to any of those failures? If so, spend time confessing today, and thank God that He's gracious and merciful, ready to forgive us when we confess and return to Him. (1 John 1:9)

3. In Isaiah 48:12 - 22, God lists several attributes of Himself. Since Isaiah 40, where else has God revealed His character and nature? List verses and describe the attributes you found. In what ways are those attributes of God comforting to you today?

4. Why does God say He defers His anger in 48:9 - 11? Why is God's glory so important to Him?

5. What does 48:17 - 19 say that the Israelites have forsaken by not living in line with the covenant God made with them? In what ways do we still do this today?

"The preceding chapters have just indicated that Babylon was not the answer to this world's problems (46-47; 48:20). Israel also failed to listen to God and receive his blessings (48:17-18), so what hope do God's people and the nations have? Their only hope is that God would graciously redeem Jacob (48:20b) and that the nations would turn to God and be saved (45:22). But how will God accomplish this?"

- Gary Smith

Week Seven - Isaiah 49-55

Here, the Servant addresses the nations who did not know Israel's God. The second servant song is found in Isaiah 49:1 - 6.

"The Jewish nation was called to glorify God and be a light to the Gentiles, but they failed in their mission. This is why Messiah is called "Israel" in Isaiah 49:3: He did the work that Israel was supposed to do."
- Dr. Warren Wiersbe

Though we don't know exactly to whom the 'you' in Isaiah 49:8 is referring, what is clear is that God gathers people and presents them as a fulfillment of the covenant. Many assume that the prisoners welcomed in Isaiah 49:9 refer to those who were from other nations, though at this time Isaiah is speaking to Israelites who are in exile because of their defeat by the Babylonians.

Isaiah 49:18 emphasizes that Yahweh is a God who lives, responds to and cares about His people, rather than an idol that will be burned or melted.

To read more about the return of the Israelites to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity, read the short Old Testament books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Day 1 - Read Isaiah 49

1. How does the Servant feel in this passage? Is His task easy and joy-filled? If not, why not?

2. Isaiah 49:7 seems to be a turning point in the tone of this chapter. What happens in Isaiah 49: 8 - 12? And to whom?

3. What three things does God say He will do in Isaiah 49:8?

4. This is one of several times that "servant" is used in the book of Isaiah. Look back at chapters 9 and 11. In what way does this Servant resemble the Son of David prophesied in 9:6 - 7 and 11:1 - 9?

5. Carefully read Isaiah 49:13 - 14. What does God tell the heavens to do, and how do the people in Jerusalem, the capital of Judah, respond?

6. Of whom does Isaiah 49:16 remind you?

Day 2 - Read Isaiah 50

1. God is very direct via Isaiah in 50:1. What caused the exile and subsequent captivity for those in Judah?

2. Isaiah 50:4 - 9 is the third of four Servant Songs. How do these verses remind you of

Isaiah 50:4	John 12:49 says Jesus "...did not speak on [his] own, but the Father who sent [him] commanded [him] to say all that [he] spoke." He comforted many in the times of His earthy ministry, including the woman at the well, Matthew, Peter, among others.
Isaiah 50:5	
Isaiah 50:6	
Isaiah 50:7	
Isaiah 50:8	
Isaiah 50:9	

3. Isaiah 50:11 warns the audience to not live according to our own wisdom. In what ways are you living according to your own wisdom and potentially not fully trusting the Lord? Spend some time asking God to reveal this to you, repent, and praise Him for His ever-present work in your life!

Week Seven

Day 3 - Read Isaiah 51:1-52:12

1. Isaiah 51:1, 51:4, and 51:7 all begin the same way, by admonishing the audience to listen to the Lord. What is it, with each admonition, that the Lord is asking? And of whom?

2. In order for the Israelites to listen to the Lord, He still must be near (51:5). What does this say about God's character, that He still draws near to His people, even in the midst of their rebellion? Is this still true today? If so, how does that provide comfort? If you don't think so, spend some time writing why you think God does not draw near today in our rebellion.

3. In order for people to still know God's law (51:7), what had to happen? What does this reflect about some people in the midst of the Israelites?

4. Isaiah 51:9 is a prayer of God's people, asking Him to wake up. Verses 9 - 11 are their prayer. What are they asking God to do?

5. And in 51:12 - 16, how does God answer them? Is He stern or harsh? Or is He kind and gentle? What does that say about how God feels about them calling out to Him? How does that resonate with you today?

6. Isaiah 51:17 -22a is his call to the people of Jerusalem to wake themselves up; God didn't need to be awakened...they did! Drunkenness is often associated in Biblical imagery with judgment. What does God say He will do with Jerusalem's judgment in 51:22b - 23?

7. Twice more Israel is told to do something (52:1 and 52:11). What are they told to do, and why for each of these commands?

Week Seven

Day 4 - Read Isaiah 52:13-53:12

“Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.” Hebrews 7:25

This whole section of Scripture is the fourth and final Servant Song.

“Isaiah 53 is quoted or alluded to in the New Testament more frequently than any other Old Testament chapter.”
Dr. Warren Wiersbe

Spend some time thinking about the last phrase of Isaiah 53, “...makes intercession for the transgressors.” Jesus is currently at the right hand of the Father God, making intercession — praying — for each one of us. Praise God today that Jesus bore all of this for the sake of our souls!

1. This poem says that the Savior was a man of sorrow or suffering (53:3). What afflictions did the Servant experience, according to the following Scriptures?

53:3	He was despised and rejected; man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him; We did not care.
53:4	
53:5	
53:7-9	

2. Yet, what attitude did the Servant maintain while enduring these grievances (53:7)?

3. And, what did these afflictions accomplish, according to 53:5 and 10 - 11?

Day 5 - Read Isaiah 54-55

1. Chapter 54 opens with a mention of barren women. The reason for their barrenness is widowhood (54:4b), but what does God say will happen in Isaiah 54:3?

2. In Isaiah, chapter 41 - 54, God tells His people not to fear ten times (41:10, 13, 14; 43:1, 5; 44:2, 8; 51:7, 54:4, 14). Throughout this book, the people of Judah were facing very real threats of physical harm. How would these reminders be a comfort for those people? What were some of the reasons God gave for them to not fear?

3. Isaiah 54:7 says that God deserted His people for a 'brief moment.' Most commentators believe this to be a reference to the Babylonian Exile, which lasted seventy years. We know that God is omnipresent, or simultaneously everywhere. Yet here, we learn that God turned His face or left His people. Has it ever felt in your life that God has left you?

At this point in history, a man's hope and a woman's purpose was found in child-rearing. To be barren would have been shameful, and God uses the idea of not having children as a reason to trust the Lord throughout the Old Testament (Sarah, Hannah, Rebekah, Rachel, among others).

Week Seven

4. In Isaiah 54:9 - 10, we see reminders of God's covenant with His people, and in 54:11 - 12, we find the restoration of the city. In that city, who will teach their children (54:13)? So, where does this likely happen?

5. Isaiah 55 has several repeated words and phrases from 54, but also within chapter 55. What words do you see repeated? What do we learn about God from this repetition?

6. What does 55:10 - 11 demonstrate about God?

Week Seven - Wrap Up

1. What attribute(s) of God did you see this week?

2. What did you learn about God this week?

3. In what verses did you see Jesus foreshadowed this week?

4. What is one thing God is showing you to change or do based on what you learned?

Week Eight - Isaiah 56-66

Day 1 - Read Isaiah 56-57

1. To whom does God extend His invitation of salvation and deliverance in 56:1 - 8?

“In chapters 40 - 55 [of Isaiah], Isaiah looked ahead to the time when Babylon would enslave God’s people. Isaiah promised freedom, but his vision of salvation looked beyond liberation from Babylon to liberation from sin and death through Jesus. In chapters 56 - 66 Isaiah looks ahead to the return of the Jews to Judea to reconstruct their country, which took place under Ezra and Nehemiah. But again Isaiah also looks beyond the return from Exile.”

- Tim Chester

2. Look up the word eunuch. Why would a eunuch refer to himself as a ‘dry tree’ (56:3)? And what does God give to eunuchs? Of the character traits that we studied last week, which one does God’s gift to eunuchs demonstrate?

3. According to 56:11b, who are the wild beasts and silent dogs referenced in 56:9 - 11a?

Week Eight

1. Isaiah 57:1 - 13 shows just how far the Israelites have gone in their worship of idols. 'Lust among the oaks' (verse 5) refers to worshiping idols, even to the point of sacrificing children. The smooth stones of verse 8 are also references to idol worship, as well as 'going up to your bed' and 'looking on nakedness' refer to sexual relations with temple prostitutes, as well as revealing what is really in their hearts. Verses 9 - 10 discuss Judah's propensity to trust in political alliances rather than God for their safety and deliverance.

2. What do we learn about God in 57:11 - 13 as He reflects on the idolatrous deeds and the way in which Israel worships their idols instead of Him?

3. Yet, what does God offer in 57:14 - 19?

Day 2 - Read Isaiah 58-59

1. Israel became rather outspoken about God's mistreatment of her in Isaiah 58. What are the people doing in Isaiah 58:2? And what is their attitude, as reflected in 58:3?

Isaiah 58:4 introduces the idea of 'hangry'! They're fighting because they're hungry and angry!

2. What did God outline as the purpose of religious rituals, according to Isaiah 58:6 - 8?

3. Isaiah 59 highlights two themes: righteousness and justice. In what chapters or verses have you seen God's righteousness and justice demonstrated in the book of Isaiah?

God's people have rejected Him, yet He is still faithful. If you've ever felt like you've gone too far, or your sin is too much for God to overcome, take heart in the truths of this last verse today, and praise God for His faithfulness!

4. Isaiah 59:15b - 20 displays God reacting to the injustice, corruption (of deed and heart), and sin of His people. In this passage, we see God put on armor. How does this compare with the armor of God that we're told to put on in Ephesians 6:11 - 17? What is the same? What is different? Why?

5. God speaks of His covenant with His people in the last verse of chapter 59. He says that He uses prophets to continue to tell His people of His promises to them, despite everything we've read about in chapter 59. How does God's faithfulness encourage you today?

Week Eight

Day 3 - Read Isaiah 60-61

The glory of the Lord was the physical manifestation of God's invisible presence.

“The gathering company is literally coming home to God. Midian (6; cf. Judg. 6:1, which Isaiah may have had in mind; the former despoiler is the coming worshiper) was in the south; Ephah was to the east of the Persian gulf; Kedar (7) and Nebaioth to the northeast, in the northern Arabian desert. The names are impressionistic of a world converging on Zion.”
- Alec Motyer

Isaiah 60:11 references the city gates being open, which is a sign of peace. In wartime, the gates would be closed to protect the inhabitants of a city.

1. Isaiah 60 and 61 largely focus on what will happen when Jesus returns since Judah never experienced a glory like this, even after they were brought out of captivity and returned to Jerusalem. However, at this point in time for the original audience, Jesus hadn't come to earth yet. What does this passage reveal about the coming Messiah?

2. How was this passage fulfilled at Jesus' first coming? For help, see Matthew 2:1 - 12 and John 1:4 - 14.

3. In 60:10, we see that God will use Gentiles/non-Israelites to restore Jerusalem. What does that say about God's authority and power?

4. Look back at Isaiah 5:7 and contrast that with Isaiah 60:18. What do you observe? How has God redeemed His city and people?

5. Isaiah 56 - 66 is considered a mini-book of Scripture within the larger book of Isaiah. The center of that text is Isaiah 61:1 - 3. Read these verses today. What stands out to you as you read it? Ask God to reveal Himself anew to you today as you read. Ask Him to help you remember this truth as you might feel discouraged, and to believe this truth even though your circumstances might make believing this particular set of verses difficult.

Week Eight

Day 4 - Isaiah 62-64

The phrase “grapes of wrath” comes from the Biblical usage, some say from Isaiah 63. Trampling of grapes usually indicates judgment in Old Testament prophetic language.

Bozrah is the capital of Edom.

1. In Isaiah 62:4, God promises His people a new name. This reverses how Israel has been known (see 60:15). Combined with Isaiah 62:11 - 12, what are the new names of Israel?

2. Isaiah 63:1 - 6 records a conversation, presumably between the Messiah and Isaiah. From where did the Messiah come? Describe the scene the Messiah recounts. Was there anyone there to save? And what does the Messiah declare in 63:4? To remember Edom, see Isaiah chapter 34.

3. Isaiah remembers the Lord’s mercy in chapter 63, verses 7 - 14. If you were in another nation watching what was happening to Israel and Judah, is this what you might say? If not, how would your perspective be different?

4. "You are our Father" is repeated three times in Isaiah 63:15 - 64:12. Why do you think that, in the midst of praying about God's power, Isaiah prayed and called God their (Israel's) Father?

5. What other names of God does Isaiah use in Isaiah 63:15 - 64:12? And what names or descriptors does Isaiah use to refer to Israel?

6. In the last two verses of chapter 64, Isaiah is reminding God that the Babylonians have completely ruined Jerusalem and His temple (See Jeremiah 25:8 - 11). What is Isaiah asking God to do in 64:12?

Week Eight

Day 5 - Read Isaiah 65-66

Sharon is a pasture to the northwest of Jerusalem. The Valley of Achor stretches to the northeast of Jerusalem. Using both here suggests that God will restore and bless the whole promised land.

1. God names gardens and bricks as places where His people were making sacrifices (65:3). Where were sacrifices supposed to happen? What other things were the Israelites doing that they were told not to do (65:3 - 7, see Leviticus 11:17)?

2. Describe the new heavens and the new earth in your own words (65:17 - 25). To what are you most looking forward to in the new heavens and the new earth?

Trashish, Pul, Lud, Tubal, and Javan are cities far away from Jerusalem that, here, represent the ends of the earth.

3. A remnant will be saved, according to Isaiah 65: 8 - 10. Of whom, then, is God referring to in the first verse of chapter 66?

Week Eight

4. Of what does God say that He wants from His people in 66:2? How can you foster that kind of attitude in today's culture? In your home? In your heart?

5. God refers to Himself as a mother instead of father in Isaiah 66:12 - 13. Why do you think this is? For what purpose is God using maternal rather than paternal language?

6. Isaiah ends with a beautiful picture of God gathering worshippers from all nations (66:10 - 23). What does God say He will do with those who come from other nations in this passage?

Week Eight

Week Eight - Wrap Up

1. What attribute(s) of God did you see this week?

2. What did you learn about God this week?

3. In what verses did you see Jesus foreshadowed this week?

4. What is one thing God is showing you to change or do based on what you learned?

Week Nine - Selected Reading

Day 1 - Read Isaiah 6-9

1. How do these passages fit into the overall flow of Isaiah? What recurring themes do you see?

2. How would you summarize these verses?

3. What attributes of God do you see?

4. What does this tell you about the state of humanity? About your own heart?

5. What is one area of your life that you can apply this truth?

Day 2 - Read Isaiah 36-37

1. How do these passages fit into the overall flow of Isaiah? What recurring themes do you see?

2. How would you summarize these verses?

3. What attributes of God do you see?

4. What does this tell you about the state of humanity? About your own heart?

5. What is one area of your life that you can apply this truth?

Week Nine

Day 3 - Read Isaiah 40-41:10

1. How do these passages fit into the overall flow of Isaiah? What recurring themes do you see?

2. How would you summarize these verses?

3. What attributes of God do you see?

4. What does this tell you about the state of humanity? About your own heart?

5. What is one area of your life that you can apply this truth?

Day 4 - Read Isaiah 52-53

1. How do these passages fit into the overall flow of Isaiah? What recurring themes do you see?
2. How would you summarize these verses?
3. What attributes of God do you see?
4. What does this tell you about the state of humanity? About your own heart?
5. What is one area of your life that you can apply this truth?

Week Nine

Day 5 - Read Isaiah 59:14-61:11

1. How do these passages fit into the overall flow of Isaiah? What recurring themes do you see?

2. How would you summarize these verses?

3. What attributes of God do you see?

4. What does this tell you about the state of humanity? About your own heart?

5. What is one area of your life that you can apply this truth?

