

Table of Contents (tap to go to study)

A Rebellious Nation - Isaiah 1:1-31	3
Judgment - Isaiah 2:1-5:30	4
Isaiah's Commission - Isaiah 6:1-13	5
The Sign of Immanuel - Isaiah 7:1-25	6
Assyria, the Lord's Instrument - Isaiah 8:1-22	7
To Us a Child Is Born - Isaiah 9:1-10:4	8
God's Judgment on Assyria - Isaiah 10:5-19	9
The Remnant of Israel - Isaiah 10:20-34	10
The Branch from Jesse - Isaiah 11:1-12:6	11
A Prophecy Against Babylon - Isaiah 13:1-14:23	12
Prophecies Against the Nations - Isaiah 14:24-21:17	13
A Prophecy about Jerusalem - Isaiah 22:1-25	15
A Prophecy about Tyre - Isaiah 23:1-18	16
The Lord's Devastation of the Earth - Isaiah 24:1-23	17
Songs of Praise to the Lord - Isaiah 25:1-27:13	18
Woes - Isaiah 28:1-31:9	19
Distress and Help in Jerusalem - Isaiah 32:1-35:10	21
Sennacherib Threatens Jerusalem - Isaiah 36:1-22	23
Hezekiah's Prayer and Sennacherib's Fall - Isaiah 37:1-38	24
Hezekiah's Illness - Isaiah 38:1-39:8	26
Comfort for God's People - Isaiah 40:1-31	27
The Helper of Israel - Isaiah 41:1-29	28
The Servant of the Lord - Isaiah 42:1-25	29
Israel's Only Savior - Isaiah 43:1-28	30
Israel the Chosen - Isaiah 44:1-23	31
Jerusalem to Be Inhabited - Isaiah 44:24-45:25	32
Gods of Babylon - Isaiah 46:1-13	33
The Fall of Babylon - Isaiah 47:1-15	34
Stubborn Israel - Isaiah 48:1-22	35
The Servant of the Lord - Isaiah 49:1-26	36

Israel's Sin and Salvation - Isaiah 50:1-51:16	38
The Cup of the Lord's Wrath - Isaiah 51:17-52:12	40
Suffering and Glory of the Servant - Isaiah 52:13-53:12	41
The Future Glory of Zion - Isaiah 54:1-17	42
Invitation to the Thirsty - Isaiah 55:1-13	43
Salvation for the Contrite - Isaiah 56:1-57:21	44
Fasting, Sin, Confession, and Redemption - Isaiah 58:1-59:21	45
The Glory of Zion - Isaiah 60:1-22	47
The Year of the Lord's Favor - Isaiah 61:1-11	48
Zion's New Name - Isaiah 62:1-12	49
God's Day of Vengeance and Redemption - Isaiah 63:1-6	50
Praise and Prayer - Isaiah 63:7-64:12	51
Judgment and Salvation - Isaiah 65:1-16	52
New Heavens and a New Earth - Isaiah 65:17-25	53
Judgment and Hope - Isaiah 66:1-24	54

A Rebellious Nation - Isaiah 1:1-31

Topics: Burdens, Children, Comparisons, Evil, Faithfulness, Forgiveness, Guilt, Hardheartedness, Hatred, Hypocrisy, Ignorance, Justice, Law, Mercy, Obedience, Pleasure, Prayer, Prophecy, Punishment, Purity, Rebellion, Repentance, Restoration, Revenge, Righteousness, Sacrifice, Shame, Sickness, Sin, Understanding

Open It

- * 1. How do you answer people who say that it is hypocrisy within the church that keeps them from believing?
- 2. What sort of circumstances might make parents unsympathetic to their children's requests?

Explore It

- * 3. During the reigns of which kings did Isaiah see visions from God concerning Judah and Jerusalem? (1:1)
- 4. What uncomplimentary images did God use to describe His people? (1:2-3)
- 5. What had Israel done to God by this stage in their history? (1:4)
- 6. How had God attempted, but failed, to get through to Israel? (1:5-8)
- 7. What prevented Israel from becoming just like Sodom and Gomorrah? (1:9)
- * 8. How did God feel about the many religious celebrations going on in Judah? (1:10-14)
- 9. How did God promise to react to the prayers of the people of Judah? (1:15)
- 10. What behaviors did God expect of His own people? (1:15-17)
- 11. What wonderful offer did God make to His people? (1:18)
- * 12. Under what conditions would God's people receive God's blessing, and under what conditions would they lose it? (1:19-20)
- 13. What contrasts did Isaiah use to give a "before and after" picture of God's people? (1:21-23)
- 14. What did God promise to do for Israel for their own good? (1:24-26)
- 15. How did God intend to treat the repentant and the unrepentant differently? (1:27-28)
- 16. How did God predict that Israel would come to feel about her current behavior? (1:29-31)

Get It

- 17. Why do you suppose Isaiah's ministry lasted through a succession of several kings in Judah?
- 18. How would Isaiah's listeners have felt about being compared to Sodom and Gomorrah?
- * 19. How could God have no pleasure in sacrifices and worship practices He had instituted?
- 20. What are some religious activities that fail to please God?
- * 21. Who are our modern-day oppressed, fatherless, and widows?
- 22. What does God want us to do with the shame we feel about sins we commit every day?
- 23. What is meaningful to you about the image of a piece of cloth, once dyed deep red, becoming white again?
- 24. What does it mean to "go through the motions" with regard to Christian faith?
- 25. In what ways have you "gone through the motions" of being a Christian?

Apply It

- * 26. In what practical way can you make God's concern for the helpless more a part of your daily life?
- 27. To what can you pay special attention in the coming weeks to make your worship alive and vital?

Judgment - Isaiah 2:1-5:30

Topics: Abandon, Anger, Authority, Darkness, Death, Deceit, Drinking, Evil, Fear, Follow, Forgiveness, Goodness, Greed, Guilt, Holiness, Holy Spirit, Humility, Idolatry, Judgment, Justice, Law, Leadership, Light, Love, Mourning, Oppressed, Peace, Pride, Protection, Rejection, Respect, Righteousness, Running, Sin, Teaching, Trust, Understanding, War, Wealth, Wisdom

Open It

- * 1. What pictures come to your mind when you think of a perfect world?
- 2. Why do you think some people are so concerned with their appearance?

Explore It

- 3. In Isaiah's vision, what is the status of Jerusalem and the mountain of the Lord in the last days? (2:1-3)
- 4. What will be the status of international relations in the last days? (2:4)
- 5. During Isaiah's day, why had the Lord abandoned His people? (2:6-9)
- 6. What images did Isaiah use to describe arrogant men faced with God's judgment? (2:10-21)
- * 7. What caution did Isaiah preach to God's people before it was too late? (2:22)
- 8. When God judges Israel, according to Isaiah's prediction, what will be taken away from them? (3:1-5)
- 9. What attitudes brought God's judgment on Israel? (3:8-11)
- * 10. When God sits in judgment in Isaiah's vision, what does He hold against the elders and leaders? (3:13-15)
- 11. What did God determine to do about pride and vanity in His people? (3:16-24)
- 12. What images of renewal did Isaiah use to characterize the Branch of the Lord (remnant of Israel)? (4:2-6)
- * 13. How did Isaiah use a parable about a vineyard to illustrate the sin and ingratitude of Israel? (5:1-7)
- 14. What kinds of suffering did Isaiah predict as a result of Israel's sin? (5:8-15)
- 15. What would become apparent about the character of God through His judgments? (5:16)
- 16. To what sorts of people did Isaiah preach woe? (5:18-25)
- 17. How did Isaiah characterize the might of the nations God uses to execute His judgments? (5:26-30)

Get It

- 18. What is some of the best news in Isaiah's prophecies about the future of Israel?
- 19. Why did sins of the leaders against fellow Israelites anger God?
- 20. What would have to change in order for people to feel that they no longer needed weapons?
- * 21. Why do we tend to put our trust in people rather than in God?
- 22. How would you describe a life that is bearing bad fruit?
- 23. Which of God's judgments from Isaiah's time could also be pronounced against our society?
- 24. How can we avoid becoming arrogant people?
- * 25. How can we tell if our own lives are having good effects on ourselves and others?

Apply It

- * 26. When can you spend time asking God to show you the quality of your life?
- 27. What should you do the next time you develop a concern for your appearance or status?

Isaiah's Commission - Isaiah 6:1-13

Topics: Ambassadors, Atonement, Awe, Blindness, Fear, Forgiveness, Glory, Guilt, Hardheartedness, Healing, Heart, Holiness, Hope, Renewal, Repentance, Sin, Understanding

Open It

1. If you were a powerful executive and could design your own office, what would your office be like?
- * 2. What are some of the reasons people volunteer at church?
3. When have you tried hard to communicate something important to an unresponsive audience?

Explore It

4. When was Isaiah granted his vision of the Lord? (6:1)
5. How did Isaiah describe the awe-inspiring sights around God's throne? (6:1-4)
- * 6. How did Isaiah see himself once he had been exposed to God's glory? (6:5)
- * 7. What provision was made for Isaiah's guilt in the presence of a holy God? (6:6-7)
- * 8. How did Isaiah respond to God's call? (6:8)
9. In what unusual way did God state the message Isaiah was to take to Israel? (6:9-10)
10. What did God want Isaiah to do? (6:9-10)
11. What did Isaiah ask God about his commission? (6:11)
12. What was sobering about God's response to Isaiah's question? (6:11-13)
13. What was hopeful about God's response to Isaiah's question? (6:11-13)

Get It

14. What can we learn about the nature of God from the vision Isaiah had before His throne?
15. What are some of the sins that would lead to a feeling of "unclean lips"?
- * 16. Why is it almost impossible, or intolerable, for a human being to stand before a holy God?
17. What could have motivated Isaiah to volunteer to be God's messenger?
18. How can we follow Isaiah's example of availability to God?
- * 19. What attitudes can make a heart so calloused that it cannot accept God's healing?
20. How can we keep our spiritual senses attuned to God's voice?

Apply It

- * 21. What can you do today to make yourself ready to be God's messenger to others?
22. With whom could you be accountable to revere the holiness of God in your daily life?

The Sign of Immanuel - Isaiah 7:1-25

Topics: Anger, Courage, Enemies, Faith, Fear, Help, Humiliation, Jesus Christ, Leadership, Miracles, Obedience, Patience, Testing, War, Worry

Open It

- * 1. To whom do people tend to turn when they face difficult circumstances?
- 2. What is one of the most frightening pieces of news you've ever received?

Explore It

- 3. What two nations united against Judah during the kingship of Ahaz? (7:1)
- 4. How was the morale of Judah affected when they heard about the alliance of Aram and Israel? (7:2)
- * 5. What word of encouragement did God send via Isaiah and his son? (7:3-9)
- 6. What did God mean when He said, "the head of Damascus is only Rezin" and "the head of Samaria is only Remaliah's son"? (7:8-9)
- * 7. What did God invite Ahaz to do in order to reassure himself? (7:10-11)
- 8. How did Ahaz respond to the invitation to ask God for a sign? (7:12)
- 9. How did God react to Ahaz's refusal to ask for a sign? (7:13)
- * 10. What sign was promised by God, even though Ahaz had not asked? (7:14-15)
- 11. What was Isaiah's specific prediction regarding Ahaz's enemies? (7:16)
- 12. What country would be used by God to punish both Judah and its enemies? (7:17-20)
- 13. In what concrete ways would Judah lose its status as a land of rich, productive agriculture? (7:21-25)

Get It

- 14. What are some of your first instincts when you are overwhelmed by fear?
- * 15. What makes it hard or easy to accept a promise that seems to contradict the facts you see before you?
- 16. What are some examples of how God accommodates our fears and weaknesses?
- 17. In what ways can you, and can you not, be harmed by another human being?
- * 18. What can we learn about God from the fact that He gave a sign that wasn't even requested?

Apply It

- * 19. What fear do you need to surrender to God in order not to be controlled by it?
- 20. For what recent act of concern and faithfulness can you thank God today?

Assyria, the Lord's Instrument - Isaiah 8:1-22

Topics: Bitterness, Children, Darkness, Fear, Hiding, Holiness, Instructions, Law, Occult, Plans, Punishment, Rejection, Trust, War, Witnessing

Open It

1. Whom do you know whose name was chosen by his or her parents because of its meaning?
- * 2. When have you had the experience of disagreeing with almost everyone around you as to the best course of action?

Explore It

3. What message of warning did God tell Isaiah to write as a large public sign? (8:1)
4. What two men did God call upon to support Isaiah in his prophecy? (8:2)
5. What did God tell Isaiah to name his son? (8:3)
6. To what imminent event in the history of Samaria and Damascus was Isaiah's son's name meant to refer? (8:4)
7. In what other nation was Judah more likely to put its trust than in God Himself? (8:5-6)
8. What metaphor did the Lord use to describe how Assyria would punish Judah? (8:7-8)
9. How did Isaiah express his confidence that Judah would not be completely destroyed by the invaders? (8:9-10)
- * 10. What did God expressly direct Isaiah not to do? (8:11)
11. About what sorts of facts was the reasoning of the people reversed? (8:12)
- * 12. How did God want His people to respond to Him? (8:13)
13. What images are given to illustrate a variety of people's responses to God? (8:14-15)
14. What and whom did Isaiah know to be completely reliable, despite what others might say or believe? (8:16-17)
15. What action did Isaiah take concerning what God said? (8:16-17)
- * 16. How did Isaiah see himself and his family? (8:18)
17. What did Isaiah have to say to those who recommended seeking guidance through the occult? (8:19-20)
18. How did Isaiah predict that the mediums and their followers would react to the circumstances they had incorrectly predicted? (8:21-22)

Get It

19. How was Isaiah's family drawn into his ministry as a prophet?
20. What would enable you to stand firm against the majority opinion?
- * 21. How can fear of people or circumstances actually work against our faith?
22. What different sources of advice and guidance do people consult in our society?
- * 23. Under what circumstances might we stumble and fall over our perception of who God is?
24. Who would you consider a symbol of faithfulness for Christians today? Why?
25. How have you seen people who don't worship God blame or curse God when they encounter hardship?

Apply It

26. How can you guard against the temptation to seek guidance from sources that counter God's wisdom?
- * 27. What current fears do you want to place under God now through prayer?

To Us a Child Is Born - Isaiah 9:1-10:4

Topics: Accountability, Anger, Burdens, Darkness, Death, Enemies, Evil, Good News, Government, Honor, Humility, Injustice, Joy, Judgment, Justice, Leadership, Light, Messiah, Oppressed, Peace, Pride, Punishment, Repentance, Righteousness, Self-righteousness, Wealth, Zeal

Open It

- * 1. What positive associations do you have with light?
- 2. What are some of the injustices in our society that you have noticed and care about?

Explore It

- 3. Although he had been preaching God's judgment (particularly on the kingdom of Israel), what total reversal did Isaiah foresee in the future? (9:1)
- * 4. What contrasting images did Isaiah use to set the scene of his prophecy? (9:2)
- 5. To what situations did Isaiah compare the joy that will be Israel's? (9:3)
- 6. What did Isaiah predict God would do for Israel, causing her to rejoice? (9:4-5)
- * 7. How does Isaiah describe the Ruler who will be provided by God for His people? (9:6-7)
- 8. When God judged Israel, what erroneous thinking prevailed among the people? (9:8-10)
- 9. What foreign powers did God use to ensure that Israel would not quickly be rebuilt? (9:11-12)
- 10. What refrain did Isaiah use to emphasize the seriousness of God's wrath? (9:12)
- * 11. What choice did the people make about their response to the God-provoked suffering? (9:13)
- 12. How did Isaiah portray the cross-section of society that would come under God's judgment? (9:14-17)
- 13. How did Isaiah portray the depths to which Israel would sink when God abandoned them to their own devices? (9:18-21)
- 14. What sins of the powerful did God single out in His list of judgments? (10:1-2)
- 15. What rhetorical question did God ask the oppressors of His people? (10:3)

Get It

- 16. What attributes of God are apparent in this passage?
- * 17. How is God's promise of the coming child an answer to His anger over our sin?
- 18. How does God intend for us to respond when He corrects or disciplines us?
- 19. How would you explain the Light that came into your darkness?
- * 20. Why might it be dangerous to downplay the seriousness of our situation whenever we encounter hardship?
- 21. How much of the injustice Isaiah condemned in his time do you see in our own time?

Apply It

- 22. What specific injustice in your area of influence can you challenge in the name of God? How?
- * 23. What person do you know who is still "walking in darkness" for whom God would have you pray?

God's Judgment on Assyria - Isaiah 10:5-19

Topics: Accountability, Anger, Comparisons, God's Will, Heart, Help, Idolatry, Injustice, Intentions, Judgment, Justice, Oppressed, Power, Pride, Punishment, Purpose, Rebellion, Sickness, Slavery, Understanding, Wealth, Wisdom

Open It

1. How have you seen power affect people?
- * 2. How do you feel when someone else takes credit for something you actually did?

Explore It

3. Against what nation did Isaiah declare God's judgment? (10:5)
- * 4. For what purpose did God use Assyria? (10:5-6)
5. How did the king of Assyria overstep the purpose for which God raised him up? (10:7)
6. How did the king of Assyria see himself in relation to all other nations and their gods? (10:8-11)
- * 7. What did God promise to do with the king of Assyria after He had used him to His own ends? (10:12)
- * 8. How did the king of Assyria flatter himself about his accomplishments? (10:13-14)
9. What was the king of Assyria's boast? (10:13-14)
10. To what inanimate tools did God compare Assyria? (10:15)
11. What calamities would be part of God's judgment against Assyria? (10:16-19)
12. How is figurative language used to describe God? (10:17)

Get It

13. What would have happened if the Assyrians had feared God?
- * 14. What attitude should we have if we find ourselves in positions of authority where we discipline others?
15. In what current international crises might God be using secular rulers for His own purposes?
- * 16. What makes people want to take credit for things they didn't actually do themselves?
17. What options are open to you if someone unjustly takes credit for some of your accomplishments?
18. What are the inherent dangers in considering God just one of many "gods" in this world?
19. Why might we experience a sense of exhilaration at the downfall of someone who has abused his or her powers?

Apply It

- * 20. How would you summarize a recent accomplishment, giving proper credit to God and to yourself?
21. What steps could you take to make sure that the purposes you have set for yourself in the immediate future are in line with God's will?
22. What do you want to remember the next time an enemy comes to ruin or embarrassment?

The Remnant of Israel - Isaiah 10:20-34

Topics: Anger, Burdens, Comparisons, Faith, Fear, Freedom, Judgment, People, Punishment, Repentance, Restoration, Righteousness, Salvation, Trust

Open It

1. What is one of the heaviest objects you've ever carried for a significant distance?
- * 2. How is your understanding of the word "soon" different from the way a child would think of it?

Explore It

- * 3. What would characterize the few people God would spare from His judgment? (10:20)
4. At their lowest point, on whom did the Israelites come to rely? (10:20)
5. What word picture did Isaiah use to illustrate how few the survivors of God's judgment would be? (10:21-22)
6. Who was going to punish the Israelites for their sins? (10:23)
7. Why did God instruct the people of Judah not to be afraid of the Assyrians? (10:24-25)
- * 8. What is the best news that Isaiah offers the people about the Assyrian invasion? (10:25)
9. How did Isaiah predict that the fall of Assyria would compare to other enemies He had judged? (10:26)
10. If Israel is likened to a yoked ox, what did Isaiah say would happen to it? (10:27)
11. How did Isaiah describe the forward march of the invading Assyrians? (10:28-32)
- * 12. Just when the Assyrians thought they had their world trembling in terror, what would God do to them? (10:33-34)

Get It

- * 13. How do the expressions in this section of Isaiah's prophecy emphasize the awfulness of God's judgment?
14. How would you express the hope for the people of Israel contained in this prophecy in your own words?
15. Why was the remnant of Israel going to be so small?
16. What factors prevent the judgments of even our best courts from being completely righteous?
17. What details come to mind in an image of a forest clear-cut by loggers or destroyed by forest fire?
- * 18. How is your experience of hardship changed if you know that you are very close to a solution?

Apply It

- * 19. What one habit of thought or behavior can you begin to establish over the next month in order to help you rely on the Lord?
20. How can you plan to offer hope this week to a Christian you know is struggling right now?

The Branch from Jesse - Isaiah 11:1-12:6

Topics: Anger, Faithfulness, Fear, Fruit, Glory, Greatness, Holy Spirit, Joy, Judgment, Knowledge, Messiah, Peace, Power, Praise, Restoration, Righteousness, Salvation, Strength, Thankfulness, Trust, Understanding, Wisdom

Open It

- * 1. What visual image do you associate with the concept of peace?
- 2. If you were a judge in a court of law, what information would you want to have in order to be 100 percent sure of your judgments?
- 3. What anecdotes about family reunions do you like to tell?

Explore It

- 4. Using the image of a tree cut down to a stump, what did Isaiah predict for Judah? (11:1)
- * 5. What qualities did Isaiah ascribe to the Branch of Jesse? (11:2-5)
- 6. What things would characterize the unique One? (11:3-4)
- 7. What unlikely scenarios from nature were used by Isaiah to illustrate God's peace? (11:6-8)
- 8. What image is used to describe the earth? When? (11:9)
- 9. What honors did Isaiah bestow upon the Root of Jesse? (11:10)
- 10. What did God promise to do for His people a second time? (11:11)
- 11. From where will the exiles be gathered? (11:12)
- * 12. What long-standing hostility will be abolished when God reclaims His remnant? (11:13)
- 13. Over what traditional enemies would the reunited Hebrews triumph? (11:14)
- 14. In what miraculous way did God promise to intervene in order for the people to return to their land? (11:15-16)
- 15. What very personal expression of a delivered exile is included in Isaiah's prophecy? (12:1-3)
- * 16. What did Isaiah joyfully command as a means of praise to God? (12:4-6)

Get It

- 17. In what ways do you think Isaiah's description of Messiah impressed the people to whom he was speaking?
- 18. When Messiah sits in judgment, whom will He welcome and whom will He be against?
- 19. What do you think it would be like to live in a world where even the animal kingdom was free of conflict?
- 20. What reversal of treatment gave rise to the song of praise in Isaiah 12?
- * 21. What does it mean to delight in the fear of the Lord?
- * 22. What news about our God is worthy of being proclaimed throughout the world?

Apply It

- * 23. What song can you choose as a particularly appropriate vehicle for your praise to God this week?
- 24. What relationship can you ask God to restore according to His will?

A Prophecy Against Babylon - Isaiah 13:1-14:23

Topics: Anger, Blasphemy, Compassion, Death, Evil, Fear, Glory, Humility, Judgment, Oppressed, Pain, Praise, Pride, Prophecy, Punishment, Rejection, Remembering, Running, Sin, Slavery, Suffering, War, Weaknesses

Open It

- * 1. How would you attempt to survive if America were completely ravaged by war and destruction?
- 2. What feelings accompany a surprise victory by the underdog team for which you rooted?

Explore It

- 3. To whom did God reveal the future destruction of Babylon even before it achieved the height of its power? (13:1)
- 4. What are some of the images Isaiah used to illustrate the power of God to be mustered against Babylon? (13:1-5)
- 5. How does the prophecy express the terror that will be felt by the Babylonians? (13:6-8)
- 6. What strange events would signal the day of the Lord (day of judgment)? (13:9-13)
- 7. What would be the primary reason for God's judgment of Babylon? (13:11)
- 8. How did Isaiah describe the helplessness and terror that would pervade Babylon? (13:14-16)
- 9. What nation would be God's instrument against Babylon? (13:17)
- 10. How would the Medes's goals of warfare be distinctly cruel? (13:17-18)
- * 11. What images of desolation contrast with the glory and pride that Babylon experienced at its height? (13:19-22)
- * 12. What pleasant reversals did Isaiah prophesy for the people of Israel? (14:1-2)
- 13. How did Isaiah say the Israelites would be able to taunt their former oppressors? (14:3-8)
- 14. How would the spirits of those in the grave greet the spirits of the Babylonians? (14:9-11)
- * 15. How did Isaiah describe Babylon's opinion of itself before its fall? (14:12-15)
- 16. What would be hard for other nations to comprehend about the total destruction of Babylon? (14:16-17)
- 17. What ultimate indignities did God have in store for an arrogant nation? (14:18-23)

Get It

- 18. For what purpose do you think God revealed events in the distant future to the Israelites of Isaiah's day?
- 19. Although God intended to use Babylon to punish Israel, what did He know about the heart of this people?
- * 20. Why was it important for God's people to realize that God saw the haughtiness and cruelty of the Babylonians?
- 21. In what way is it easier to endure persecution if you have an assurance that the tables will eventually be turned?
- * 22. How is it both wise and unwise to fear the cruelty of which powerful people are capable?

Apply It

- * 23. What promise of God can fortify your faith as you think about a difficulty you face this week?
- 24. What is one way you could warn someone in authority about God's standards regarding the use and abuse of power?

Prophecies Against the Nations - Isaiah 14:24-21:17

Topics: Advice, Answers, Blessing, Death, Discipline, Escape, Faithfulness, Fear, Foolishness, Fruit, Gifts, Glory, Good News, Grief, Healing, Heart, Idolatry, Intentions, Joy, Justice, Love, Mourning, Occult, Oppressed, Pain, Plans, Poor, Power, Prayer, Pride, Promises, Prophecy, Punishment, Quiet, Remembering, Righteousness, Sacrifice, Salvation, Shame, Sickness, Strength, Suffering, Trust, Vows, Wealth, Wisdom, Worship

Open It

1. What do you consider to be three good sources of advice? Why?
- * 2. When have you sought the help or endorsement of someone powerful or famous, and why did you want it?

Explore It

3. Where did God promise to break the power of Assyria, Israel's oppressors? (14:24-27)
4. In the year of King Ahaz's death, what message did Isaiah have for Israel's perpetual enemies, the Philistines? (14:28-32)
5. How does Isaiah describe the fate of Moab in the wake of God's judgment? (15:1-9)
6. What did Isaiah predict the Moabites would seek from Sela, "across the desert"? (16:1-4)
- * 7. Where would a throne of love and righteous judgment for all nations be established? (16:4-5)
8. What sin on the part of the Moabites brought all the destruction and mourning for their former abundance? (16:6-11)
9. Where did God know that the Moabites would seek help when they began to feel His wrath? (16:12)
10. How soon after he prophesied the fall of Moab did Isaiah say it would happen? (16:13-14)
11. With what foreign power had the northern kingdom of Israel allied itself, leading to God's judgment on them both? (17:1-8)
12. What had Israel forgotten, which would put an end to their fruitfulness? (17:10-11)
- * 13. How did Isaiah compare the "raging" of peoples and nations to the wrath of God? (17:12-14)
14. What kingdom would attempt to mount an alliance against Assyria, God's instrument of judgment? (18:1-7)
15. How did God instruct Judah to respond to the request to join the alliance with Cush against Assyria? (18:4-5)
16. In what ways does Isaiah describe the coming humiliation of Egypt? (19:1-10)
17. What help would Egypt be able to find in her wise men and leaders? (19:11-16)
18. What former slave nation did God intend to use to punish Egypt? (19:17)
- * 19. What amazing change did Isaiah prophesy in the relationship between Egypt and Jehovah God? (19:18-22)
20. How did Isaiah state God would describe even former enemy nations? (19:23-25)
21. What unusual command did God give to Isaiah as a sign to the people? (20:1-5)
22. What did God want His people to know ahead of time about the reliability of Egypt as an ally against Assyria? (20:6)
23. Against what major power did God post Isaiah as a lookout for its destruction? (21:1-10)
24. What future did Isaiah prophesy for Edom and the border territories? (21:11-17)

Get It

25. At the same time he was prophesying the punishment of Israel and Judah, what effect do you imagine was created when Isaiah also foretold the destruction of all the major powers around them?
- * 26. In the midst of all the judgment, what evidences of compassion and reconciliation with former enemies are contained in these chapters?

27. Why is it difficult for us to imagine the utter defeat of nations which, at this time, are prosperous and powerful?
- * 28. In what ways are you tempted to turn to a powerful but worldly “ally” when you are in trouble?
29. What is sometimes frustrating about the timing of God’s punishment of those who mistreat His people?

Apply It

30. What can you do the next time your instinct is to secure a powerful human ally?
- * 31. What small step can you take today to begin to prepare your heart to receive a former enemy as a brother or sister?

A Prophecy about Jerusalem - Isaiah 22:1-25

Topics: Authority, Death, Glory, Grief, Honor, Joy, Judgment, Mourning, Prophecy, Protection, Punishment, Running

Open It

- * 1. What are some of the most pressing worries in your life today?
- 2. Where do people in our society turn when they are in need of help?

Explore It

- 3. What labels, used by Isaiah, showed God's disapproval of Jerusalem's morality? (22:1-2)
- 4. What humiliating experience did Isaiah predict for Jerusalem and its leaders? (22:3)
- 5. What was Isaiah's emotional response to God's revelation about the future of Jerusalem? (22:4)
- 6. How did Isaiah describe the magnitude of the military threat against Jerusalem? (22:5-8)
- * 7. How did the people of Jerusalem respond to the threat against them? (22:9-11)
- 8. How did Isaiah portray the people's neglect of God during their time of need? (22:11)
- * 9. Rather than repentance, what attitude prevailed in Jerusalem on the eve of its destruction? (22:12-13)
- * 10. How did God emphasize the sinful attitudes of the people of Jerusalem? (22:14)
- 11. How did God intend to deal with Shebna, the evil palace steward? (22:17-19)
- 12. What attitude toward the people would characterize God's replacement for Shebna, the steward? (22:20-21)
- 13. Despite all of the honor bestowed by God, what would eventually become of the replacement steward? (22:22-25)

Get It

- 14. What should be our first response when confronted with threats or problems?
- 15. In what sense was the attack against Jerusalem by an alliance of enemies a test of its people?
- * 16. What events in your life or the world around you tend to inspire fatalism?
- 17. How would you respond to someone who believes that righteousness doesn't matter?
- * 18. Under what sorts of circumstances are you most likely to worry about "covering your bases"?
- 19. What is God's concern for leaders who use their position primarily for their own gain?

Apply It

- 20. What reminder would help you seek God's help first whenever you are confronted with difficulties?
- * 21. What passage of Scripture can you memorize to counteract a temptation to doubt God's involvement in your life?

A Prophecy about Tyre - Isaiah 23:1-18

Topics: Abundance, Forget, Glory, Greed, Grief, Humility, Leadership, Mourning, Plans, Pride, Punishment, Remembering, Shame, Silence, Wealth

Open It

1. In your opinion what might be the biggest advantages of being wealthy?
- * 2. How do you think sharing is valued in our society?

Explore It

3. What was the “glory” of the kingdom of Tyre, which Isaiah predicted would become useless to them? (23:1)
4. What were some of the wares that were traded by the ships of Tyre? (23:2-3)
5. Why would Egypt be in anguish over the absence of the “sons and daughters of the sea” (ships of Tyre and Sidon)? (23:4-5)
- * 6. What were some of the titles given to the kingdom of Tyre at its height? (23:6-8)
- * 7. Why did Isaiah say the Lord planned to destroy Tyre? (23:9)
8. Why would the former seafaring kingdom of Tyre need to turn to agriculture? (23:10-11)
9. How did God say that the people of Tyre would be acting at the time He judged them? (23:12)
10. What kingdom did Isaiah say that Tyre and Sidon should fear? (23:13-14)
11. How long did Isaiah predict that Tyre would be devastated? (23:15)
12. What would God do for the kingdom of Tyre after seventy years? (23:16-17)
- * 13. What would be different about the attitudes and purposes of Tyre before and after God’s judgment? (23:18)

Get It

14. Why might Israel and Judah have been tempted to see Tyre as a source of help against other enemies?
15. What parallels do you see in modern society concerning Tyre’s abuse of its material wealth?
- * 16. What does God intend for us to do when we have opportunities to enrich ourselves through making money?
- * 17. Why would God target the very possessions or activities that cause a nation to prosper?
18. Under what circumstances is it possible for us to use wealth to do good in God’s sight?

Apply It

- * 19. When can you prayerfully write out the reasons you make money and acquire things?
20. What creative way can you think of to glorify God this month out of your material resources?

The Lord's Devastation of the Earth - Isaiah 24:1-23

Topics: Bitterness, Covenant, Disobedience, Equality, Fear, Glory, Guilt, Joy, Law, Power, Praise, Punishment, Rebellion, Righteousness, Running, Shame, Suffering

Open It

- * 1. What sorts of circumstances can bring a sudden hush over a rowdy celebration?
- 2. What example of serious environmental damage have you witnessed?

Explore It

- * 3. How did Isaiah announce the extent of God's judgment of the whole earth? (24:1)
- 4. Who would be affected by the devastation God announced? (24:1-3)
- 5. By what method of repetition did Isaiah emphasize the point that no one will be spared from God's judgment? (24:2)
- 6. Who is responsible for turning the earth itself into a wasteland? (24:3-6)
- 7. How will the day of God's judgment reverse the experience of those who were inclined to continuous partying? (24:7-9)
- 8. What images did Isaiah use to portray the physical and spiritual emptiness in the wake of God's judgment? (24:10-13)
- 9. What will be the response of God's faithful people to the arrival of God's justice? (24:14-16)
- * 10. How did Isaiah illustrate God's inescapable judgment? (24:17-18)
- 11. What expressions indicate that the whole earth will feel the force of God's judgment? (24:18-20)
- * 12. What are the various powers that will be judged by God? (24:21-23)

Get It

- * 13. How does Isaiah underscore the omnipotence of God over everything—material and spiritual?
- 14. Why will the whole earth ultimately be judged by God?
- 15. How does God view our attempts to gain position and status over one another?
- * 16. Why do the people of God respond with joy and praise when they see the judgments of God?
- 17. How has the sinfulness of humankind affected the physical earth?
- 18. How can people avoid the punishment of God?

Apply It

- * 19. When can you pray this week for God to illumine some dark areas of disobedience in your life and help you to have a repentant heart?
- 20. In what concrete way can you counteract the waste and ruin of the physical earth this week?

Songs of Praise to the Lord - Isaiah 25:1-27:13

Topics: Accomplishments, Anger, Atonement, Blindness, Compassion, Death, Desires, Discipline, Enemies, Evil, Faith, Faithfulness, Fruit, Glory, Good News, Grace, Guilt, Heart, Honor, Humiliation, Idolatry, Joy, Judgment, Law, Learning, Life, Name, Oppressed, Peace, Plans, Poor, Praise, Prayer, Pride, Protection, Punishment, Resurrection, Salvation, Shame, Silence, Sin, Strength, Trust, Waiting, War, Worship, Zeal

Open It

- * 1. What are the qualities of a person you trust implicitly?
- 2. What is the most elaborate meal or banquet you've ever attended?

Explore It

- * 3. What aspect of God's character is the primary reason for Isaiah's song of praise? (25:1)
- 4. How had God followed through on His plans for the fortresses of people? (25:2)
- 5. How will God's treatment of the ruthless and the needy differ? (25:3-5)
- 6. What honor will God prepare for all of the faithful people? (25:6)
- * 7. What great burdens of human life will ultimately be lifted by God? (25:7-9)
- 8. How will God treat the rebellious of the world (Moab)? (25:10-12)
- 9. What will God do for His people, which will give rise to praises? (26:1-6)
- * 10. What characterizes the relationship between God and His people? (26:7-9)
- 11. What prevents the wicked from experiencing God's favor? (26:10-11)
- 12. How will God's people look back on His activity in the world when it has been completed? (26:12-15)
- 13. How are God's people humbled by His discipline? (26:16-18)
- 14. What images did Isaiah use to portray the resurrection of the dead? (26:19)
- 15. What did Isaiah instruct God's people to do while God judges the world? (26:20-21)
- 16. To what huge creature did Isaiah compare God's defeat of evil? (27:1)
- 17. What is Isaiah's image for God's nurturing care of His people? (27:2-6)
- 18. To what end did God strike and contend with Israel? (27:7-11)
- 19. What is God's promise of restoration for His people? (27:12-13)

Get It

- * 20. What sort of enemies do we face against which we have no natural, human defense?
- 21. What does God want the poor to know about their oppressors?
- 22. What attitudes and habits depict a righteous person?
- 23. Why did Israel in Isaiah's day stand in need of God's discipline?
- 24. What is one indication in this section of Isaiah that God's salvation was not only for the descendants of Abraham?
- * 25. How is your understanding of evil influenced by Isaiah's characterization of the righteous wrath of God?

Apply It

- * 26. What specific enemies, immediate and long-term, do you want to ask God to defeat on your behalf?
- 27. With whom will you ask God to give you the courage to share something of the goodness of God?

Woes - Isaiah 28:1-31:9

Topics: Abundance, Anger, Awe, Beauty, Blessing, Compassion, Covenant, Darkness, Death, Decisions, Drinking, Enemies, Evil, Fear, Grace, Healing, Heart, Help, Hiding, Holiness, Holy Spirit, Honor, Humility, Hypocrisy, Idolatry, Instructions, Joy, Justice, Listening, Lying, Mourning, Name, Plans, Poor, Power, Pride, Prophecy, Protection, Punishment, Rebellion, Rejection, Repentance, Rest, Right, Righteousness, Rules, Salvation, Shame, Sin, Strength, Stubbornness, Teaching, Trust, Understanding, Waiting, Wisdom, Words, Worship

Open It

1. What rules or laws in our society tend to be flaunted by a large number of people?
2. When have you depended on someone only to discover that he or she has let you down?
- * 3. What are some examples of lessons that you have had to learn the hard way?

Explore It

4. How did God illustrate the pride of Ephraim? (28:1-4)
5. What images did God give for the relationship He wanted with His people? (28:5-6)
6. How did God see the religious leaders who led the people astray? (28:7-8)
7. What were the people saying about Isaiah and his harsh teachings? (28:9-10)
8. How did Isaiah say that the people would be taught if they didn't listen to him? (28:11-13)
9. Why did the rulers of Jerusalem think they had exempted themselves from the coming destruction? (28:14-15)
10. What did God reveal as the true source of security for His people? (28:16)
11. What would the people of Israel discover about their supposed refuge? (28:17-20)
12. How did Isaiah use the imagery of a farmer to communicate that God will not totally destroy? (28:23-29)
13. According to Isaiah, what would become of Ariel (Jerusalem), the "Lion of God"? (29:1-4)
14. What are the various word pictures used to describe God's punishment of the enemies of Jerusalem? (29:5-8)
15. In what different ways did Isaiah express the fact that God's ways had been revealed but the people didn't understand them? (29:9-12)
- * 16. Why did Isaiah condemn the worship of the people of his day? (29:10-14)
17. What sorts of hidden deeds did God promise to bring into the open and address with His justice? (29:15-21)
- * 18. What new relationship would God bring about between Himself and His people? (29:22-24)
19. What did God predict about the alliance with which Judah sought to protect itself from Assyria? (30:1-5)
20. At the same time they sent gifts to buy the favor of Egypt, what did the people say to the prophets (such as Isaiah) who were telling them the truth? (30:6-11)
21. How did God respond to the variety of disobedience Judah practiced? (30:12-17)
- * 22. In the middle of their rebellion, what was God holding out to the people? (30:18)
23. What did Isaiah prophesy about the ultimate reconciliation between God and His people? (30:19-26)
24. How did Isaiah describe the way God would rescue His people from their enemies? (30:27-33)
25. What did Isaiah insist would be the outcome of reliance on Egypt? (31:1-3)
26. To what wild animal did Isaiah compare the Lord's vengeance against Israel's enemies? (31:4-9)

Get It

27. How do you respond when a younger person talks back to you?
28. Why do people often feel there is security to be gained outside of God?
29. What is the biggest obstacle to human relationships with God?
- * 30. Why do you think people bother to go through the forms of worship if they don't mean them?

- * 31. How can you tell if someone is sincere when he or she speaks of loving God?
- 32. What injustice has been done to you which will have to wait for God's vengeance?
- 33. Of what instances are you aware in which Christians have asked not to be told God's perspective on their actions?

Apply It

- * 34. What steps can you take to make sure that your worship is heartfelt, not just an act?
- 35. What is one practical way you could place your sense of security in God?

Distress and Help in Jerusalem - Isaiah 32:1-35:10

Topics: Anger, Beauty, Blessing, Blindness, Complacency, Confidence, Courage, Death, Earth, Evil, Fear, Foolishness, Forgiveness, Fruit, Glory, Grace, Healing, Holiness, Holy Spirit, Injustice, Integrity, Joy, Judgment, Justice, Knowledge, Lying, Mourning, Peace, Poor, Power, Praise, Protection, Respect, Rest, Revenge, Righteousness, Sacrifice, Salvation, Security, Shame, Sin, Sorrow, Strength, Understanding, Wisdom

Open It

- * 1. What dramatic difference between “before” and “after” have you observed due to a natural disaster?
- 2. What examples can you cite of a fool being called noble or a scoundrel being highly respected?
- 3. What circumstances tend to cause people to become complacent or lazy?

Explore It

- * 4. What would characterize the reign of the king that Isaiah foretold? (32:1-4)
- 5. In God’s eyes, what are the differences between the foolish and the noble? (32:5-8)
- 6. What warning did Isaiah have for the women of Jerusalem who had become complacent? (32:9-13)
- 7. How long did Isaiah predict the punishment would continue? (32:14-20)
- 8. What judgment did God declare for His destroyer, Assyria? (33:1)
- 9. What prayer did Isaiah utter for God’s faithful? (33:2)
- * 10. What does the “key” of the fear of the Lord unlock for the believer? (33:5-6)
- 11. What sad state did Isaiah predict for both the land and the people in the face of God’s judgment? (33:7-9)
- 12. How did Isaiah predict that the experiences of the sinner and the righteous person would differ? (33:10-19)
- 13. What are some of the physical and spiritual characteristics of the Jerusalem of the future? (33:17-24)
- 14. What are some of the roles that will be taken on by the Lord as Messiah-King? (33:21-22)
- 15. What sobering news did Isaiah announce to all people and nations? (34:1-2)
- 16. What are some of the images Isaiah used to describe the extent of the slaughter to come? (34:3-7)
- 17. On whose behalf did the Lord plan retribution? (34:8)
- 18. What are some of the ways Isaiah chose to express the desolation that would follow God’s judgments? (34:9-15)
- 19. What physical transformations of the land provide pictures of God’s redemptive work? (35:1-2)
- 20. What message did Isaiah have for believers who might have begun to falter in their hope? (35:3-4)
- 21. What are some of the miraculous signs which will be common in the Kingdom of God? (35:5-7)
- * 22. What did Isaiah tell us about the “highway” in the Kingdom of God? (35:8-10)

Get It

- * 23. What are the different effects of God’s wrath and God’s grace?
- * 24. What is God’s ultimate solution for the sin that separates us from Him?
- 25. Why did Isaiah say that the nations who carried out God’s punishment against His people should not feel secure in their own power?
- 26. What examples can be found in Isaiah’s prophecies of the earth itself benefiting or suffering because of our sin?
- 27. What value is there in Isaiah’s prophecies containing great words of hope and encouragement?

Apply It

- * 28. With what promise of God can you encourage a believer who is becoming weak or fearful due to difficult circumstances?
- 29. What Scripture can you study and perhaps commit to memory to help you avoid becoming a “fool” by God’s definition?

Sennacherib Threatens Jerusalem - Isaiah 36:1-22

Topics: Answers, Bargaining, Confidence, Deceit, Delegation, Enemies, Listening, Mourning, Peace, Questions, Salvation, Silence, Trust, Words, Worship

Open It

- * 1. When have you seen high or low morale determine the outcome of a challenging situation?
- 2. When have you been persuaded that it is fruitless to fight against some group of people, trend, or opposing opinion?

Explore It

- 3. What enemy moved against Judah during King Hezekiah's reign? (36:1)
- 4. Who did Hezekiah send to meet the field commander of the king of Assyria? (36:2-3)
- * 5. What sources of help did the king of Assyria belittle for their supposed inability to help Judah sustain a rebellion? (36:4-7)
- 6. How did the field commander taunt Judah's representatives about their helplessness? (36:8-9)
- * 7. What final blow did the field commander deal to the morale of the people of Judah? (36:10)
- 8. Why did the officials from Jerusalem ask the Assyrian field commander to speak to them in Aramaic? (36:11)
- 9. Why did the commander refuse to change languages for communication purposes? (36:12)
- 10. What message did the commander address directly to the people on the wall of the city? (36:13-15)
- 11. For what reasons did the Assyrian urge the people of Jerusalem to surrender? (36:16-17)
- * 12. Why was the Assyrian field commander convinced that God could not help the people of Jerusalem? (36:18-20)
- 13. Why didn't the people on the wall of Jerusalem reply to the Assyrian when he spoke to them? (36:21)
- 14. With what attitude did Hezekiah's delegation bring him the news of the encounter with the Assyrian? (36:22)

Get It

- * 15. What was the Assyrian field commander's purpose in approaching the city ahead of the army?
- 16. Why was humility and mourning an appropriate response on the part of the leaders of Judah?
- 17. What falsehood stands out among the Assyrian's true assessments of the predicament of Jerusalem?
- 18. Why would it be useful for an enemy to undermine your confidence in your leaders?
- 19. In what ways have other people, or you yourself, belittled or mocked you for your faith in God?
- * 20. How can Christians stand firm even when they are aware of their own weakness and the strength of an enemy?

Apply It

- * 21. What options are open to you in the coming week to deepen your understanding of the character of God so that you will not be shaken by the lies of the Enemy?
- 22. What criticisms of your "weakness" of faith, or doubts of your own, do you need to dismiss or ignore as a symptom of unbelief?

Hezekiah's Prayer and Sennacherib's Fall - Isaiah 37:1-38

Topics: Anger, Answers, Blasphemy, Confidence, Death, Fear, God's Will, Idolatry, Insults, Listening, Mourning, Murder, Plans, Prayer, Pride, Prophecy, Punishment, Questions, Repentance, Strength, Words, Worship

Open It

- * 1. What experience have you or someone you know had with going to court to have a decision overturned (court order, traffic ticket, etc.)?
- 2. Why do you think children tend to ridicule not only one another but also one another's parents?

Explore It

- 3. What was the attitude of Hezekiah and his ministers when confronted with the superior might of the invading Assyrians? (37:1-2)
- 4. What was the primary reason that Hezekiah thought God might intervene on behalf of the helpless people of Jerusalem? (37:3-4)
- 5. According to the prophet Isaiah, how did God view the words of the Assyrian field commander? (37:5-7)
- 6. What further threat did Hezekiah receive from the king of Assyria before he saw a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy? (37:9-13)
- 7. Why did Sennacherib believe he was invincible? (37:11-13)
- * 8. Of what attributes of God did Hezekiah remind himself as he began his prayer to God? (37:14-16)
- 9. Why did Hezekiah know that the track record of the gods of other nations had no bearing on what would happen to Jerusalem? (37:19)
- 10. Why did Hezekiah believe that the rescue of Jerusalem would serve God's ultimate purposes? (37:20)
- 11. Through whom did God reveal to Hezekiah His judgment against Assyria? (37:21)
- * 12. What attitude on the part of Assyria amounted to blasphemy against God? (37:23-25)
- 13. What images did Isaiah use to foretell the future of Assyria in contrast to its present position? (37:26-27)
- 14. How did God plan to emphasize His power over Assyria? (37:28-29)
- 15. What would be accomplished by the "zeal of the Lord Almighty"? (37:32)
- 16. How far did Isaiah predict that the king of Assyria would get in his assault on the city of Jerusalem? (37:33-35)
- * 17. What sudden and miraculous event caused the Assyrians to withdraw from Jerusalem? (37:36-37)
- 18. What event brought to completion the personal prophecy concerning Sennacherib? (37:38)

Get It

- 19. Why do you think Hezekiah and his officials came to God with repentance before they presented their requests?
- * 20. What is the first thing you might expect God to do with regard to pagan challenges to His Lordship?
- 21. What perspective does a believer have with respect to the awesome powers of this world?
- 22. Why might God have withheld the specifics of how He would deliver Judah, although He revealed that He would save them?
- 23. Why was it impossible for the people of Jerusalem to take the glory for the retreat of the Assyrians?
- * 24. What is the best attitude you can have to deal with the threats of your enemies?

Apply It

- * 25. In what new way might you pray about a situation in which you've been awaiting God's help?

26. What “enemy” can you seek to see through God’s eyes this coming week?

Hezekiah's Illness - Isaiah 38:1-39:8

Topics: Children, Consequences, Death, Delegation, Faithfulness, Forgiveness, Gifts, Goodness, Grace, Health, Humility, Instructions, Judgment, Life, Love, Mourning, Parents, Peace, Praise, Prayer, Prophecy, Questions, Remembering, Salvation, Security, Sickness, Sin, Wealth

Open It

- * 1. How does it feel to learn that the bad news you are hearing applies to others but not to you?
- 2. What would you do if you learned that you had exactly three months to live?
- 3. What philosophies have you heard concerning the timing of our deaths as human beings?

Explore It

- 4. What message did God send via Isaiah to the good king Hezekiah when he became gravely ill? (38:1)
- * 5. What was Hezekiah's reaction to the prophecy about his imminent death? (38:2-3)
- 6. To what did Hezekiah appeal in asking for more time on this earth? (38:3)
- 7. What two specific promises did God make in answer to Hezekiah's prayers? (38:4-5)
- 8. How did God contradict natural laws in order to give Hezekiah a sign? (38:7-8)
- 9. What were some of the images used by Hezekiah in his song to describe his anguish upon learning that he would soon die? (38:9-14)
- 10. How did Hezekiah acknowledge God as the source of his healing? (38:15-16)
- * 11. How did Hezekiah view his physical and mental suffering after he was delivered? (38:17)
- 12. What did Hezekiah see as the duty of those to whom God gives the gift of life? (38:18-19)
- 13. What details did Isaiah add about how God brought about Hezekiah's healing and why God gave a sign that these events would happen? (38:21-22)
- 14. What king sent envoys to Hezekiah after hearing of his illness and recovery? (39:1)
- 15. What was the nature of the tour that Hezekiah gave the Babylonian envoys? (39:2)
- 16. What two questions did Isaiah have for Hezekiah concerning the foreign visitors? (39:3-4)
- * 17. What did Isaiah prophesy about the future of Judah when he learned about the visitors from Babylon? (39:5-7)
- 18. How did Hezekiah react to Isaiah's sobering prophecy? (39:8)

Get It

- 19. How else might Hezekiah have reacted when Isaiah told him he would die from his current illness?
- 20. What positive events resulted from the potential tragedy of Hezekiah?
- * 21. Why is, or is not, death the worst thing that can happen to us?
- 22. In general, what might make a person want to keep living?
- 23. In general, why would a person actually desire to die?
- 24. What do you think motivated Hezekiah to show the Babylonians all of his treasure?
- 25. How did Hezekiah's reaction to the second prophecy differ from his reaction to the first?
- 26. What is good or bad about being resigned to God's will?

Apply It

- * 27. From what bad news in your life might you ask the Holy Spirit to help you learn?
- 28. Upon what trial can you look back and see that God had your best interests in mind, even in allowing you to go through it?

Comfort for God's People - Isaiah 40:1-31

Topics: Atonement, Comparisons, Compassion, Complaining, Craftsmanship, Creation, Equality, Gentleness, Glory, Good News, Greatness, Hiding, Hope, Idolatry, Image, Judgment, Knowledge, Light, Name, Poor, Power, Punishment, Renewal, Restoration, Rewards, Right, Sacrifice, Sin, Sovereignty, Strength, Teaching, Understanding

Open It

- * 1. What are some of the various ways people comfort themselves about life's difficulties?
- 2. What is one of the most comforting messages you've ever received from a fellow Christian?
- 3. What changes take place in your view of everyday sights when you have seen them from high above (airplane, tall building, etc.)?

Explore It

- 4. In contrast to the previous announcements of God's judgment, how did Isaiah begin God's message? (40:1)
- * 5. What good news did Isaiah have for Jerusalem concerning the sufferings that went before? (40:2)
- 6. What did Isaiah instruct the people to do, even while they were in the wilderness? (40:3)
- 7. How did Isaiah use the surrounding land to illustrate the change that Isaiah envisioned when God would intervene on behalf of His people? (40:4)
- * 8. How did Isaiah contrast the mortality of human life with the Word of God? (40:6-8)
- 9. With what exclamations of joy did Isaiah announce God's arrival? (40:9-10)
- 10. In contrast to the picture of God approaching in great power, how else did Isaiah portray the relationship of God to His chosen people? (40:11)
- 11. What aspects of the created world did Isaiah use to illustrate God's greatness? (40:12)
- 12. What questions were the only adequate way for Isaiah to hint at the wisdom of God? (40:13-14)
- 13. How did the power of even the most feared nations of Isaiah's time compare to the power of God? (40:15-17)
- 14. What observations did Isaiah make about the idols commissioned by the rich and by the poor? (40:18-20)
- 15. With what questions did Isaiah introduce his thoughts about the transcendence of God? (40:21-24)
- 16. What wonder of nature did the Holy One use as an example of His power? (40:25-26)
- 17. How did God respond to Judah's assertion that He had forgotten them? (40:27-28)
- * 18. What were God's special promises to the weak and weary? (40:29-31)

Get It

- 19. How does Isaiah's message of comfort apply to us today?
- * 20. In what sense can it be comforting to meditate on the overwhelming greatness of God?
- * 21. What sorts of circumstances cause contemporary people to become weak and weary?
- 22. In what sense can God's powerful wrath actually be an encouragement to the downtrodden?
- 23. Which of Isaiah's portrayals of God's power over nature speaks most clearly to you? Why?
- 24. Why is it important for us to remember that God is infinitely higher than we imagine ourselves to be?
- 25. What examples have you encountered of the gentle, loving care of God for His people?

Apply It

- * 26. What Christian within your acquaintance could you encourage with a word about God's comfort the next time you see him or her?
- 27. Which attribute of God will be your focus of meditation and praise this coming week?

The Helper of Israel - Isaiah 41:1-29

Topics: Accomplishments, Advice, Anger, Answers, Arguments, Call, Confusion, Craftsmanship, Creation, Death, Enemies, Evil, Fear, Future, Gifts, Goodness, Good News, Help, Idolatry, Judgment, Poor, Prophecy, Punishment, Redemption, Rejection, Right, Righteousness, Serving, Shame, Silence, Strength, Understanding, War, Weaknesses

Open It

1. What is one situation in which you have felt completely powerless?
2. What examples do you know of how essential water can be to the life of a community?
- * 3. What experience did you have as a child of having someone step in to protect you?

Explore It

4. What challenge did Isaiah issue on behalf of God to all the nations of the earth? (41:1)
5. How did Isaiah describe the wrath of God's tool of righteousness? (41:2-3)
- * 6. Who did Isaiah say would take responsibility for the judgment being wrought against the nations? (41:3-4)
7. Where do the pagan nations turn for help in the face of God's judgment? (41:5-7)
- * 8. What relationship had God initiated with Israel? (41:8-9)
9. What words of comfort and strength did God announce to His people through Isaiah? (41:10)
10. What, according to the prophecy, would become of Israel's enemies? (41:11-12)
11. How did Isaiah contrast God's view of the people of Israel with His own power? (41:13-14)
12. How did God intend to use His people against their enemies? (41:15-16)
13. What images concerning water did Isaiah use to illustrate what God would do for His people? (41:17-20)
- * 14. What challenges did God lay before the idols of Israel's enemies? (41:21-24)
15. Where were the origins of the nation God would use against His enemies? (41:25)
16. Why did all of the idols prove totally inadequate in the face of God's wrath? (41:26-29)

Get It

17. What responses might you expect among the downtrodden people of Israel and Judah who heard God's strong words against their enemies?
18. What idols in our day seem as ludicrous as the images of wood and stone in Isaiah's day?
19. How did the virtues of the people figure, or not figure, into God's decision to save them?
- * 20. What are the implications in our lives of being chosen by God?
- * 21. What are some of the differences in serving a living God versus a man-made idol?
22. What is an appropriate response for someone who has been rescued from mortal danger?
23. Why is weakness in human terms not necessarily a cause for despair for the believer?

Apply It

- * 24. What idols in the world around you can you ask God to protect you from worshipping?
25. What weakness that you confront daily can remind you to rely on God as your source of strength?

The Servant of the Lord - Isaiah 42:1-25

Topics: Anger, Blindness, Commitment, Covenant, Creation, Darkness, Discouragement, Disobedience, Earth, Enemies, Faithfulness, Freedom, Gentleness, Glory, Greatness, Hiding, Holy Spirit, Hope, Idolatry, Joy, Judgment, Justice, Law, Life, Light, Name, People, Praise, Promises, Righteousness, Serving, Shame, Sin, Strength, Victory, War, Zeal

Open It

- * 1. For what different reasons might one person hold another person's hand?
- 2. What interpretations do we tend to put on another person's silence?

Explore It

- 3. How does God introduce His Servant? (42:1)
- * 4. What did God say would distinguish His Servant? (42:1)
- 5. How is the gentleness of God's Servant described by Isaiah? (42:2-3)
- 6. What attitude would characterize God's Servant? (42:4)
- 7. How is the glory of God described by Isaiah? (42:5)
- 8. What did God promise to accomplish through His Servant? (42:6-7)
- 9. What kinds of compromise are impossible given who God is? (42:8)
- 10. What was Israel learning through Isaiah's prophecy that they could have learned no other way? (42:9)
- * 11. Who, according to Isaiah, will sing the "new song" of praise to God? (42:10-12)
- 12. How is God described in relation to His enemies? (42:13)
- 13. What wonders will take place when God no longer holds Himself back? (42:14-16)
- * 14. How will God take pity on our blindness? (42:16)
- 15. What will become of those who worship idols? (42:17)
- 16. Why did God call Israel blind and deaf? (42:19-20)
- 17. How did the people compare to the laws God had given them? (42:21-22)
- 18. What response did God want, and what response did He get, when He turned Israel over to her enemies? (42:23-25)

Get It

- 19. According to this passage, what mission will the Messiah not give up until it is completed?
- * 20. What characteristics of God's Servant, the Messiah, are reassuring to those who falter in their faith?
- 21. What makes people blind and deaf to God's Word?
- 22. Who might Isaiah's hearers have been surprised to learn that they were intended to bless?
- 23. How did Isaiah make it clear that God's salvation plan reached even those outside of the Jews to whom he was speaking?
- * 24. How do you imagine God is able to take hold of our hand?
- 25. What sort of people does God promise not to forsake?
- 26. How could God's ultimate intention in disciplining His people with war and flames actually be for their good?

Apply It

- * 27. To whom can you express some of the tenderness and care you have received from Jesus? How?
- 28. When can you take time to praise God for His love and kindness?

Israel's Only Savior - Isaiah 43:1-28

Topics: Arguments, Believe, Blindness, Creation, Fear, Forget, Forgiveness, Glory, History, Honor, Knowledge, Love, Miracles, Name, New Life, People, Praise, Pride, Prophecy, Punishment, Rebellion, Redemption, Restoration, Revelation, Sacrifice, Salvation, Sin, Testing, Truth, Understanding, Witnessing

Open It

1. What techniques do you use within yourself to deal with fearful situations?
- * 2. How have you felt about the finished product of a project you have labored over?

Explore It

- * 3. Why did the Lord tell Israel not to be afraid? (43:1)
4. Through what sorts of trials did Isaiah say God's people would pass unscathed? (43:2)
5. What valuable price was God willing to pay for Israel's ransom? (43:4)
6. How did God promise to address the exile and scattering of Israel? (43:5-7)
7. What could God's people witness about Him that other peoples could not claim about their gods? (43:8-10)
- * 8. What is impossible for human beings apart from God? (43:11-13)
9. What did God promise to do with a proud, conquering nation? (43:14-15)
10. What past deeds of God were related by Isaiah to illustrate his point? (43:16-18)
11. What forsaken land and its animal inhabitants would recognize God's activity among His chosen people? (43:19-21)
- * 12. What did God hold Israel accountable for failing to do in response to His goodness to them? (43:22-24)
13. What did Israel do in relation to God that they should not have done? (43:24)
14. What did God promise to do with sin? (43:25)
15. What punishment did God assign to Israel? (43:27-28)

Get It

16. What are some of the ways that we can know God loves us?
17. How do many people respond to the belief that there is only one means to salvation?
- * 18. For what different reasons do you think people fail to express gratitude to God?
19. Why do you think God's people sometimes fail to perceive His provision for them?
20. Why was God continually reminding Israel of how He delivered them from Egypt?
- * 21. What attitudes lead us to neglect worship and prayer?
22. What is sometimes difficult about remembering that God has forgiven and forgotten our past sins?
23. What is the penalty of unforgiven sin?

Apply It

- * 24. In what practical ways can you remind yourself to pray this coming week, knowing that God is eager to answer?
25. How can you use God's promise in Isaiah 43:2 to help you have the faith and courage to endure your own difficult circumstances?

Israel the Chosen - Isaiah 44:1-23

Topics: Blessing, Blindness, Children, Craftsmanship, Creation, Fear, Foolishness, Forget, Forgiveness, Glory, Growth, Help, Holy Spirit, Idolatry, Knowledge, Listening, Lying, Praise, Prayer, Promises, Prophecy, Redemption, Remembering, Repentance, Salvation, Security, Shame, Sin, Sovereignty, Understanding, Witnessing, Worship

Open It

- * 1. When have you desperately wanted to be able to “start over again” in a conversation or relationship with another person?
- 2. How do you explain the fact that people with children often have a strong desire for their children to have a better life than they have had themselves?

Explore It

- 3. Having just announced His judgment on Israel’s pride, how did God, through Isaiah, comfort His people? (44:1-2)
- 4. What images from nature illustrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on humankind? (44:3-4)
- * 5. In the bright future prophesied by Isaiah, how will people feel about being identified as the people of God? (44:5)
- * 6. How does God compare with other gods that people worship? (44:6)
- 7. What challenge from the living God are the idols unable to answer? (44:7)
- 8. What is the role of God’s people in relation to the sovereignty of God? (44:8)
- 9. Despite how they might initially be received, what will be brought to light about those who manufacture idols? (44:9-11)
- 10. What is a telltale sign that the blacksmith who fashions an idol is no different from anyone else? (44:12)
- 11. Where does the carpenter get the model and the materials for making false gods? (44:13-14)
- 12. What is particularly ironic to God about the fact that people use wood for idol-making? (44:15-19)
- * 13. What is the state of the soul of the person who makes his or her own idol and then worships it? (44:20)
- 14. What did God do on Israel’s behalf (even though they didn’t deserve it) that Isaiah said should motivate Israel to return to God? (44:21-22)
- 15. What did Isaiah envision as appropriate praise for what God had done for Israel? (44:23)

Get It

- 16. How would you explain our dependence on God for both mortal and eternal life?
- 17. What do we need in order to flourish spiritually?
- 18. Why are we sometimes hesitant to let others know that we belong to God?
- * 19. In what respects is God in a totally different category from the images and things that people worship?
- * 20. Referring to this passage, about what great truth are believers called to tell others?

Apply It

- 21. How can you and your Christian friends encourage one another to let unbelievers know about the unique saving power of God?
- * 22. How can you identify and renounce the idols (false gods) that you might be tempted to make for yourself?

Jerusalem to Be Inhabited - Isaiah 44:24-45:25

Topics: Anger, Creation, Darkness, Earth, Foolishness, Hiding, Honor, Ignorance, Integrity, Name, Power, Prophecy, Quarrels, Questions, Redemption, Repentance, Restoration, Righteousness, Salvation, Secret, Shame, Sovereignty, Strength, Swearing, Wealth, Wisdom, Words, Work, Worship

Open It

1. What are some of the ways that political rulers demonstrate their power and influence?
- * 2. When was the last time you were unexpectedly able to provide a surprising solution to a problem?

Explore It

- * 3. How did God describe Himself with regard to the smallest and largest things? (44:24)
4. How does God reveal truth and falsehood through people? (44:25-26)
5. How does Isaiah illustrate God's sovereignty over nature and humankind? (44:27-28)
6. Whom did God "anoint" to subdue nations? (45:1)
7. How does Isaiah's prophecy portray the power that God would give to Cyrus? (45:2)
- * 8. For whose sake did God choose to honor a pagan king who didn't honor Him? (45:4)
9. How would the supremacy of Cyrus ultimately give glory to God? (45:5-7)
10. What imagery is used to communicate the generosity of God's righteousness and salvation? (45:8)
11. To what does Isaiah liken the foolishness of questioning God? (45:9-10)
12. How did God make it clear that Cyrus was merely a tool in His hands? (45:11-13)
13. What of the might and wealth of nations in Isaiah's time would revert to Cyrus of Persia? (45:14)
- * 14. How did God's purposes exceed even what Israel was praying for? (45:15-17)
15. Why did God create the earth and tell people to seek Him? (45:18-19)
16. In Isaiah's day, to what gods did people pray? (45:20-21)
17. How will the future be different for people who turn to Him versus people who rage against Him? (45:22-25)

Get It

18. What is surprising to you about the way God was going to use the pagan king, Cyrus of Persia?
- * 19. What do some of the illustrations in this passage reveal about the scope of God's power?
20. What is amazing to you about the fact that, in the end, all of the people of the earth will recognize the sovereignty of God?
21. Why do you think one of God's central messages to us is that He is the only source of salvation?
22. How does God go about exposing people who falsely claim to speak for Him?
23. Through what different sources was God able both to bless and discipline His people?
24. Why do you think human beings are sometimes tempted to argue with God?
25. Why do you find it hard or easy to remember that God is Lord of all circumstances?
- * 26. What does it mean to you to be found righteous in the Lord?

Apply It

- * 27. Knowing that the powers of this earth are at God's disposal, how can you pray specifically for one of the troubled spots in the world today?
28. What prayer can you commit to pray each day for the next two weeks for someone you know who is angry at God?

Gods of Babylon - Isaiah 46:1-13

Topics: Answers, Burdens, Comparisons, Equality, Idolatry, Listening, Plans, Purpose, Rebellion, Remembering, Righteousness, Salvation, Slavery, Stubbornness, Worship

Open It

- * 1. When do you recall being carried around as a child?
- 2. Why do you think we tend to compare ourselves with other people?

Explore It

- 3. What observations does Isaiah make about Bel and Nebo, the gods of the conquering Babylonians? (46:1-2)
- 4. In what ways does the text use the word “burden”? (46:1-2)
- * 5. In contrast to gods that must be carried, what relationship did Jehovah have with Israel? (46:3-4)
- * 6. What do we know about the process of setting up an idol which is totally unlike God? (46:5-7)
- 7. Who did Isaiah intend to take these words about the uniqueness of God to heart? (46:8)
- * 8. In what respects does God show Himself to be totally different from idols? (46:9-10)
- 9. How was the threat from the east part of God’s purpose? (46:11)
- 10. What assurance is given concerning God’s words and plans? (46:11)
- 11. What heart attitude was God addressing through this prophecy of Isaiah? (46:12)
- 12. What does God say about His righteousness? (46:13)

Get It

- 13. What do you think makes people worship something of their own creation?
- * 14. What does it mean to be carried by God?
- 15. How long has God’s purpose for humankind been established?
- * 16. How does God compare to the things that our contemporary world worships?
- 17. What difference can it make to our faith that God’s righteousness is near?
- 18. How can we resist the temptation to give time and energy to gods of our own design?

Apply It

- * 19. In what current difficulty could you be strengthened by reminding yourself that God will carry you?
- 20. For what person or persons will you pray this week that they will realize that God’s salvation is near?

The Fall of Babylon - Isaiah 47:1-15

Topics: Advice, Anger, Burdens, Darkness, Evil, Holiness, Knowledge, Mercy, Mourning, Name, Occult, Poor, Punishment, Redemption, Revenge, Secret, Security, Shame, Silence, Success, Trust, Wisdom

Open It

- * 1. What experience have you had that you thought, or wished, would go on forever?
- 2. As a child, how did you feel about the person who would put a bully in his place?

Explore It

- 3. In Isaiah's prophecy, what happens to the wealthy and refined "Virgin Daughter of Babylon"? (47:1-3)
- * 4. Who is, and will be, the redeemer of Israel? (47:4)
- 5. What ultimate fate did God predict for the Babylonian empire? (47:5)
- 6. How did Babylon treat God's people when He "gave them into your hand"? (47:8)
- * 7. From what calamities did Babylon consider herself exempt? (47:8)
- 8. What would the sorceries and spells of Babylon be unable to prevent? (47:9)
- * 9. What mistaken impressions did Babylon have about her accountability? (47:10)
- 10. What did Isaiah predict would happen to Babylon unexpectedly? (47:11)
- 11. What comprised Babylon's religion? (47:12)
- 12. Of what were the gods and priests of Babylon completely incapable? (47:13-15)

Get It

- * 13. How would you respond to a prophecy about the fall of a nation that had not even risen to greatness?
- 14. Why do some consider themselves immune from certain troubles?
- 15. Why might it be unwise to show no mercy whenever we are in a position of superior strength?
- 16. What superstitious rituals are popularly thought to ward off harm?
- 17. What sorts of deeds do people do when they think no one is watching?
- * 18. How can the possession of a lot of knowledge be misleading?
- 19. What sorts of calamities cannot be avoided by human wisdom or wealth?

Apply It

- * 20. What steps can you take to discover whether there are any hardships to which you consider yourself immune?
- 21. What can serve as a concrete reminder for you this coming week that God sees everything you do?

Stubborn Israel - Isaiah 48:1-22

Topics: Anger, Call, Children, Creation, Delay, Depend, Direction, Evil, Glory, Holiness, Holy Spirit, Hypocrisy, Idolatry, Joy, Listening, Name, New Covenant, Peace, Praise, Prophecy, Purpose, Rebellion, Redemption, Righteousness, Running, Sovereignty, Stubbornness, Success, Swearing, Teaching, Testing, Truth, Understanding

Open It

1. What are the various possible motivations for us to do the right thing?
- * 2. Who is the best teacher you have known?

Explore It

- * 3. What inconsistencies did God see in the people of Judah? (48:1-2)
4. Why did God give plenty of notice but then act suddenly with respect to Judah? (48:3-5)
5. What did God ask Judah to admit? (48:6)
6. How did God characterize what He planned to do “from now on”? (48:6)
7. What was God preventing by doing something completely new? (48:7)
8. What negative characteristics did God see in Judah? (48:8)
- * 9. What was God’s reason for delaying His wrath against Judah? (48:9)
10. For whose sake did God test Judah with afflictions? (48:10-11)
11. What did God announce about His own nature in this prophecy of Isaiah? (48:12-13)
12. What did Isaiah prophesy that God’s “chosen ally” would accomplish? (48:14-15)
13. What did God announce, and invite people to hear, from a posture of nearness? (48:16)
- * 14. What did God pledge to do for His people? (48:17)
15. If Israel had heeded God’s Word from the beginning, what blessings would have been theirs? (48:18-19)
16. What joyful announcement did Isaiah predict for the people who would be taken captive by Babylon? (48:20-21)
17. What truth did God pronounce concerning the wicked? (48:22)

Get It

18. Why did the people of Judah and Jerusalem take it for granted that they had the Lord’s favor?
- * 19. When we are completely undeserving of God’s mercy, why might He act in our behalf anyway?
20. When we face problems and hardships, what are the wisest conclusions we can make about God’s purposes?
21. What did God plan to do when He was finished with Babylon and the time came to judge that nation?
22. What does God mean when He says He is “the first and the last”?
- * 23. Why do you think God is interested in providing guidance and direction for our lives?
24. What great blessings accompany those who obey God’s commands?
25. Of what blessings do evil people deprive themselves?

Apply It

- * 26. In what area of need will you claim God’s promise to direct you this coming week?
27. How can you respond the next time you hear about how individual believers or the church has failed God?

The Servant of the Lord - Isaiah 49:1-26

Topics: Abundance, Answers, Call, Children, Comfort, Comparisons, Compassion, Covenant, Creation, Darkness, Earth, Faithfulness, Forget, Forsake, Freedom, Glory, Guidance, Heaven, Help, Hiding, Holiness, Honor, Humility, Joy, Knowledge, Light, Listening, Name, Opposition, Oppressed, People, Power, Protection, Purpose, Redemption, Rejection, Restoration, Rewards, Salvation, Security, Serving, Strength, Witnessing, Work, Worship

Open It

- * 1. What do people do to remember loved ones who are far away?
- 2. When have your efforts to be kind to another person been misunderstood?

Explore It

- 3. When did God place His call on His Servant, the Messiah? (49:1)
- 4. To what implement of hunting or war was Messiah compared? (49:2)
- * 5. What did God promise to show through His Servant? (49:3)
- 6. Although His work might have seemed to be in vain, what would vindicate Messiah? (49:4)
- * 7. What was God's greater purpose in sending Messiah, besides bringing Israel back to Himself? (49:5-6)
- 8. How would Messiah be regarded initially by the people of Israel? (49:7)
- 9. What promise did God make concerning the honor that His Servant deserved? (49:7)
- 10. How did God intend to use the Messiah, in His own time? (49:8-9)
- 11. How does Isaiah's prophecy describe the calling out of the people of God? (49:9-12)
- 12. Compared to the response God expected, how did the people of God express their situation? (49:13-14)
- * 13. With what images did God illustrate the depth of His love? (49:15-16)
- 14. What was God's promise to the land with regard to the people exiled from it? (49:17-18)
- 15. What happy circumstance would surprise the people who saw the desolation of God's judgment? (49:19-21)
- 16. How did God promise that the Gentiles, who once oppressed Israel, would treat them in the future? (49:22)
- 17. What would the people of God know when the powerful of other nations served them? (49:23)
- 18. What seemed impossible to Israel and Judah when Isaiah was prophesying? (49:24)
- 19. What would be understood as a result of God's dealings with Israel's oppressors? (49:25-26)

Get It

- * 20. What are some evidences from this prophetic passage that God understands how we feel in the middle of our troubles?
- 21. In what way is this passage a message of restoration?
- 22. How does God intend to reverse the roles of the oppressed and the oppressor?
- 23. What factors (implied in this passage) might have made it difficult for the people of Isaiah's day to have hope for the future?
- 24. What would be most difficult for God's people to imagine when their land was largely deserted and their people in exile?
- * 25. How did the prophet Isaiah reveal that God is Lord of the whole earth?
- 26. To what extent did Isaiah say that God's compassion and comfort would be dependent on the deeds or attitudes of people?

Apply It

- 27. How can you refresh the attitude of your thanks and praise to God this week for including you in His plan of salvation?

* 28. In what particular area of insecurity can you remind yourself of God's great love for you?

Israel's Sin and Salvation - Isaiah 50:1-51:16

Topics: Abundance, Accountability, Accusation, Blessing, Call, Comfort, Compassion, Creation, Death, Determination, Earth, Fear, Forget, Freedom, Heaven, Help, History, Hope, Instructions, Joy, Justice, Law, Light, Listening, Miracles, Name, Obedience, Oppressed, People, Protection, Punishment, Rebellion, Right, Righteousness, Salvation, Sorrow, Sovereignty, Strength, Submission, Teaching, Thankfulness, Trust, Waiting, Words

Open It

- * 1. What is the appeal of the many so-called self-help techniques?
- 2. What does a person need in order to endure unfair treatment patiently or gracefully?

Explore It

- 3. What sorts of evidence did God challenge Israel to produce to prove that He was the cause of their defeat and captivity? (50:1)
- * 4. What response did Israel give when God came to them and called them? (50:2)
- 5. What were the rhetorical questions to which Israel would have to have answered no? (50:2)
- 6. What examples from nature did God use to illustrate the extent of His power? (50:2-3)
- 7. What characterized the tongue (therefore the words) of God's Chosen One? (50:4)
- 8. What did God's Messiah refuse to do, unlike the people of Israel? (50:5)
- 9. In obeying God, what suffering would the Messiah have to endure? (50:6)
- * 10. How was the Sovereign Lord a powerful source of determination and confidence? (50:7-8)
- 11. How did the power of Messiah's accusers compare with the power of God on His side? (50:9)
- * 12. What does God want us to do whenever when we find ourselves "walking in the dark" (unsure of what to do next)? (50:10)
- 13. What will become of those who insist on lighting their own way? (50:11)
- 14. How should it boost our faith to look back at the lives of believers how came before us? (51:1-2)
- 15. How did Isaiah depict the new Jerusalem to come? (51:3)
- 16. What good gifts did God promise to His people? (51:4-6)
- 17. How should the people of God respond to threats and insults? (51:7-8)
- 18. What great deeds did Isaiah mention when calling upon the Lord for help? (51:9-10)
- 19. What qualities will characterize God's people at Christ's coming? (51:11)
- 20. How were the fears of Israel turned upside down when Isaiah confronted them? (51:12-13)
- 21. If God can command the sea, what can He do for the fearful prisoner? (51:14-15)
- 22. Who is the God who acts in our lives? (51:16)

Get It

- 23. What are some of the indications of God's tenderness in this prophecy of Isaiah?
- 24. What specific benefit can we find in the words of Jesus, the Messiah?
- 25. How is God's Servant, the Messiah, significantly different from the rest of humankind in His responsiveness to God?
- 26. What is unique in your mind about the concept of a suffering Messiah?
- * 27. Even when He rebukes us, what will God do for us if we ask Him?
- * 28. When we encounter dark places in our lives, how does God's provision compare with our own attempts to light our way?
- 29. Who are some of the models, past and present, for believers to follow?
- 30. For what transformations of the earth do we hope?
- 31. What do believers have available to them when they confront enemies?

Apply It

- * 32. What constructive way can you find to deal with a "dark" circumstance or confusing problem in

your life?

33. In what current perplexing circumstance can you ask God for wisdom?

The Cup of the Lord's Wrath - Isaiah 51:17-52:12

Topics: Anger, Beauty, Blasphemy, Comfort, Freedom, Good News, Guidance, Holiness, Joy, Leadership, Oppressed, Peace, Punishment, Purity, Redemption, Salvation, Serving, Sovereignty, Strength, Suffering

Open It

- * 1. What is the best news you have received recently?
- 2. What, for you, are meaningful symbols of hope?

Explore It

- * 3. How did Isaiah describe the plight of God's people because of their disobedience? (51:17-20)
- 4. What great reversal between Israel and her enemies was prophesied by Isaiah? (51:21-23)
- 5. To what did Isaiah call the city of Jerusalem? (52:1-2)
- 6. How did Isaiah communicate the fact that God did not "benefit" from the punishment His people? (52:3-5)
- * 7. How did Isaiah say the news of God's deliverance would be greeted in Israel? (52:6-9)
- 8. How does God regard those who communicate His Good News? (52:7)
- 9. What promise did God make to the watchmen who awaited His deliverance? (52:8)
- * 10. Who will know about the salvation of the Lord when He comforts His people? (52:10)
- 11. What did God require from His servants who were to leave Persia? (52:11)
- 12. What did God promise to His people who would be allowed to leave Persia? (52:12)

Get It

- * 13. What happens when there is no godly leadership for God's people?
- 14. What can we learn about God by knowing that He did not "sell" His people for gain?
- * 15. What does God inspire in us when He helps us?
- 16. In what way is the person blessed who proclaims God's Good News?
- 17. Why is it not necessary for God's people to be afraid?

Apply It

- 18. For which leaders of God's Church will you commit yourself to pray throughout the coming week?
- * 19. How can you regain your hope when God's enemies scoff at you and other believers?

Suffering and Glory of the Servant - Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Topics: Appearance, Beauty, Believe, Death, Disobedience, God's Will, Greatness, Healing, Hiding, Innocence, Judgment, Knowledge, Light, Oppressed, Peace, Praise, Prayer, Punishment, Redemption, Rejection, Revelation, Righteousness, Satisfaction, Silence, Sin, Sorrow, Soul, Strength, Suffering, Understanding, Wisdom

Open It

- * 1. What kinds of human suffering are particularly abhorrent and difficult for you to watch?
- 2. What personal experience can you relate about the suffering of the innocent?

Explore It

- 3. How did God, through Isaiah's prophecy, characterize the actions of the coming Servant? (52:13)
- 4. What opposite reactions would people have to the Messiah before and after His suffering? (52:14-15)
- * 5. What was unbelievable about the message of God's chosen deliverance? (53:1-3)
- 6. What did Isaiah prophesy about the attractiveness of God's Servant? (53:2-3)
- 7. What would actually be happening when people were assuming that God was punishing Jesus? (53:4)
- * 8. What would the wounds of the Messiah accomplish for all believers? (53:5)
- 9. In what way did Isaiah illustrate people's sinfulness? (53:6)
- 10. What has God done with the sin of each human being? (53:6)
- * 11. How did Isaiah say that the Messiah would respond to mistreatment and suffering? (53:7)
- 12. What earthly heritage would remain for the Messiah? (53:8)
- 13. In what way would the Messiah's death not fit the deeds of His life? (53:9)
- 14. What was God's will in relation to the life of His Son? (53:10)
- 15. What "satisfaction" did God promise would follow the suffering of the Messiah? (53:11)
- 16. Why did Isaiah say that the Messiah would be exalted and "divide the spoils"? (53:12)

Get It

- 17. Why do you think some people tend to despise those who suffer?
- 18. How important is it to be attractive in order to be held in high regard?
- 19. What are the different ways in which a person might attract a following?
- 20. How is the imagery in God's prophecy of the mission of the Messiah full of meaning?
- 21. Why was it necessary for a righteous servant to be the bearer of sins?
- * 22. What great spiritual treasures were gained for us by the death of Jesus Christ?
- * 23. What sufferings of Jesus (such as those described in Luke 23:1-56) were foretold in Isaiah 53?

Apply It

- * 24. What one goal for your relationship with God can you work on in the coming weeks by contemplating His sacrifice for you?
- 25. How can you plan to answer the next person who questions you about Jesus' humiliation and suffering?

The Future Glory of Zion - Isaiah 54:1-17

Topics: Abandon, Accusation, Anger, Call, Children, Compassion, Covenant, Earth, Fear, Forget, History, Husbands, Joy, Kindness, Love, Name, Peace, Punishment, Redemption, Rejection, Restoration, Righteousness, Security, Shame, Swearing, Teaching, Victory, Youth

Open It

1. What is the longest “minute” you’ve ever experienced?
- * 2. How do you think philosophies of child rearing and discipline have changed since you were a child?

Explore It

- * 3. What great misfortune for women of Isaiah’s day did he compare with Israel’s desolation? (54:1)
4. What did Isaiah predict for Israel in terms of numbers and prosperity? (54:2-3)
5. What did God promise concerning the shame that Israel brought on herself? (54:4)
6. What human relationship did Isaiah compare to the relationship between God and His chosen people? (54:5)
7. What comparison did God use to express His treatment of Israel? (54:6-8)
- * 8. What was the duration of God’s displeasure relative to His compassion? (54:8)
9. To what period in history did God compare the day that Isaiah prophesied? (54:9)
- * 10. What covenant did God proclaim to be unshakable? (54:10)
11. What visual picture did Isaiah paint of the city of Jerusalem before and after God’s salvation? (54:11-12)
12. What blessings would characterize the children of those who experienced God’s grace? (54:13)
13. From what curses would Jerusalem be delivered in the day Isaiah foresaw? (54:14-15)
14. What did Isaiah reveal about the “destroyer,” whether it be the destroyer of Israel or of Israel’s enemies? (54:16-17)
15. How did God plan to vindicate His people? (54:17)

Get It

- * 16. Although Israel brought shame on herself, what did God propose to do about it?
17. With the hindsight of today, why do you suppose God contrasted a “moment” of suffering with an “everlasting” kindness?
18. In what sense is it reassuring to know that God is sovereign over those who attack us?
- * 19. How does God view the “sins of our youth” once we have repented of them?
20. How has the compassionate nature of God been revealed to you in the past?

Apply It

21. The next time you are under attack, how can you remember God’s faithfulness and control of all the circumstances?
- * 22. How can you be alert to the ways God is teaching you in the coming week?

Invitation to the Thirsty - Isaiah 55:1-13

Topics: Abundance, Accomplishments, Comparisons, Covenant, Earth, Evil, Faithfulness, Forgiveness, Greatness, Heaven, Invitation, Joy, Leadership, Life, Listening, Love, Mercy, Money, Peace, Poor, Promises, Purpose, Repentance, Satisfaction, Soul, Thinking, Witnessing, Words

Open It

- * 1. What was the most elaborate dinner or reception you've ever attended?
- 2. What experience comes to your mind when you think about joyful singing?

Explore It

- 3. Whom does God invite to come eat and drink in abundance? (55:1)
- * 4. What does God ask in return for the abundant provisions He makes? (55:1)
- 5. What question does God pose with regard to money and labor? (55:2)
- 6. Why does God invite us to listen and to come to Him? (55:3)
- 7. What covenant does God offer? (55:3-4)
- 8. What honor does God promise to bestow on Israel? (55:5)
- 9. What advice does this prophecy offer with respect to seeking God? (55:6)
- * 10. If the evil person turns to God, what will God do for him or her? (55:7)
- * 11. How does God contrast His thoughts and ways with ours? (55:8-9)
- 12. How is the message of God's Word like snow and rain? (55:10-11)
- 13. What is the effect of God's Word? (55:11)
- 14. How does Isaiah describe the overwhelming joy of God's ransomed people? (55:12)
- 15. What change in the nature of the vegetation will be like the accomplishment of God's purpose? (55:13)

Get It

- 16. What is appealing about God's invitation through Isaiah?
- 17. How do you explain the nations' response to the people in whom God has worked?
- 18. When is the time to call on the Lord?
- * 19. When is it helpful to remind ourselves that God's ways are not our ways?
- * 20. Why is it good for believers to think about what life will be like when God's purposes are accomplished?
- 21. What does it mean to you to be spiritually thirsty?

Apply It

- 22. How can you remind yourself of the sure effectiveness of God's Word this coming week?
- 23. When will you take time to notice nature returning praise to God?
- * 24. Concerning what particular problem will you pray for God's perspective?

Salvation for the Contrite - Isaiah 56:1-57:21

Topics: Acceptance, Adoption, Adultery, Ambassadors, Anger, Blessing, Blindness, Call, Children, Comfort, Complaining, Covenant, Death, Drinking, Evil, Fear, Greed, Guidance, Healing, Help, Holiness, Hopelessness, Humility, Idolatry, Joy, Justice, Knowledge, Love, Lust, Lying, Mourning, Name, Peace, Praise, Prayer, Punishment, Rebellion, Remembering, Renewal, Rest, Right, Righteousness, Sacrifice, Salvation, Serving, Silence, Sin, Spiritual Rebirth, Strength, Understanding, Worship

Open It

1. What experience have you had with helping a foreigner adjust to American life?
- * 2. How does it feel when someone you love is clinging to a destructive habit or way of life?

Explore It

3. Why does God encourage us to maintain justice and do what is right? (56:1)
4. What two examples illustrate what God means by “doing what is right”? (56:2)
- * 5. What does God declare about the availability of His kingdom? (56:3)
6. What characterizes the eunuchs in Isaiah’s illustration? (56:4-6)
7. What characterizes the foreigners about whom Isaiah spoke? (56:6-7)
8. What was unique about the house of God as opposed to the temples of pagan gods? (56:7)
9. How did Isaiah characterize Israel’s watchmen? (56:10-12)
10. What did Isaiah say that people failed to understand when the righteous were perishing? (57:1-2)
11. What sins did God hold against Israel that prevented Him from relenting from His anger? (57:3-6)
12. Where did Israel seek help instead of turning to the Lord? (57:7-9)
13. What did Israel refuse to say in spite of her weariness with the pursuit of sin? (57:10)
14. How had Israel come to fear other gods more than the Lord? (57:11)
15. To what powerless source of help would God abandon Israel? (57:12-13)
16. How did God say the people who turned to Him would be rewarded? (57:13)
- * 17. What does God tell us about Himself through Isaiah the prophet? (57:15-16)
- * 18. In spite of their stubbornness, what decision did God make with respect to His people ? (57:17-19)
19. What truth did God reveal concerning the wicked? (57:20-21)

Get It

20. How do God’s commandments demonstrate His love and concern for us?
- * 21. What is the good news for God-fearing people outside the hereditary line of Israel?
22. How did the sins of Israel’s “blind watchmen” affect the people of Israel?
23. What do you think is one reason why God might allow the death of a righteous person?
24. What is communicated in the names God calls the people of Israel who turned to idolatrous practices?
25. What is God able to do that our own pointless remedies cannot?
- * 26. What is unique about where God chooses to “live”?
27. What undeserved action of God has changed your mourning into praise?

Apply It

- * 28. What praise can you offer to God for His inclusion of all the nations in His plan of salvation?
29. In what area of your life can you put aside your own solutions and ask God to show you His answer?

Fasting, Sin, Confession, and Redemption - Isaiah 58:1-59:21

Topics: Arguments, Armor, Blindness, Burdens, Children, Covenant, Darkness, Evil, Fasting, Glory, Guidance, Guilt, Healing, Help, Holiness, Holy Spirit, Honor, Humility, Hypocrisy, Injustice, Integrity, Joy, Justice, Law, Light, Lying, Murder, Needs, Oppressed, Peace, Poor, Power, Prophecy, Quarrels, Rebellion, Repentance, Restoration, Revenge, Right, Righteousness, Salvation, Satisfaction, Separation, Sin, Strength, Truth, Words, Worship

Open It

1. How would you characterize someone you have known who exhibits inner peace?
2. If you had a choice, would you rather renovate an old house or build a new one? Why?
- * 3. What are some habits or rituals you go through every morning to get ready for the day?

Explore It

4. What was the outward appearance of rebellious Israel? (58:2)
5. Why did the people of Israel think they deserved God's attention? (58:3)
6. What fault in the fasting of God's people prevented God from answering their prayers? (58:3-5)
7. What kind of fast did God want His people to practice? (58:6)
- * 8. What blessings were promised to the righteous who had compassion on the poor? (58:7-8)
9. What kinds of activities characterized the people God would guide and bless? (58:9-11)
10. What did God promise to empower His people to do? (58:12)
11. What did the people need to do in order to experience God's joy? (58:13-14)
- * 12. What was the cause of Israel's separation from God? (59:1-2)
13. What specific sins did God charge against His people? (59:3-4)
14. How were the people of Israel compared to spiders and snakes? (59:5-6)
15. What prevented God's sinful people from knowing His peace? (59:7-8)
16. To what did Isaiah liken the people in their separation from God? (59:9-11)
17. What confession did Isaiah make on behalf of Israel? (59:12-13)
18. What, according to Isaiah, was missing from God's people? (59:14-15)
- * 19. What did God do when he found no righteousness among His people? (59:16-17)
20. What did Isaiah predict God would do would inspire fear of the Lord? (59:18-19)
21. To whom did God promise to come? (59:20)
22. What is the nature of God's covenant? (59:21)

Get It

23. Why might the promise that they would rebuild Jerusalem be more precious to the people of Israel than if He told them they would create a new city?
- * 24. How does God view religious observances that have no basis in daily behavior?
25. How do we benefit when we minister to others?
26. What might constitute "doing as you please" on the Sabbath, and why would God oppose it?
27. What is the greatest and most lasting source of joy for the Christian?
- * 28. How does sin separate us from God?
29. Why do you think that people who rebel against God have no peace?
30. What does it mean to you to "spend yourselves in behalf of the poor"?
31. What situations have you known in which moral people ("whoever shuns evil") are persecuted?
32. What do you find especially meaningful about each of the gifts God has given in His covenant with His people?

Apply It

33. In what new and concrete way can you honor each Sabbath of the coming month?
34. What human relationship or spiritual discipline would you like to rebuild with God's help?

* 35. What can you do for needy people that will illustrate the sincerity of your fasting or other religious observances?

The Glory of Zion - Isaiah 60:1-22

Topics: Abundance, Acceptance, Anger, Blessing, Compassion, Darkness, Glory, Hatred, Holiness, Honor, Joy, Light, Peace, Praise, Pride, Promises, Redemption, Reputation, Restoration, Righteousness, Salvation, Serving, Sorrow, Timing, Victory, Weaknesses, Wealth, Worship

Open It

- * 1. When have you had to cope with a circumstance that left you suddenly in total darkness?
- 2. What are some of the things people say and do to honor one another?

Explore It

- * 3. How does Isaiah's prophecy contrast the spiritual condition of the earth with that of God's redeemed people? (60:1-3)
- 4. What emotions will accompany the restoration and blessing of God's people? (60:4-6)
- 5. In this prophecy, what nations and their resources are being brought as tribute to God? (60:6-9)
- 6. How did Isaiah say that the roles would be reversed with the foreign kings who had formerly oppressed Israel? (60:10)
- 7. When His anger was past, what did God bestow on His people? (60:10)
- 8. What indications of abundance and honor are predicted for Israel? (60:11)
- 9. What did Isaiah say would happen to nations that refused to serve Israel? (60:12)
- 10. How will God's temple reflect His new relationship with His people? (60:13)
- 11. How will Israel's former oppressors refer to Jerusalem? (60:14)
- 12. What great contrast is made concerning Israel's current and future status? (60:15)
- * 13. When God's people received honor from other nations, what would His people know about God? (60:16)
- 14. With what illustrations did Isaiah show that God would replace the ordinary things with the best? (60:17)
- 15. What former conditions would be replaced with Salvation and Praise? (60:18)
- * 16. What will be the light in the City of God? (60:19-20)
- 17. What did Isaiah say would characterize God's people? (60:21)
- 18. What is God's perspective on the timing for accomplishing His purposes? (60:22)

Get It

- 19. What would it take for "little Israel" to attain all the power and wealth described in Isaiah's prophecy?
- * 20. What attribute of God's character allowed Him to reverse the fortunes of Israel?
- 21. In what sense would you say thick darkness covers our world today?
- * 22. Why is it appropriate to portray God's glory in terms of light?
- 23. Why do people bring gifts to rich and powerful rulers?
- 24. Why is it encouraging for you to know that God can and does honor those who are despised in the world?
- 25. To what extent would the prophecy of "no violence, ruin, or destruction" be good news for today?
- 26. What difference does it make to you to know that you were "planted" by God?

Apply It

- * 27. In what way could you serve as light to your darkened world in the next few days?
- 28. For whom do you need to ask God to give you His compassion?

The Year of the Lord's Favor - Isaiah 61:1-11

Topics: Beauty, Blessing, Children, Comfort, Covenant, Darkness, Despair, Faithfulness, Freedom, Good News, Glory, Grief, Growth, Holy Spirit, Joy, Justice, Ministry, Mourning, Poor, Praise, Renewal, Restoration, Revenge, Rewards, Righteousness, Salvation, Shame, Sin, Wealth

Open It

1. What is your favorite “rags to riches” story?
- * 2. What are some of the reasons we call people blessed or fortunate?

Explore It

- * 3. What are the purposes for which God's Anointed was sent into the world? (61:1-3)
4. What adornments did Isaiah say God's people would receive in exchange for “ashes,” “mourning,” and “a spirit of despair”? (61:3)
5. Why did God “plant” His people with great honor? (61:3)
6. What promise did God make concerning the cities that had been destroyed by invaders? (61:4)
7. How would the work force of Israel reflect its power and status? (61:5)
- * 8. Besides riches, what honor did Isaiah say God would bestow on all His people? (61:6)
9. How is the joy of God's redeemed people contrasted with their present condition? (61:7)
10. What does God love? (61:8)
11. What does God hate? (61:8)
- * 12. What will the whole world understand about God's people? (61:9)
13. How did Isaiah illustrate the honor and intimacy with which God will relate to His people? (61:10)
14. What did Isaiah portray as sprouting like seeds out of soil? (61:11)

Get It

- * 15. How would you characterize the sorts of people for whom the Messiah came?
16. How do you see the qualities of the Messiah listed in Isaiah 61 illustrated in the life of Jesus?
17. Why is blessing His people an effective way for God to display His splendor?
18. What would it signal about your status with the giver if you were to inherit a “double portion” in his or her will?
- * 19. Why is it important to God that all nations acknowledge Him?

Apply It

- * 20. In light of God's attitudes and purposes, how do you plan to react to those around you this week who are grieving or despairing?
21. What creative idea could you suggest to leaders in your Sunday School or church for giving special thanks to God for His generous blessings?

Zion's New Name - Isaiah 62:1-12

Topics: Abandon, Enemies, Glory, Holiness, Joy, Marriage, Name, Persistence, Power, Praise, Preparation, Redemption, Rest, Rewards, Righteousness, Salvation, Silence, Swearing, Work

Open It

1. What is it like to visit a building, town, or city that has been abandoned for a long time?
- * 2. Why is it significant when someone changes his or her name?

Explore It

3. For what great event was Isaiah watching and praying on behalf of Israel? (62:1)
- * 4. When God exalted His people, what did Isaiah expect the Lord to give them? (62:2)
5. To what symbol of kingship did Isaiah compare Israel in the day of the Lord's favor? (62:3)
- * 6. How did Isaiah predict that a change of name would reflect a change of status for Israel? (62:4)
7. What status and emotions went along with marriage for a young woman of Isaiah's time? (62:5)
8. Who did Isaiah feel should have no rest until Jerusalem was restored and established? (62:6-7)
9. What did God swear that He would never allow to happen again? (62:8)
10. What will peace and prosperity allow God's people to do with their crops? (62:9)
- * 11. What is the call of the prophet to the people as they wait for the Day of the Lord? (62:10)
12. What names did Isaiah prophesy would be used in reference to God's people in Jerusalem? (62:12)

Get It

13. How did Isaiah express the importance of praying continually?
- * 14. Why do you think God will give His people a new name?
15. What does it mean to watch for the coming of Christ?
- * 16. What does it mean to "prepare the way of the Lord"?
17. What are the differences between a deserted city and a sought after city?

Apply It

- * 18. In what concrete way (no matter how small) can you "prepare the way of the Lord" in your family or community this week?
19. What circumstance in your life calls for persevering prayer at this time?

God's Day of Vengeance and Redemption - Isaiah 63:1-6

Topics: Alone, Anger, Death, Glory, Greatness, Help, Praise, Punishment, Questions, Redemption, Revenge, Righteousness, Salvation, Strength

Open It

1. Who comes to your mind when you think of a fearsome military leader?
- * 2. What difficult task have you had to do alone because you couldn't find anyone willing to help?

Explore It

3. How does Isaiah describe the figure seen approaching Jerusalem? (63:1)
- * 4. In Isaiah's vision, how does the Lord announce Himself? (63:1)
5. What question does the prophet ask of the approaching ruler? (63:2)
6. What did the stains on God's garments resemble? (63:2)
- * 7. What is the source of the red stain on the Lord's garments? (63:3)
8. What is clear about what the Lord has done to His enemies in the vision? (63:3)
9. What was the timing involved in the Lord's wrath? (63:4)
10. Who fought with the Lord to accomplish His purposes? (63:5)
11. What strength did the Lord draw upon to execute judgment? (63:5)
- * 12. What motivated the Lord to "trample" the nations and pour out their blood? (63:6)

Get It

- * 13. Why would God want His people to know about His terrible wrath against unbelievers?
- * 14. What would be both fearsome and encouraging to Israel about the red-robed figure?
15. What vivid images arise from the idea of God "trampling" the nations?
16. What is the redemption to which the Lord refers in the prophecy?
17. How is God's overwhelming power emphasized in Isaiah's vision?
18. How can the knowledge that God is serious about judging the world encourage us to live faithfully for Him?
19. What difference does it make to you that God is going to judge the world?

Apply It

20. How can you include the concept of God's justice the next time you tell someone about Him?
- * 21. How can you encourage someone you know who is currently overwhelmed or discouraged by injustice in the world?

Praise and Prayer - Isaiah 63:7-64:12

Topics: Angels, Anger, Awe, Call, Compassion, Enemies, Expectations, Fear, Glory, Grief, Guidance, Heart, Heaven, Hiding, History, Holiness, Holy Spirit, Kindness, Love, Mercy, Miracles, Name, Parents, People, Power, Praise, Prayer, Punishment, Questions, Rebellion, Redemption, Remembering, Rest, Right, Righteousness, Salvation, Silence, Sin, Sovereignty, Waiting, Zeal

Open It

- * 1. When have you had the experience of suffering emotionally because someone you loved was suffering?
- 2. Why do you think you are nostalgic about certain periods of time in your past?

Explore It

- 3. What did Isaiah tell about God's relationship to Israel? (63:7)
- * 4. What did God want from the people He chose to bless? (63:8)
- * 5. How did God respond to the distress of His people? (63:9)
- 6. How did God's people respond to His love and mercy? (63:10)
- 7. After Israel rebelled, how did God relate to them? (63:10)
- 8. To what era in their past did the people of Israel look with nostalgia? (63:11-14)
- 9. In contrast to the time of Moses when God's interventions were abundant, what were the people of Isaiah's day asking? (63:15)
- 10. Who did Isaiah acknowledge as even more important to the identity of Israel than their forefathers Abraham and Isaac? (63:16)
- 11. What was the current plight of God's people as described by Isaiah? (63:17-19)
- 12. For what did Isaiah and the people of his day long? (64:1-4)
- 13. After acknowledging what God could do, how did Isaiah take responsibility on behalf of Israel for their own plight? (64:5)
- * 14. How did Isaiah view the "righteous" deeds of the people, which they might have used to argue that they deserved God's favor? (64:6-7)
- 15. What craftsman's image did Isaiah use to express Israel's dependence on God? (63:8)
- 16. On what basis did Isaiah ask God to relent from His anger? (64:9-12)

Get It

- * 17. Why is God's own nature, rather than our own, our best appeal to Him for forgiveness and restoration?
- 18. How is it possible for us to grieve the Holy Spirit?
- 19. Why is it good for believers to rehearse the instances of God's faithfulness in the past?
- 20. What situations in your life or the world around you do you wish God would affect with miraculous power?
- 21. Why is it a privilege to be called by the Name of God?
- 22. What characterizes the people on whose behalf God acts?
- * 23. Why are our righteous acts ineffectual for reconciling us to God?

Apply It

- * 24. What visual reminder could you place where you will see it often to remind you to trust in God's righteousness and not your own?
- 25. What acts of kindness in your history can form the basis for thanksgiving and testimony this coming week?

Judgment and Salvation - Isaiah 65:1-16

Topics: Abundance, Blessing, Call, Children, Choices, Death, Disobedience, Evil, Forget, Forsake, Holiness, Idolatry, Invitation, Joy, Listening, Name, Punishment, Rest, Revelation, Sacrifice, Self-centeredness, Self-righteousness, Shame, Silence, Sin, Sorrow, Stubbornness, Swearing, Truth

Open It

1. When was the last time something good came to you that you weren't expecting?
- * 2. How does it feel to encounter people who think they are too good to associate with you?

Explore It

3. To whom did God say that He had revealed Himself? (65:1)
4. What characterized the people to whom God reached out? (65:2)
5. By what activities did Israel provoke God? (65:3-4)
- * 6. How did Israel evaluate their own morality in comparison to others? (65:5)
7. What did God promise He would do because of the people's sin? (65:6-7)
- * 8. How did God portray the fact that there was a remnant of faithful people even in an unfaithful nation? (65:8)
9. What did God promise to do on behalf of those who remained faithful? (65:9-10)
- * 10. What did God say He would do to those who forsook Him and consulted other gods? (65:11-12)
11. Why did God hold the people responsible for their disobedience? (65:12)
12. How did God contrast the future of His servants with that of the disobedient in Israel? (65:13-14)
13. How did the names of the obedient and disobedient reflect their standing with God? (65:15)
14. Who would be the source of all blessings and all promises when God redeemed His remnant? (65:16)

Get It

15. Why do you suppose Israel was not seeking God or asking for Him?
16. Why would God respond with such fury to the hypocritical idolaters?
17. In what way was God being just by not destroying the whole nation?
18. What is desirable about a religion that has prescribed rituals a person can observe in order to feel superior to others?
- * 19. Why is Christianity not a religion in which we can measure our righteousness and compare it to others?
- * 20. What is challenging about being willing to remain faithful and wait to see God reward His servants and punish the wicked?

Apply It

21. What spiritual habits can you begin to cultivate this month which will help you to remain faithful to God and wait for His reward?
- * 22. How can you avoid the temptations that may come your way in the coming weeks to feel superior to other Christians whom you don't like?

New Heavens and a New Earth - Isaiah 65:17-25

Topics: Age, Answers, Blessing, Call, Children, Creation, Earth, Gladness, Heaven, Heritage, Holiness, Joy, Peace, People, Pleasure, Remembering, Rewards, Satisfaction, Work

Open It

- * 1. What, in your opinion, enables a person to reach old age in contentment?
- 2. What was the most unforgettable weeping you've ever heard?
- 3. How long would you like to live?

Explore It

- * 4. What did God, speaking through Isaiah, promise to create? (65:17)
- * 5. What will happen to the memory of the past? (65:17-18)
 - 6. When God rejoices over Jerusalem, what will be eliminated from it forever? (65:19)
 - 7. How will premature death be redefined when God redeems His people? (65:20)
- * 8. In contrast to invasion and exile in Isaiah's time, what security will be enjoyed by the people God blesses? (65:21-23)
 - 9. How will the nature of child-bearing and work be different in the new earth? (65:23)
 - 10. When does God promise to hear and answer His people? (65:24)
 - 11. How will the relationships within the natural world reflect the peace of God's presence? (65:25)
 - 12. What will be totally absent from God's holy mountain? (65:25)

Get It

- * 13. How does this prophecy of Isaiah reinforce the idea that the blessings we receive are not dependent on us?
- * 14. What are some examples of sin's taint on our present world, necessitating the creation of a new earth?
 - 15. In what sense is violence an illustration of sin's far-reaching effects?
 - 16. How can a premature death indicate the sinfulness of this world?
 - 17. What sorts of experiences in life would we rather not remember?
 - 18. When has God provided for you before you even asked?

Apply It

- * 19. What promise can encourage you the next time you feel that you've worked or labored in vain?
- 20. In what concrete way can you bring God's peace to those around you in the next few days?

Judgment and Hope - Isaiah 66:1-24

Topics: Abundance, Actions, Anger, Answers, Call, Choices, Comfort, Creation, Death, Disobedience, Earth, Evil, Fear, Glory, Hate, Heritage, Honor, Humility, Idolatry, Joy, Judgment, Listening, Love, Murder, Name, Pain, Peace, Punishment, Purity, Rebellion, Sacrifice, Satisfaction, Shame, Soul, Worship

Open It

- * 1. What are some positive and negative images of the humble person?
- 2. What, for you, best illustrates fruitfulness and flourishing?

Explore It

- 3. Why is humankind presumptuous to think of building a house for God? (66:1-2)
- * 4. What kind of person does God esteem? (66:2)
- 5. How does God view the sacrifices made by arrogant people who “have chosen their own ways”? (66:3)
- * 6. What will happen to the person who chooses evil and ignores God’s voice? (66:4)
- 7. What does God have in store for those who exclude the humble worshiper? (66:5-6)
- 8. What image did God use to make the point that just because they didn’t see the immediate restoration of Jerusalem didn’t mean it wouldn’t happen? (66:7-11)
- 9. To what does God compare the tender care, nourishment, and comfort He will give His people? (66:12-13)
- 10. How will the reward of the wicked differ from the reward of the faithful? (66:14-16)
- 11. What is the ultimate punishment for not respecting God? (66:16)
- 12. What will become of people who worship false gods when God’s glory is revealed? (66:17-18)
- * 13. What inspiring imagery did Isaiah use to predict how the message of God’s glory would spread throughout the earth? (66:19-21)
- 14. How long will the new creation last? (66:22)
- 15. How does this prophecy express the promise of eternal life? (66:22-23)
- 16. What will become of the unrighteous and disobedient? (66:24)

Get It

- * 17. What does it mean to be humble and contrite in spirit?
- 18. Why does God hate hypocritical “religiosity”?
- 19. Why should we be hesitant to exclude people from the church of God based on our own standards?
- 20. What is meaningful to you in the parallel Isaiah draws between God and the mother of a young child?
- * 21. Who will see the glory of the Lord, and who will be subject to His judgment?

Apply It

- * 22. Who could you encourage with the truth that God’s purposes will be accomplished, no matter how long we feel we have to wait?
- 23. What practical steps can you take toward proclaiming God’s glory to others?