**The Book of Isaiah**

Isaiah 1:1 During the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah

740-690 BC Prophesied principally to Judah and Jerusalem (the southern kingdom).

Isaiah means “The Lord is Salvation.

Isaiah lived in Jerusalem and, unlike his contemporary Micah of Moresheth, who was from the countryside, he was a man of the court and the city.

It is likely he was of royal lineage. He had access to the kings/court. An insider.

Isaiah ministered to Judah during the time of the divided kingdom.

Timeline:

732 BC Syro/Ephriam war (Isaiah 7, 2 Kings 15:37) Rezin of Syria/Damascus and Pekah of Samaria rebel against Assyria and try to conquer Judah under Ahaz. Isaiah counsels Ahaz to rely on God but he sought an alliance with Tiglath Pileser III (2 Kings 16:7-9) Judah was temporarily saved, but lost independence.

722 BC Ephraim/Samaria was destroyed by Assyria under Shalmaneezer V and his successor Sargon after a 3-year siege.

701 BC Sennacherib took all the cities of Judah and surrounded Jerusalem during the reign of Hezekiah in 701 BC. Isaiah 1:7 is the reality Isaiah was experiencing at that time.

Tiglath-pileser III 745-727 BC 2Kings 15:19-20 - known as Pulu in Babylon or Pul in Israel. Syro/Ephraim War, Jezreel.

Shalmaneezer V 727-722 BC Hosea 10:14, 2 Kings 17 Began destruction of Israel.

Sargon II 722-705 BC 2 Chronicles 28:1-27

Finished destruction of Samaria/Northern kingdom.

Sennacherib 705-681BC 2 Chronicles:29-33, Is 36:1-7, 37:21,35-37 - constant threat to Judah under king Hezekiah

Ahaz serves as a bad example of a godly leader. Isaiah 7-8

Hezekiah serves as an example of a godly leader. Isaiah 36-38

But Hezekiah messed up Isaiah 39

Isaiah the prophet helped to save Judah at that time. Hopefully, Judah will be sufficiently chastened, but, unfortunately not. 115 years later Judah went into exile into Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar. This, too, is prophesied in Isaiah 39

Isaiah prophesied the coming of Assyria (Isaiah 7:17) and of Nebuchadnezzar (Isaiah 39) and the return from exile under Cyrus (Isaiah 45:1) are prophesied by Isaiah.

Isaiah contains 111 separate predictions. Of the 1,292 verses in the book, 754 (59%) deal with future events.

Forty-seven chapters of this book were directly quoted or alluded to by Christ or the Apostles. With more than four hundred allusions, Isaiah stands second only to Psalms as the most cited book in the New Testament.

Isaiah is said by the Jews to have died by being sawed in two (Hebrews 11:37)

The greatest of all the prophets? Others might nominate Elijah, but we do not have his prophecies, or Moses who was a prophet, but not a traditional one.

Author: Isaiah, son of Amoz.

But, the consensus of modern scholarship is

Isaiah I Ch 1-39 and Isaiah II (Deutero Isaiah) Ch 40-66

Why? Change of subject. Isaiah Ch 1-39 focuses more on Assyria, Isaiah 40-55 focuses more on Babylon and Cyrus.

Greater messianic focus and the introduction of the Suffering Servant (who they say is Israel, not the Messiah).

Comment: This is possibly true. But it comes from a presupposition that the Bible is not inspired. Mentioning Cyrus or conquest by Babylon proves it was written after these things. Circular reasoning. Besides, Isaiah prophesies Jesus!

This is circular reasoning. Isaiah has a great unity of theme. Isaiah 1-39 is about current events. Isaiah 40-66 is about the future. I will treat Isaiah as a whole.

Outline of Isaiah that explains this dichotomy:

Isaiah 1-39 Messiah the King 9:1-7, 11:1-16, 32:1-8, 33:17-24 Assyria

Isaiah 40-55 Messiah the Servant 42:1-4, 49:1-6, 50:4-9, 52:13-53:12 Babylon and Persia

Isaiah 56-66 Messiah the Conqueror 59:20-21, 61:1-3, 61:10-62:7, 63:1-6 The whole world

Another Outline

God Judges the Nations (Ch. 1-35)

God Comforts his People (Ch. 36-48)

God’s Prince of Peace (Ch. 49-57)

God’s Program for Salvation (Ch. 58-66)

The themes of Isaiah are the themes of the Bible.

1. The sinfulness of Judah and Jerusalem

2. Appeal of God to turn to him—to repent.

3. Judgment if they do not.

4. The Messiah—the Suffering Servant—is coming to save.

5. Restoration of a Remnant

Sub themes of Isaiah (also important but not dominant themes)

1. God rules the nations.

2. The glory of God.

3. Social justice

Isaiah is about faith in God’s promises. Faith in God’s promises, not in the world’s power/Assyria & Babylon.

Isaiah 1-5 is a sort of prologue to the “beginning” of Isaiah in Isaiah 6.

It is tempting to start the class in Isaiah 6 and then to come back.

Isaiah 1 Introduction to Isaiah. This chapter includes most of the themes of the entire book:

The utter sinfulness of Jerusalem/Judah (v 3-8)

Tender appeal by Jehovah that Judah repent (v. 16-19)

The inevitability of judgment (v. 24-25, 29-31)

The possibility of salvation (v. 26-27)

Isaiah 1:1 Isaiah is a prophet to the Southern Kingdom (Judah and Jerusalem)

The chapter is like a courtroom scene, including witnesses, with Judah as defendant.

Isaiah 1:2-4

Hear me, you heavens! Listen earth! Isaiah is calling the heavens and the earth as witnesses to what God is telling Judah. Appealing to creation Reminds of Deut 30:19 You better pay attention!

Isaiah may be harkening back to Moses on purpose.

Also reminds of Romans 8:22 The whole creation has been groaning.

God: I have raised you and loved you like a parent does a child. I have always maintained *hesed*—covenant-love, loyal-love

Q: How has God been like a parent to us? Parallel: Hosea 11:1, 3-4.

Reminds of Ezekiel 16:6-10 A female child left for dead, but rescued by God.

But we have rebelled. How have we rebelled? How have you rebelled?

“The ox knows his master” Even dumb animals are spart enough to know who is master.

A donkey knows its owner’s manger

Our equivalent: A dog knows where the food comes from.

Q: Why does Israel (and do we) not know our master? (don’t bite the hand that feeds you) We forgot where home is.

v. 3 The word “know” here is *yada* which is an intimate knowing used even of the sexual relationship. Do you know God like this?

My people do not understand “people” = *ammi* (as opposed to *lo ammi* in Hosea not God’s people). God still loves Israel and calls her his children in spite of it all.

Q: If you were to interview the residents of Jerusalem, would they agree with the assessment in v. 4? Probably not. Who, me?

Whose guilt is great: Whose sin is a heavy load, weighing the down. Can you relate?

Implication: We are easily deceived about who our master is.

Isaiah 1:5-8 What do we see about God here? He has compassion. It breaks his heart to see Judah like this (Luke 13:34-35 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem… Again, it reminds of Hoseah 11:8 How can I give you up?)

BTW Isaiah 1:4 in NIV is woe, but better translated alas!

Note: v. 7 was literally true. 701 BC

v. 8 Jerusalem, the beautiful city, is left poverty-stricken.

“The key to national prosperity is righteousness, not sound fiscal policy.” (Motyer)

God: You drove me to this.

Isaiah 1:9 Here we have hope. Q: Who are these “survivors”? (a hard question…. These are the remnant, which is a common theme in Isaiah. Who is the remnant?)

What is the normal meaning in everyday usage of the word remnant?

The remnant: Anchor Bible: “What is left of a community after it undergoes a disaster.

The remnant is the small portion of the religious people who truly worship God and will, therefore be saved from destruction.

Is 10:20-23, Zeph 2:7-11 Hosea 11:8-11 Ezek 5:1-3 What do we learn of the remnant from these passages?

The Jews in Jerusalem are thinking they are just fine, but only a remnant of them will be saved. Application: Most who call themselves Christians are like these Jews. The remnant here are those who are saved from destruction, and they are a small minority.

Isaiah 1:10-15 Why is God so angry? (He is, after all, calling us Sodom and Gomorrah)

What was the sin of Sodom? Ezekiel 16:49-51 Social injustice.

Didn’t he ask them to bring these offerings? (yes!). So what is the problem? (Malachi 3:10-12 bring in the whole offering, 1 Sam 15:22 to obey is “better” than to sacrifice Hos 6:6 I desire *hesed*, not sacrifice)

Being religious but not practicing *hesed* makes me sick!

v. 13 Might our worship be “worthless assemblies”?

So, what do we learn, then? What should we do?

Isaiah 1:16-17 Repent! What would we say we should do when we repent? Stop sinning, read the Bible and pray.

God says: Start behaving rightly toward the poor, the oppressed the orphan and the widow. Practice social justice. Do justice.

Isaiah 1:18-20. Come, let us reason together. Let’s have a conversation about this. God is willing to appeal to our reason.

Q: What does God offer? God offers salvation. Scarlet → white as snow.

What is required? That we are willing (ie choose freely) to obey

Two choices:

Willingly obey

Resist and rebel. What do you chose?

Isaiah 1:21-23 No more justice in the land. Rulers are taking bribes. The rich get richer and the poor are taken advantage of.

A constant theme, especially in Amos and Micah, but also in Isaiah a lot.

The most common sins mentioned in Isaiah are idolatry and failure to treat people with justice.

v. 24 The result: I will vent my wrath on you! v. 25 I will remove the dross/impurities.

v. 26 Hope for Israel. v. 27 Zion (Jerusalem/Judah) will be delivered from my wrath.

v. 29-31 The idolators (sacred oaks, gardens) will be destroyed.

**Isaiah 2 The Mountain of the Lord**

A key chapter (parallel to Micah 4:1-8)

Isaiah 2:1-5 A kingdom prophecy.

Kingdom Prophecies in Isaiah

1. The future temple which attracts Gentiles (2:2–4).

2. The glorious Branch (4:2–6).

3. The virgin birth of Immanuel (7:13–14).

4. The dawning of a new day in the birth of a child (9:1–7).

5. The Shoot of the stem of Jesse (11:1–10).

6. The conversion of Gentiles (19:18–25).

7. The new Jerusalem (54:9–13; 60:19–22).

Vs 2. Last days, what last days? Hebrews 1:2 But in these last days…

Acts 2:17 “In the last days…” (quoting Joel 2:28-32)

What is the mountain of the Lord? It is Mt. Zion, it is Jerusalem, it is the Kingdom of God. It is the Church.

v. 3 The Law will go out from Zion. Pentecost and the early church?

Many peoples… Genesis 22:18 Through you all nations will be blessed.

Vs 4. Is inscribed near the UN headquarters in New York. What is the vision described here, how is it possible? God will bring peace and unity where there was war and division. This is the Kingdom of God. This is God’s vision.

v. 5 The precursor to “come let us go up” (v. 3) is “Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord. Otherwise our evangelism will not produce “come let us go up.”

A parallel passage: Isaiah 11:1-16.

11:1-3 A root (nazer) of Jesse. Matthew 2:23 He will be called *nazer*ene

Because of the sin of Israel and Judah (Isaiah 7), the royal kingship will become a stump.

But by God’s grace, from that stump will come a shoot/branch.

Isaiah 11:2 Note the mention of the Holy Spirit here. The Spirit is key.

11:4-5 Messiah will bring (social) justice (rightness, fairness) and righteousness. The needy and the poor cared for.

11:6-9 A kingdom prophecy. A beautiful image of the kingdom. Already but not yet.

v. 8 Look at this metaphor!!! The infant will play near the cobra’s den. This is God’s vision for his Church, for his people, for his Kingdom.

11:10-16 The kingdom of God is a banner, a resting place, a gathered remnant, a highway to heaven.

Isaiah Ch 2-4 starts with Isaiah 2:2-5 and ends with Isaiah 4:2-6 This section begins and ends with hope. Ch 2-4 is like a sandwich.

Isaiah 4:2-6 The return of the glory of the Lord to the kingdom.

v. 2 In that day (again 2:2) the Branch of the Lord will be beautiful.

v. 3-4 The remnant will be cleansed.

v. 5 The Shekinah—the glory of the Lord, the cloud of smoke by day and the pillar of fire by night—will be with the people.

Jesus came and tabernacled among us John 1:18 He tabernacled among us. We beheld his glory—the glory of the one and only Son of God.

Branch → Cleansing → Booth/dwelling

Read Isaiah 2:6-22 What is God talking about here? The Day of the Lord.

TDOTL: . Obadiah 4, Amos 5:2, Amos 3:2, Micah 3:12 Zephaniah 1:14-18 ***Is. 2:12 Is. 13:6-9Is. 13:10-13 Is. 34:4, 8-10 Jer. 46:10 Lam. 2:22 Ezek. 13:5 Ezek 30:3 Joel 1:15 Joel 2:1 Joel 2:11 Joel 2:31 Joel 3:14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.***

***Amos 5:18-20 Obad. 15 Zeph. 1:8 Zeph. 1:14 Zeph. 1:18-2:3 Zeph. 1:15-17 Zech. 14:1 Malachi 4:5***

**The Day of the Lord signifies “The moment when Jehovah grasps the reigns, which he seems to have held slackly before, when the currents of his moral rule, which have been running sluggishly, receive a mysterious quickening, and the Lord’s work on the earth is at last fully performed.”**

**Or “The Day in which Jehovah will manifest himself as God.”**

The Day of the Lord is a day that God’s kingdom comes with power to build up or to destroy.

v. 10 The unrighteous are hiding in the rocks.

v. 12-17 The proud, the rich and prosperous… All will be brought low.

v. 20 TDOTL is a day people throw away what they formerly valued greatly.

v. 22 Great advice Stop trusting in mere humans.

Let’s pick up the pace. We will read longer sections, comment on what stands out to you.

Read Isaiah 3:1-26, 4:1 What do you see here, what stands out? (vs 5 oppression, vs 9 brought it on themselves)

Read Isaiah 4:2-6

Isaiah 5:1-30 “The Song of the Vineyard” An Old Testament Parable

Isaiah 5:1-7 God’s vineyard

Is 5:1-2 God created a vineyard and he loved the vineyard.

The vineyard was Israel and Judah (v. 7) in context, but for us it is the church.

v. 2 He cleared the land, took out the stones and added the choicest vines. That is what God has done for his church and even in your life. He created a life for us and gave us work to do.

v. 2 He set up a watchtower. He looked over his church to guard it.

v. 2 He created a winepress. He expected to yield something from the garden.

v. 4 What more could I have done for you, O church/O Israel and Judah?

v. 4 When I came to pick grapes, there were only bad grapes. How does God feel about this?

So it will be destroyed, its wall broken down and it will be a wasteland (v. 5)

Isaiah 5:8-30 God calls them out for their sin.

v. 8-13 They were seeking wealth at the expense of the poor—driving the poor off their land. v. 9 But their great houses will become desolate.

v. 13 Therefore, they will go into exile. They will not be part of God’s church.

v. 20-23 for example Woe to those who call evil good and good evil.

-wise in their own eyes

-drunkards “heroes at drinking wine” = calling evil god

-injustice in the courts acquit the guilty and convict the innocent

Isaiah 6 Isaiah’s commission.

Isaiah 6:1-4 Q: What do you see about God here?

Q: What does holy mean?

v. 3 The whole earth is full of his glory. What does this mean?

6:5-6 A great scene. Q: Why is Isaiah acting this way?

6:7 Why did God do this to Isaiah?

6:8 A great attitude. Do you have this attitude? If you say this, where might God send you? (into your neighborhood, to the hospital,…)

Isaiah 6:9-10 Isaiah’s commission.

Also found in Matthew 13:14-15 Let’s read Matthew 13:10-17 to get the context.

Q: What is going on here? Is God purposefully making them not believe? Why is Jesus speaking in parables?

Isaiah 6:11-13 Q: How does Isaiah feel about his commission?

Our job is not to bring God’s judgment to the people. Our job is to bring the truth to them and if judgment falls on them that is on them, as they say. Is sharing our faith a lot of fun? Well…..

Isaiah 7 Do not ally yourself with the world.

Isaiah 7:1-9 Ephraim and king Pekah (the Northern Kingdom) is allying with Aram and king Rezin (Syria) to attack Judah. They are rebelling against Assyria. This is the Syro/Ephraimite war of 734 BC.

v. 2 A scary situation for Judah. What should they do? Who should they turn to?

v. 3 God had Isaiah name his son Shear-Jashtub? (a remnant will return)?

God days I will protect you and a remnant will return.

v. 4 This is how we should react when things look really bad—when it feels like our enemies will overpower us.

-be careful.

-keep calm.

-do not be afraid or lose heart. Trust in God.

v. 7 [If you trust God] it will not happen.

v.9 A great quote. If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.

Isaiah 7:10-12. Ahaz refuses to ask for a sign. Is this a good thing? How should we act in this regard? Ahaz does not turn to God.

Isaiah 7:13-17 God days, “I will give you a sign.” But you, Ahaz, will not see that sign.

v. 14 The sign? The virgin (young maiden) will give birth to a son who will be God-with-us. Jesus is called God-with-us in Matthew 1:22 and Matthew 28:20.

Jesus is God-with-us. Ahaz should have recognized this, but he did not look for the sign. Instead, he trusted in Assyria.

v. 16 This is a double-prophecy. The prophecy was fulfilled in Ahaz’ day, but not in a good way. The son of Ahaz is Hezekiah. 722 BC (12 years later) The land of Rezin (Aram) and Pekah (Samaria/Ephraim/Israel/Northern Kingdom) were laid waste v. 17 The Lord… will bring the king of Assyria.

Isaiah 7:18-25 This is exactly what happened! The Lord whistled for bees from Assyria. Q: Why did this happen? Is it because he did not love the Ephraimites?

Isaiah 8:1-22

Q: How would you like to have a son named Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz? (quick to the plunder, swift to the spoil).

Q: What was the point of God doing this?

Q: What is the point of 8:12-14?

v. 18 Q: How would you describe Isaiah’s attitude here?

Isaiah 9:1-7 The Lord’s deliverance.

More notes on Ch 7-9:

Read Isa 8:1-10

Isa 8:11-22

What is God’s instruction “to his disciples”?

Is this a prophecy of the Messiah? How so?

What are some ways people consult mediums and spiritists today?

Isaiah 9:1-2

Obviously a prophecy of the Messiah, how does Jesus fulfil vs 1-2?

Matt 4:12-17

Isa 9:3-5, what is promised verses 3-5?

Isa 9:6-7

What does this teach about the Messiah?

What is the significance of: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace?

Isaiah 10:1-4 Q: What gets God angry here?

Q: What aspect of life does God want us to emphasize? Because we do not have political power, what, instead, ought we to do?

Isaiah 58:5-8 Social justice.

Matthew 4:23 Q: What was the content of Jesus’ ministry?

v. 3-4 Q: What is God’s point here? (that on judgment day, the things they had relied on will not save them.

Isaiah 10:5-6. What is the deal here? Whom is he using to do what to whom?

Q: How might something very different, but loosely analogous happen to us?

Isaiah 10:7-16 How is the king of Assyria, God’s instrument feeling about being used in this way?

Q: What is the point of v. 15?

10:20-25 Figuratively, who are this remnant? Where will they return to? What are the qualities of this remant?

Isaiah 11:1-9 Already covered

Isaiah 12:1-6 A psalm of Isaiah. Q: What are some of the things we ought to be praising God for?

Q: What are some ways Isaiah is suggesting we ought to thank/praise God?

Read Isaiah 12. What is Isaiah talking about here? What is he describing?

We are skipping Isaiah Ch 13-23. Our “excuse” for doing this is that these passages apply to those, figuratively, who are outside of God’s people.

Summary of Isaiah 13-24:

Judgement against Babylon, the Philistines, Moab, Damascus, Cush, Egypt, Jerusalem, etc…

Isa 24:1-3 and 24:21-23. You get the idea? Go back sometime and read those chapters on your own.

Isaiah 25:1-5 How does this passage describe God’s people? (poor/needy) What does God do for them? (refuge/shelter)

Isaiah 25:6-9 What blessings will God provide His people? When did/will this happen?

Isaiah 25:10-12 Who does Moab represent and what happens to them? (those who oppose God)

Isaiah 26:1-7 what promises does God offer here? How do we receive them? (peace if your mind is set on Him, level paths if you are upright)

Isaiah 26:8-11 What does Isaiah ask God to do and why?

Isaiah 26:12-21 What does Isaiah say about/to his people?

Isaiah 27:1-13 What is the vineyard he is referring to in vs 2-3? How does God treat the vineyard?

Skip Ch 28-30

Isaiah 31:1-3 The situation: Assyria was threatening the very existence of Judah at this time (see Isaiah 36 and 37). What was the only hope for “saving” Judah? The world says to rely on Egypt, the other superpower of the day.

Q: Who might be “Egypt” for us? Why do we want so badly to rely on Egypt.

Q: What should we do instead? Why?

Isaiah 32:1-4 Q: Who is this king? Q: In what sense will we be “like a shelter from the wind”, or “like streams of water in the desert”?

Isaiah 36:1-22 Describe what is going on here. What is Sennacherib’s strategy?

Let us imagine that in this case, Sennacherib (or his field commander) will represent Satan. What is Satan saying to you? What are you tempted to feel right now?

v. 21 Q: Why is this a good strategy for us?

Isaiah 37:1-20 Q: What is Hezekiah’s response in vs. 1-4? (He consults with God through Isaiah for his will)

37:14-20 How would you characterize his prayer? What can you personally learn with regard to your own prayer?

Isaiah 37:21-35 v. 24-25 What did Sennacherib say? v. 26-29 What is God’s response to this?

v. God’s response to his people:

Q: Why only a remnant? V. 35 For whose sake will God do this?

Isaiah 37:36-38 Q: How did the people of Jerusalem feel about this? What did they learn?

Carlos did Isaiah 38 and 39

**Isaiah 38 – Hezekiah**

Review of Isa 37: Sennacherib king of Assyria threatened Israel. Hezekiah spread out the letter before God and prayed. God delivered Israel and the angel from God wiped out the Assyrian army.

Isaiah 38:1 Q: If you were Hezekiah, how would you respond to this news?

Isaiah 38:2-3 Q: How did Hezekiah respond? Could you pray the same way?

Isaiah 38:4-8 Q: What was God’s response? What does this tell you about God (James 5:13-16)? Why did God offer a sign in verse 7-8?

Isaiah 38:9-20 What was Hezekiah’s response to being healed? What does he mean it was for his benefit in verse 17?

Isaiah 38:21-22 Q: At this point why did Hezekiah ask for another sign?

Isaiah 39:1-8 Q: Why did Hezekiah show the Babylonians everything? What did Isaiah say would be the result and what was Hezekiah’s response?

2 Chronicles 32:24-33. A summary of Hezekiah’s life, what do you see here, especially verse 31?

More notes on Isaiah 38

38:1-3.

Q: How would you have felt?

Q: How would you describe Hezekiah’s response to the bad news from God? Was it a faithful response? (focus on the word bitterly)

38:4-8 Q: What was God’s reaction?

This tells us that God “changes his mind.” based on our prayers. How does this make you feel?

Q: Why did God give a sign to Hezekiah?

38:9-20 What do we see here as a model for us?

38:21 Q: Any significance that, despite the promise of God, Hezekiah still applied a poultice?

38:22 This appears to be a quote from something that happened before 38:7-8

Isaiah 39 What was Hezekiah’s mistake here?

Note, however, that this is not a strong indictment of Hezekiah, as God used this whole situation to bring about his will.

Is Hezekiah being selfish that he is happy, despite the fact that judgment will come to his grandchild?

Isaiah 40:1-2 Q: What “service” has been completed? What “sin has been payed for.”? What is the context here.

This is a prophecy about a future blessing which will come after Judah has been judged and delivered.

It is not unlike Jeremiah 29:10-14 This passage is about the remnant whom God will save and bless.

Q: What is God’s message for this remnant? Comfort.

Q: What is an area in your life in which you could use the message of comfort?

A great passage on comfort: 2 Cor 1:3-7. In what sense is God offering us comfort?

Isaiah 41:9 Another great passage on this topic. Q: Who is he talking to? Q: How does this make you feel?

Isaiah 40:3-5. Q: Who is this “voice in the desert? John the Baptist. Mark 1:1-4

Q: In what sense is JTB this voice?

Q: What is the symbolic meaning of the straight highway, the valleys being filled up and the mountains made low?

Q: What is God doing for us through Jesus Christ?

40:6-11 Q: What do we see about God in this passage? How does this make you feel?

40:12-20 Q: Again, what do we see about God here? What Bible book does this sound like? (I think of Job)

Does this make you feel awesome and protected or does this make you feel scared? How does God want you to feel from this passage?

40:21-27 More of the same. Any more responses?

40:28-31. What is God telling us here? When you hear about soaring on wings like eagles, what can you see God doing through you?

Isaiah 41:1-7 God’s feeling about the idols.

41:8 Who are these descendants of Abraham? Galatians 3:6-14

Isaiah 41:8 The Servant is, depending on the context, Israel (41:8, 49:3), the Church/Kingdom, the Messiah (50:4-9, 53:9). Thorough treatment in Motyer p. 26.

(we already looked at 41:9-10)

41:11-20. How will God treat those who are his?

We are skipping to Isaiah 42.

Isaiah 42:1-4 Q: Who are we talking about here? How do we know?

Q: How is Jesus described here? (“my servant”)

In some passages, Jesus is, symbolically a sheep and in others he is symbolically a lion. Q: Which is he in this passage? (a lamb)

Revelation 5:5-6 Q: In what ways is Jesus like a lion?

Any specific examples? (Matthew 16:23, Matthew 23, esp. v. 29-37, but notice right after he is a lamb again Mat 23:37-39)

Q: In what ways is he like a lamb?

Specific examples (John 8:11 then neither do I condemn you. Luke 9:51-56 did not call down fire , Matthew 9:35-38 compassion , Matthew 12:15-21 quotes this passage)

Q: Which is the real Jesus?

Q: Why do we see both aspects of Jesus? Who sees one and who sees the other?

v. 4 Q: How will he bring about justice if he is not breaking bruised reeds or snuffing out smoldering wicks?

Isaiah 42:5-7 Let’s also read Isaiah 61:1-3 Q: What is Jesus going to do? (quoted in Luke 4:17-21.

Q: How does Jesus do these things today?

Isaiah 42:8-9 Who is God comparing himself to here? What is the basis for his claim about them?

Q: Can you think of any things God announced to us before they happened?

Isaiah 42:10-17 (It is not clear this is about Jesus, but…) Is this a lion or a lamb?

(note: Islands as a symbol of human insignificance before God. Isa 40:15-17 ...)

Q: What is God asking us to do here? Let’s practice. We often do little “sharing” for birthdays. Let’s do that for God right now.

v. 15-17 God is going to act for us in powerful ways.

Skip to Isaiah 43.

Is 43:1-7 Who is “you” here? Q: What is God doing for us? Q: What should we be doing? Q: What does this passage tell us about our relationship with God?

Is 43:8-13 What are we witnesses of?

Is 43:14-28 Q: How did we treat God? How did God treat us in return?

Notice: God reasons with us here. He appeals to our reason.

Is 44:1-8 What do we learn about God here? (he is reliable and unchanging)

Isaiah 44:9-23 The foolishness of idols Idols vs. YHWH

Q: How are we like this? We are more sophisticated than this, but to God it all is the same.

Isaiah 44:24-28 Q: Who is God? He is the one who is able to call Cyrus 150 years before he is born!!!

Isaiah 45:1-8 Who is Cyrus, symbolically/prophetically? He is a prefigure of the Messiah. Cyrus did not even believe in God, yet God used him.

Why would God do this? “Then you will know that I am the Lord.” 45:5

Is 45:9-13 Q: Who is the potter? He is the one who will send Cyrus. Romans 9:14-24.

We are skipping Isaiah 46-48. The themes are somewhat repetitive compared to to Ch 42-45.

**More notes on Isaiah 43-45**

Isa 43:1-7

Q: What does this say about your relationship with God? What are some things that God tells us not to fear? (water, fire, being scattered/alone)

Isa 43:8-13

Q: God calls Israel to be witnesses, witnesses of what? What does God call us to witness?

Isa 43:14-28

Q: How did Israel (we) treat God? How did he respond? (verse 25)

Isa 44:1-8

Q: What does this teach about God? (First and last, there is no other God)

Isa 44:9-23

Q: Besides wood and stone, what are some idols we can make? Why does God say it is foolish to bow down to them?

Isa 44:24-28

Q: Who is God according to this passage?

Isa 45:1-8

Q: What does God say about Cyrus? What do you think of vs 4-5? Why does God lift up someone who does not honor Him?

Isa 45:9-13

Q: God explains why He uses Cyrus, any comments?

Romans 9:14-24

Q: So, why does God do this? (to make known the riches of His mercy)

Isaiah 49:1-7 Q: Who is the prophet talking about? Jesus/the Messiah?

v. 1. Who are these islands? This is the Gentiles of all nations.

v. 1 Before I was born the Lord called me… v. 5 He who formed me in the womb. Q: What is God saying about the Messiah?

v. 5 ….to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself. v. 6 to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept.

Q: What will the Messiah do?

Q: Where did Jesus rescue you from?

Isaiah 49:8-18 v. 8-9a Q: What has God done for us? What did he free you from?

v. 9b-12. Metaphorically, what has God done for us as we are restored to him. Q: does it always feel this way? (v. 14) But is it true nevertheless!

v. 15-16 What is God’s response when we are tempted to not believe v. 9b-12?

v. 17-18 Q: Who are these ornaments that we will wear? (it is our spiritual children). Q: Does anyone have a fond memory about someone that you helped to become a Christian?

Is 49:19-26 Q: What is this passage about, symbolically? (It is about our evangelism.) Q: Do you see it this way? Do you have a vision for God to use you to bring many to Him?

v. 22-23 Q: Who will we help to come to Christ? (our “children” and our “foster” parents) Q: Are they literally going to be licking the dust at your feet? ☺.

v. 26 How will we know that Jesus is Lord?

**Isaiah 52 Lord’s Supper**

Is 52:1-6

v. 1-2 Wake up, O people of God! Zion is Mt. Zion is Jerusalem, but, figuratively in Isaiah, it is the kingdom of God or, in this case it is the people of God. Wake up!

v. 1 What are these “beautiful garments?” Gal 3:26 Those of you who have been baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. These are the garments that get you into the wedding feast if Christ in Matthew 22:11-12 When the king came in to view the guests, he saw a man there who was not dressed for a wedding. So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ The man was speechless. Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie him up hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

v. 2 Remove the bonds of slavery.

v. 3-5 We were sold for nothing. Q: What did you sell your salvation for? What wages did Satan pay you?

v. 3 We sold ourselves for nothing and we cannot be bought back with silver. Something much more precious must be paid.

v. 4 We went down to Egypt. Egypt is where you become enslaved to sin. Is there anyone here who avoided going down to Egypt? I certainly did not!

v. 5 We were taken for nothing. In fact, we sold ourselves into captivity.

But… Isaiah 52:7-12

v. 7 How beautiful are the feet of those who shared their faith with you!!!

How beautiful are the feet of the one who told you that God reigns!!!!

How will this work? v. 8 The Lord, Jesus will return to Zion—to Jerusalem.

v. 9 Therefore those of you whose lives were a total and complete ruin, be comforted!

Why? Because he has redeemed you. He has bought you back! But not with silver. No…. With something infinitely more precious than silver.

v. 11 God says Leave! Leave Egypt!!! Stay away from unclean things. Repent of your sins!!!

Isaiah 52:13-15 How will all this work?

v. 13 The Messiah will be lifted up. Jesus in John 12:32 I, when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto myself.

What is the path out of Egypt? What is the thing more precious than silver that put those beautiful garments on you? It is the blood of Jesus.

God’s enemies—the same ones who enslaved us in Egypt, will “lift up” Jesus.

God’s friends will also “lift up” Jesus.

v. 14 He was brutally beaten to the point that he barely looked like a man. That is my Savior Jesus!

v. 15 His blood will sprinkle many nations. This is the same blood we came into contact with when we were baptized into Christ.

The body which was disfigured in v. 14

And the blood that was sprinkled in v. 15

That is what we remember as we share the Lord’s Supper together!

Read Isa 53:1-3

Talking about Jesus again, what does it mean that he had no beauty or majesty? Why was he despised and held in low esteem? It says “we held him in low esteem”, what do you think of that?

Read Isa 53:4-6

How can his suffering, pain, piercing, and wounds bring us peace and healing? See 1 Peter 2:23-25

Read Isa 53:7-9

He was lead like a lamb to the slaughter, was he helpless? See John 10:17-18

Jesus was silent: See Matt 26:59-63

Assigned a grave with the wicked and the rich? See Luke 23:32-33, crucified with criminals (the wicked). See Luke 23:50-56

Read Isa 53:10-12

Verse 10, the King James Version says “it pleased the Lord to bruise him”, why would God be pleased by Jesus being crushed? See 2 Cor 5:18-21. (God was not “pleased” by Jesus suffering directly but by the reconciliation it produced.)

Verse 12, what is Jesus’s portion among the great? See Philippians 2:8-11

Isaiah 54:1-3 Q: Who is this “barren woman” (and who is the one with a husband)? (she is the Gentile nations)

Q: How is this formerly barren woman described? What will happen? What is the meaning of the imagery of lengthening our cords and strengthening our stakes?

v. 3 Q: In what sense were these cities “desolate?”

Isaiah 54:4-6 Q: What was the “shame of your youth” and the “reproach of your widowhood”

(note that widows in ancient times were virtually cut off from family and potential remarriage—they were without hope in the world).

What was our shame replaced by?

Sometimes God is described as a Father. How is this true?

Sometimes he is described as a Husband. How is this true?

Isaiah 54:7-15 Why did God abandon us? What was that like? Why did he take us back? What is that like?

v. 16-17 Is it true that God created the destroyer to “wreak havoc.”?

I thought that God did not create evil. What is this about.

Isaiah 55:1-5 [John 10:10 The thief kills and destroys. I have come that you may have life, and have it to the full.]

v. 1 What comes to mind when you hear God saying “come to the waters.”

v. 2 What did you formerly (or do you still) spend your money on and give your labor to?

v. 2 What is this “richest of fare” we can delight in? [is it really without cost? v. 1]

Isaiah 55:6-9 Q: How are God’s thoughts different from ours?

Isaiah 55:10-13 Q: Does God’s word always accomplish its purpose? Are you sure? What about those who hear it but reject it? (John 12:47-48).

So, what should we do, then, with God’s words?

Isa 56:1-8 Q: What do you think of vs 4-5? A name better than sons and daughters, how so? (Compare to Leviticus 21:16-23) What do you think of vs 6-8, a house of prayer for all nations? (the new covenant church)

Isa 56:9-12 Q: Who are Israel’s watchmen? What’s wrong with these guys?

Isaiah 57:1-2 Q: What advice does God give us here with regard to those who have died?

Q: Who are the righteous Isaiah talks about here, why do they perish? (See 2 Kings 22:19-20)

Read Isa 57:3-13 Q: Who are these people, why is God upset with them, what are their sins? Verse 11, how did they lose their fear of God?

Read Isa 57:14-21 Q: What does verse 15 mean to you? (God lives in a high and holy place, also in the hearts of the lowly and contrite)

Isaiah 58:1-14 Godly fasting.

Isa 58:1-2 Q: Do you see a contradiction here? (They seem eager to know God but the prophet rebukes them)

Isa 58:3-7 they seem bewildered in verse 3, what kind of fasting does God want?

Isa 58:8-14 Q: What are the blessings God confers on those who do it right?

Isaiah 59:1-2 Q: Can God hear the prayers of sinners? So why does he not hear?

Aside: John 9:31 Is this true? Acts 10:1-6 God tells Cornelius that “Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God.”

OK, so now I am confused. How am I to understand all of these scriptures?

Conclusion: Because of our sins, God chooses not to hear and to, in some sense, hide his “face” from us. Our relationship with God is dramatically hindered by our sin.

Isaiah 59:3-16 Is God exaggerating here? Romans 3:9-18 Is God exaggerating here? Does it feel like he is exaggerating to you? (note: some of this is quoted from Isaiah 59) Haven’t you done at least some good? Besides, remember Acts 10:1-6. So, how are we to understand both Romans 3:9-8 and Isaiah 59:1-16?

Ephesians 2:1-3 We were “objects of wrath.”

It would be like a dog who attacked and killed your child. That dog would be an “object of wrath.”

Isaiah 59:19-60:7 Some very good news. What will be the cause of this breaking out of very good news? (v. 19-20). (fear, reverence, repentance)

Why do you think these people feared, gave reverence to God and repented?

60:1-7 What will God do for us? There is a lot of imagery here

1. His glory appears over you. What does this make you think of?

2. Sons and daughters, wealth on the seas, herds of camels, gold and incense.

What will that look like in your life?

60:10-22. Is he talking about the Church or is he talking about our final state in heaven with him? (both, of course).

What do the following mean to you?

1. v. 11 Foreigners will rebuild your walls.

2. v. 11 your gates will always stand open.

3. v. 13 juniper, fir, cypress

4. v. 15 forsaken and hated becomes joy

5. v. 16 drink the milk of nations.

v. 18-22 It feels like this is more reminiscent of heaven that the Church. What will heaven be like? Q: What do you think heaven will be like?

Isaiah 61:1-3 Q: Who is “me” in this passage?

Luke 4:16-21 What do we learn about Jesus here?

Q: If you were to describe the ministry of Christ, what would come to your mind?

Isaiah 61:4-7 What will God do?

Isaiah 62-64

Read Isa 62:3-5 what is God’s promise to His people?

Isaiah 63 – Summary: God will take vengeance on His enemies and redeem His people.

Read Isa 64:3-7 What does this passage teach us about God? (he is awesome, does things we don’t expect, does things we don’t see, helps those who remember him) What does it teach about us? (all our righteous acts are filthy rags, no one calls on God or strives to be near him)

Isaiah 65:1-2 Q: Who are these to whom God revealed himself? And who are the obstinate people?

But for those to whom God reveals himself, here is what God will do:

Isaiah 65:17-25 This is what it is like in the Kingdom of God.

Q: What is heaven like according to this passage?

Q: To what extent is this a passage about the Church as well?

Q: What is your personal picture of heaven?

Isaiah 66:9-24 This is a kind of summary of Isaiah. What are some of the things you have learned from the Book of Isaiah that you see in this passage?

v. 17 is a stark reminder of reality.

v. 19 What is the sign that God will set among them? (Jesus). Those who survive (the remnant) will go out to distant islands to proclaim God’s glory.

Your job may be one of those islands.