

ISAIAH STUDY GUIDE WEEK 1

Week 1: Introduction: Confrontation and Hope for God's People (Isa. 1:1–5:30)

The Place of the Passage

This first section introduces the book and, in doing so, introduces the problem God addresses through the prophet Isaiah. “Children have I reared and brought up,” God says, “but they have rebelled against me” (Isa. 1:2). The people who were supposed to be a holy nation are a “sinful nation” (Isa. 1:4). Even as Judah’s sin is thoroughly confronted, this first section also gives us a glimpse of God’s purposes to bring grace for his people and, indeed, for the whole world.

The Big Picture

Isaiah 1–5 shows us the depth of Judah’s sinfulness, the judgment they deserve, and the grace that God promises to bring to them and the rest of the world.

Reflection and Discussion

Read through the complete passage for this study, Isaiah 1–5. Then review the following questions and write your own notes on them concerning this introductory section to Isaiah’s prophecy.

God’s Confrontation of Judah’s Sin (Isa. 1:1–30)

As the heavens and earth are called into the courtroom as witnesses, God announces the charge against his people (Isa. 1:2–6). **What are they accused of? Rebelling against God their father.** Referring to Judah as “children” or “sons” of God highlights their great privilege (Isa. 1:2). It also points to God’s patience, for he graciously endured their rebellion from the time he first called them his “son” at the exodus (Ex. 4:22–23; Deut. 14:1). **How does this help us to see the great offense of Israel’s ongoing problem? God has been patient, not wanting any to perish, but Israel has persisted in sin and disobedience. Even though God has sought them and redeemed them time and again they continue to go after Baal and break their covenant with God.**

“What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? . . . I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats” (Isa. 1:11). At first glance, it appears God is rejecting the very acts of worship he previously required of his people in Leviticus. Yet Isa. 1:10–20 shows it is hypocrisy, not worship, that God opposes. The ordinances were always intended to foster true godliness, which would be demonstrated in humble purity of heart and energetic promotion of others’ well-being. **According to Isa. 1:13–17, how did Israel**

divorce these worship practices from their original purposes? **They are observing the rituals, but it is not done out of love for God but appeasement. This is seen in the fact that they do not show mercy to others, they are doing evil in the sight of the Lord with lascivious living, In what ways is religious hypocrisy seen today? The same, we come to church but our heart is far from God. The fruit of the Spirit is not evident in our lives. We say what we want, do what we want, and have no consideration for those in need around us.**

“How the faithful city has become a whore” (Isa. 1:21). The covenant God made with Israel after the exodus was viewed as a marriage covenant (Isa. 54:5). **Why does Isaiah use such shocking language here? To make the point that the willfulness of the sin is just like an unfaithful spouse who willfully goes against the covenant made. What does this tell us about the way God views sin? It is grievous to his heart, sickening to him,**

God’s Promises of Judgment and Grace (Isa. 2:1–4:6)

From their first appearance in Genesis 49:1 onward, phrases such as “in the latter days” (Isa. 2:2) **The Mountain of the LORD**

2 This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:

² In the last days

the mountain of the LORD’s temple will be established
as the highest of the mountains;
it will be exalted above the hills,
and all nations will stream to it.

³ Many peoples will come and say,

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the temple of the God of Jacob.
He will teach us his ways,
so that we may walk in his paths.”
The law will go out from Zion,
the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

4

He will judge between the nations
and will settle disputes for many peoples.
They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.
Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war anymore.

5

Come, descendants of Jacob,
let us walk in the light of the LORD.

are often used in contexts charged with end-time expectations, typically connected to the establishment of God's kingdom and the redemption of his people (Gen. 49:1, 10; Num. 24:14–19; Deut. 4:30–31; Dan. 2:28–35; Hos. 3:5).

Overview of Passages

- **Genesis 49:1, 10:** Jacob gathers his sons on his deathbed to declare what will befall them "in the last days", emphasizing that the ruling scepter will remain with **Judah** until **Shiloh** (the Messiah/tranquility) arrives and gathers the peoples. [1, 2, 3]
- **Numbers 24:14–19:** Balaam delivers his final oracle looking toward "the latter days", prophesying that a **star out of Jacob** and a **scepter out of Israel** will rise to exercise dominion and conquer neighboring hostile nations like Moab and Edom. [1, 2]
- **Deuteronomy 4:30–31:** Moses warns Israel that when they face distress and exile "in the latter days," turning back to God will reveal His mercy, as He will not destroy them or break His ancestral covenant. [1, 2]
- **Daniel 2:28–35:** Daniel interprets King Nebuchadnezzar's dream about a massive multi-metal statue (representing successive world empires) crushed by a **stone cut out by no human hand**, which shatters the kingdoms and grows into a mountain filling the whole earth ("what will be in the latter days"). [1, 2]

- **Hosea 3:5:** Hosea foresees a period where the children of Israel dwell without a king or sacrifice, after which they will **return and seek the Lord their God and David their king** with awe and reverence "in the latter days". [[1](#), [2](#)]

The focus here is on a future exaltation of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Since gods in the ancient Near East were thought to dwell at the heights of mountains, what is Isaiah communicating by insisting on the exaltation of God's dwelling place over all?

That the Lord God high above any other god. What results of this exaltation appear in Isa. 2:1–5? **The nations will come and worship him, he will settle their disputes righteously and there will be no more war.**

"For you have rejected your people . . ." This begins the lengthy section announcing God's approaching judgment against his people's rebellion (Isa. 2:6–4:1). Review Isa. 2:8, 17–18 and Isa. 3:8, 14–16 (note also Isa. 1:21–23). What has Israel done to deserve judgment? Since we can learn what God is for by hearing what he is against, what does this section teach us about God?

Chapter Overview

Isaiah 2 begins with a second heading, probably relating to chs. 2–4 or to chs. 2–12.¹

It opens with hope: in spite of Israel's condition in Isaiah's own time, Isaiah predicts that the nations of the earth would come to "the LORD's temple" (v. 2) to learn God's instructions, his *tōrâ*, for life.² Since God will resolve international disputes, weapons can be put to more peaceful and productive use.³

The tone then shifts sharply. Isaiah wanted Judah to know that God's rule would not come before God purged sin.⁴ The people have filled themselves with the world's values: wealth and power.⁵ Self-interest leads to self-worship, and the outcome is idolatry.⁶

God will humble (v. 12) every great thing on the earth in which humans tend to glory—whether natural (vv. 13–14) or man-made (vv. 15–16).⁷ The chapter ends with a pointed reminder: humans are utterly dependent creatures who are only one breath away from death. Why put any trust in them?⁸

The takeaway for today is practical: if even the Gentiles will one day seek God's ways, surely God's chosen people should be walking in those ways now.⁹ We must put God's

ways into practice in our own lives. We must start reaching out to the poor and the helpless. We must give up our lust for riches and power.¹⁰

How is Isaiah 2:22 a fitting command in light of the promise of a day when “the lofty pride of men shall be brought low, and the Lord alone will be exalted” (Isa. 2:17)? **We must trust in God**

Chapter Overview

Isaiah 3 continues a larger section on human arrogance in Judah. Isaiah speaks of a day when Israel's leaders, who exalt themselves while actually encouraging wickedness, will be taken away and replaced by weak, unworthy people.¹ Leaders would be taken away by either death or deportation.²

The root problem is pride. Judah's sin is arrogance. Ultimately, it is to commit the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah, the insistence of the residents that they had the right to determine right and wrong.³

God especially confronts leaders who abuse power. Judah's rulers succumbed to the great temptation of leaders everywhere: using their position as one of privilege instead of responsibility.⁴ The leaders were crushing the poor, as women grind grain between two millstones.⁵

The chapter ends with the haughty women of Zion. This lengthy list of finery drives the point home with ironic force: all these exterior accoutrements are worthless without inner integrity.⁶ The formally prim and proper upper-class women will be either humiliated or enslaved.⁷

The takeaway is simple. If we respect his parameters, we may expect positive results. If we choose not to, negative results follow.⁸

We saw the numerous reasons for Israel's condemnation in Isaiah 2–3. Yet in a surprising entrance of grace, God promises to provide

Chapter Overview

Isaiah 4 opens with one last picture of humiliation. Isaiah foresees a day when so many of the men have died that there are not enough fathers and husbands to go around.¹ Then the tone shifts sharply: both v. 1 and v. 2 begin with "in that day" but speak of two very different futures.²

Within the book, verses 2–6 form a prophecy of redemption just before the long message of indictment and judgment in ch. 5. It balances that found in 2:2–5, which immediately follows the long message of indictment and judgment in ch. 1.³

Theologically, the hope of vv. 2–6 is not that Israel will somehow escape judgment but that the judgment will result in purification instead of destruction.⁴ The "Branch" is likely a Messianic title related to the "shoot" and "Branch" (11:1; 53:2) descended from David—but some believe that here "Branch" refers to Judah.⁵

The cloud and fire imagery recall Israel's wilderness wanderings, when the pillar of cloud and fire guided and protected the people.⁶

For application, it is not a cruel God who brings judgment. Rather, it is a loving God who sees no other way to bring us to the place where he can live in us.

"the branch of the Lord," the Messiah (Isa. 4:2). Read Jeremiah 23:5–6; Jer. 33:15; Zechariah 3:8–9; Zechariah 6:12–13.

The Prophetic Passages

- **Jeremiah 23:5–6** – God promises to raise up a "righteous Branch" for David. This future King will reign wisely, execute justice and righteousness in the land, save Judah and Israel, and be called "*The Lord Is Our Righteousness*". [[1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#)]
- **Jeremiah 33:15** – Reaffirms the promise during the exile, stating that God will cause a "righteous Branch" to sprout for David to administer justice and righteousness, alongside the security of Jerusalem. [[1](#), [2](#)]
- **Zechariah 3:8–9** – Speaking to High Priest Joshua and his companions as "men who are a sign," God announces the coming of His servant, "**the Branch**," accompanied by a single stone with seven eyes and the removal of the land's iniquity in a single day. [[1](#)]
- **Zechariah 6:12–13** – Zechariah is instructed to crown High Priest Joshua, declaring that a man named "**the Branch**" will branch out from his place, build the

temple of the Lord, bear royal honor, and sit and rule upon his throne—uniquely uniting the offices of **king and priest**. [1, 2]

Who is “the Branch,” and what else will he do? **King Jesus and He will rule in righteousness**

God’s Condemnation of Judah’s Sin (Isa. 5:1–30)

Chapter Overview

Isaiah 5 turns from the hope of chapter 4 to the perversion, self indulgence. As judgment (2:6–4:1) immediately follows hope (2:1–5) in 2:1–4:1, so here Isaiah is unwilling to let the people use future hope to blind themselves to the present reality.¹

The chapter opens with a song about a vineyard that yields bad grapes despite years of labor. The hearers' astonishment would have been magnified when they realized that the presentation was allegorical and that they themselves were the useless vineyard.² Jesus' parable of the tenants (Mt 21:33–44; Mk 12:1–11; Lk 20:9–18) is based on this song.³

The "woes" that follow name the bad fruit, with perhaps an intentional progression from greed (vv. 8–10) to perversion of moral law (vv. 20–21).⁴ Self-indulgence and social injustice are linked (vv. 22–23), and they are the result of rejecting the revelation ("law ... word") of the universe's transcendent ("Holy One") powerful One ("LORD Almighty").⁵

The chapter ends with God summoning foreign armies, since the great powers of the day were only tools to accomplish Yahweh's purposes.⁶ For today, it confronts a culture that has lost the idea that we owe obedience to God. As a result, we are becoming lawless.⁷

Israel was God’s “pleasant planting” and carefully cultivated vineyard (Isa. 5:7). Yet as Isaiah sings about this vineyard in Isaiah 5:1–7, we learn that they failed to produce the fruit of righteousness that God expected. They brought forth only unwanted “wild grapes” (Isa. 5:4). In Isaiah 5:8–30 a cycle of six “woes” shows us some of these bitter fruits of Israel’s degenerate character. What are they? **Perversion, self indulgence.**

Social injustice

This section ends with a terrifying scene (Isa. 5:26–30). The sovereign God will summon nations, including Assyria, to carry out his judgment against his people. There only remains a picture of “de-creation,” darkness, and chaos (Isa. 5:30). What have we

already seen about God's character and promises in Isaiah 1–4 that gives assurance that there is still hope? Come let us reason together- If we repent He is faithful and just to forgive us

Read through the following three sections on Gospel Glimpses, Whole-Bible Connections, and Theological Soundings. Then take time to consider the Personal Implications these sections may have for you.

Definition: Exodus The departure of the people of Israel from Egypt and their journey to Mount Sinai under Moses' leadership (Exodus 1–19; Numbers 33).

Definition: De-creation The reversal of the goodness and blessing of God's creation. As the blessing of creation is described as light out of darkness, order from chaos, and filling emptiness (Gen. 1:1–2:3), judgment is sometimes described as a return to darkness, chaos, and emptiness (Jer. 4:23–26).

Definition: Messiah A transliteration of a Hebrew word meaning “anointed one,” the equivalent of the Greek word Christ. Originally applied to anyone specially designated for a particular role, such as king or priest. Jesus himself affirmed that he was the Messiah sent from God (Matt. 16:16–17).

Gospel Glimpses

INVITATION. When Adam and Eve rebelled against God in Eden, they were sent away from his presence. As their descendants, we're all born outside of God's presence and continue to rebel against him. Yet God invites us back. Even after Israel provoked God with their many sins, he still extended an invitation of grace: “Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow” (Isa. 1:18). It is ultimately the blood of Jesus that cleanses us in this way (1 John 1:7). He invites us to “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28).

SURPRISING GRACE. Throughout Isaiah 2:6–4:1, we hear what God will do “in that day”—a day of utter terror for sinners (Isa. 2:20–21). In Isa. 4:2 Isaiah once again says, “in that day,” only this time it is followed by an unexpected, surging wave of grace. Isaiah often introduces grace as a surprise. In this instance, God promises to provide “the branch of the Lord,” the Messiah (Isa. 4:2). His people will be washed of their filth (Isa. 4:3–4) and the presence of the God they defied will become their refuge (Isa. 4:5–6; note Isa. 3:8). God's surprising grace to sinners should never get old. The New Testament words, “But God,” should always awaken fresh wonder. “And you were dead in the trespasses . . . But God . . . made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved” (Eph. 2:1, 4–5).

Whole-Bible Connections

GOD'S FAITHFUL CITY AND BRIDE. Because Israel rejected God, “the faithful city has become a whore” (Isa. 1:21). They are like a faithful city that has become faithless,

and a bride who abandoned her marriage covenant. Yet Isaiah looks to the future and sees restoration: “**Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city**” (Isa. 1:26). She will be a faithful city and bride because of Jesus Christ, who loved her and gave himself up for her on the cross (Eph. 5:25). Revelation describes the ultimate fulfillment of Isaiah’s promise: “I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Rev. 21:2; note also Rev. 21:10–11).

THE TRUE VINE. “Let me sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard” (Isa. 5:1). Using the metaphor of a vineyard, Isaiah’s song retells Israel’s history from their initial “planting” in Canaan to their continual failure to bear righteous fruit (Isa. 5:1–7). While Isaiah sees destruction coming in the future (Isa. 5:5–6), the psalmist later writes from the midst of it and pleads for God to “have regard for this vine” (Ps. 80:14). This is the background to Jesus’ announcement, “I am the *true* vine” (John 15:1). He is the True Vine who bore the fruit of righteousness that Israel and all of us failed to produce. Although he is the only one who didn’t deserve to be destroyed like the unfruitful vine of Isaiah 5, Jesus took this destruction in our place on the cross. And now, through faith in him, any failed vine can be united to the True Vine and begin to bear good fruit. “Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit” (John 15:5).

Theological Soundings

THE WORD OF GOD. This book is “the vision of Isaiah” (Isa. 1:1). As a prophet who receives a vision, Isaiah is called to declare God’s word to his world. Thus, when Isaiah speaks, it is no contradiction to say, “the Lord has spoken” (Isa. 1:2), and “hear the word of the Lord” (Isa. 1:10). Like others who wrote Scripture, Isaiah “spoke from God as [he was] carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21; see also 2 Tim. 3:16). As we read Isaiah’s words, we are reading the very words of God.

THE DEPTHS OF SIN. The book of Isaiah is unrelenting in its confrontation of sin. From the beginning, we see that God’s people have rebelled (Isa. 1:2) and are a “sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly” (Isa. 1:4). What is worse, they sin against grace, for God cared for them as his children (Isa. 1:2; Isa. 5:4). Since we are corrupt in every part of our being, God’s redemption must (and does) include comprehensive cleansing and renewal.

Personal Implications

Take time to reflect on the implications of Isaiah 1–5 for your own life today. Consider what you have learned that might lead you to praise God, repent of sin, and trust in his gracious promises. Make notes on the personal implications for your walk with the Lord in light of (1) the Gospel Glimpses, (2) the Whole-Bible Connections, (3) the Theological Soundings, and (4) this passage as a whole.

1. Gospel Glimpses
2. Whole-Bible Connections
3. Theological Soundings
4. Isaiah 1–5

As You Finish This Unit . . .

Take a moment now to ask for the Lord's blessing and help as you continue in this study of Isaiah. And take a moment also to look back through this unit of study, to reflect on some key things that the Lord may be teaching you—and perhaps to highlight and underline in your Bible key verses to review again in the future.

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ISAIAH STUDY — WEEK 1

Confrontation & Hope for God's People

Isaiah 1:1–5:30

THE PLACE OF THE PASSAGE

Isaiah opens with a shock: God calls heaven and earth into His courtroom and announces His charge against His people.

“Children have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against Me.”

(Isaiah 1:2)

Isaiah 1–5 introduces:

- **The depth of Judah's sin**
- **The judgment they deserve**
- **The surprising grace God promises**
- **The future hope for Judah and the nations**

This week sets the tone for the entire book:

God confronts sin because He intends to redeem sinners.

Isaiah is also talked about in II Kings 19-20 and II Chronicles 26, 32. He was a prophet mainly to the southern tribes of Benjamin and Judah, alongside the prophet Micah. Hosea was a prophet to the Northern 10 tribes before their fall, during Isaiah's early ministry to Judah and Jerusalem. The book of Isaiah is split into two different sections. Chapters 1-35 are written in the period that Assyria was about to take over the northern tribes and chapter 40-66 are written as as Babylon was prophesied to take over the southern tribes. Chapters 36-39 serve as an interlude. Chapter 1

1. Though God's holiness will destroy sin, He does not wish for His children to be destroyed: As the book of Isaiah starts out, Judah has gone astray. This prophecy was likely in the days of Ahaz, a King of Judah who did not do what was right in the sight of the Lord (see II Chronicles 28). Ahaz was the son of Jotham, a King who had done what was right in the sight of the Lord and because of his righteousness, the Lord blessed him and made him prosperous. In this time of prosperity it seems that Judah had gotten comfortable (see note on chapter 4) and had fallen away from the Lord. Because of this transgression, they had been separated from God and destined for His wrath. But this was not because the Lord wanted His people destroyed. We can see in this first chapter the love the God had for His people through His lament (see verses 5-6) and His call to reason together (see verses 18-20). We see this over and over again in the Old Testament, where the children of God rebel, and God calls them back to Him. He wants His children to be saved, but He knows that they cannot be saved if they continue in their sins (see Isaiah 6:8-10). Peter comments on this characteristic of God, saying that He does not want any to perish, but that all should come to repentance (see II Peter 3:9). The Lord is a merciful and loving God, but His righteousness will not allow for sin to be in His presence. We are to be holy, for He is holy (see Leviticus 11:44 and I Peter 1:16).

2. The sacrifices of the unrighteous are an abomination to God: Even though the people were still bringing offerings before the Lord, worshipping Him and giving Him honor, He held no delight in their sacrifices, for their heart was not right. They were living lives of evil, but still bringing offerings to the Lord. The Almighty calls their feast days and incense vain and an abomination. It seems that the children of Israel did this quite often, as other prophets call them out for doing evil but still standing before the Lord as righteous. God speaks through Jeremiah (see Jeremiah 7:9-10) to ask a

rhetorical question about the people doing evil and assuming their deliverance. Proverbs 21:3 teaches that righteousness and justice is more important than sacrifice. But righteousness and justice were not found in Judah at this time.

3. God always saves a remnant: Another theme we see in the Old Testament is this concept of a remnant of the people being saved. Though the Lord would send His judgment on the children of Israel for their sins, He would not leave them without a remnant that would be saved. The remnant were those Jews during the time of Jesus who would indeed believe in the Christ, proclaiming Him as Lord and savior (see Acts 15:12-20 and Romans 11:1-6). Here, God speaks through Isaiah saying that if He had not left them a remnant, they would have been as Sodom and Gomorra, the wicked nation in Genesis 18-19 that God destroyed completely with fire and brimstone. It would seem God is keen on keeping a remnant, as a parallel is drawn in I Kings 19 when Elijah the prophet thinks that he is the only one left who is working for the Lord. The Almighty assures him that He still has 7,000 knees in Israel that have not bowed to Baal, the false god of the time.

Chapter 2

The day of the Lord: This phrase appears in the words of many of the prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Zephaniah, Zechariah and Malachi) and is referenced several times in the New Testament. Most often this phrase is considered an “end of times” prophecy, referring to the day when the Lord will return to judge the people of the earth, but a few times it is in reference to the time of Christ. In this chapter it would seem to be referring to the end of time when the Lord will return and restore His creation, purging the evil, ushering in an age of peace and righteousness. Perhaps the most notable New Testament passage that alludes to this is I Thessalonians 5:1-11, where Paul speaks of the second coming of the Lord, when He will destroy all darkness and uplift the light. This is a word of warning to the world, but a word of encouragement and peace to the saved.

Chapter 3

1. The leadership had led the people astray: In verses 14 and 15 of this chapter, we see that the Lord goes to the elders and rulers of the people to confront them, saying that it was they who had lead the people astray. This is not the only time in prophecy where responsibility is laid on the spiritual leaders of the people, as Micah and Malachi are two other notable examples

when the Lord rebukes the leaders of the people for causing those who listen to their instruction to go astray (see Micah 3:1-3 and Malachi 2:1-9). The one who takes on the role of a spiritual leader in any capacity should bear in mind that he or she has a heightened responsibility for the people that are influenced (see James 3:1). This responsibility should not be taken lightly. In Jeremiah 7-10, we see a situation where the priest was telling the people that everything was good and they were alright with God when in reality they were far from God. Today we need to be mindful of the possibility that the leadership that influences us may not be influencing us for the better, but for the worse. This is why we are to search the scriptures like the Berean Christians to see if what we are being taught is the truth (see Acts 17:10-15).

2. Pride and comfort gives a false sense of security: The latter part of this chapter depicts a scene of comfort and pride for those in Jerusalem at the time. This is likely shortly after the reign of Jotham which was prosperous for the southern kingdom because of Jotham's adherence to the Lord. Ahaz, however, who ruled after Jotham, was not faithful to the Lord. The people seem to have gotten comfortable where they were at and were no longer seeking the Lord. They probably didn't feel as though they needed Him. But the Lord made it clear that their sense of security was a false one, for He was going to destroy their life of ease due to their unrighteousness. Who does this sound like? Have we gotten to a point of ease where we no longer seek the Lord? Do we have a false sense of security? We need not let pride and/or comfort get in the way of our work in the kingdom of the Lord.

Chapter 4

The Branch: The Messiah is referred to as the Branch by three different prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Zechariah (see Jeremiah 23:5, 33:15 and Zechariah 3:8, 6:12). The Branch is depicted as glorious, coming to wash away the filth of the daughters of Zion and being called holy. He will save the remnant of Israel who is left after the destruction came from Assyria and Babylon. His presence will echo the cloud of smoke and pillar of fire that lead the children of Israel by day and night, respectively, after they left the bondage of Egypt (see Exodus 13:21). This cloud of smoke/pillar of fire was a physical representation of the presence of the Lord just as Jesus was a physical representation of God on earth. He provides shelter for those who are washed in His blood.

Chapter 5

1. Man must do his part: “What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it?” Chapter five starts out with a metaphor of God’s building up of Israel, but them turning away from His righteousness. He has set them up as a beautiful vineyard, but the vineyard has produced wild grapes, that is to say a people who are not His own. Though He had done all for the children of Israel, they still had turned away, and for this they would be punished. We see that God has given man a choice in his salvation, a part to play. He had done everything for them so that there was no more that He could have done; now it was simply up to the people to turn from their evil ways in repentance. In the same way today, we have been called by Christ, but it is up to us to make the decision to follow Him.

2. Woe to those who call good evil and evil good: The people of God had drifted so far away from Him that they had distorted righteousness to the point where they called that which was evil good and that which was good evil. The people were wise in their own mind, but not in the wisdom of the Lord. They ran to strong drink and reveled in unrighteousness. There was no true distinction between good and evil, but rather they held a distorted view. The children of God always need to be careful with what they approve of as righteous, for we might even today be calling good evil and evil good.

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Summaries, Lessons and Connections.

Chapter 1

v. 1-17: After Isaiah is identified as the son of Amoz and the time frame of his prophecy is set, both heaven and earth are called into witness against the children of God who have strayed from their Father. Israel had turned to all kinds of unrighteousness, causing the lament of God (specifically verses 5-6) and incurring His wrath on their unholy nature. There is vivid prophecy of the siege of their cities and their impending captivity, as the Northern tribes would be soon taken into captivity by Assyria with the Southern tribes following some time afterwards by the captivity by Babylon. The country would be laid desolate and the cities burned with fire. Burnt offerings meant nothing to the Lord when the sacrifices were coming from the hands of the unrighteous.

v. 18-20: There is a call for reason from the Lord, a call to repentance that He might wash away the sins of the people, changing them from crimson to as white as snow. If they would be obedient, there would be a great blessing; but if they would not, they would be destroyed.

v. 21-31: The people had turned away and the Lord had given them into the hands of their future captors. But He would not forget about His people, nor leave them unavenged. A remnant would be saved in Zion, when the Lord would come to restore His people. There was a message of hope amid a prophecy of destruction.

Chapter 2

v. 1-5: How wonderful will be the restoration of the mountain of the Lord, when evil is purged from the land and the righteous will dwell with the Lord as He teaches them to walk in His ways.

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v. 6-22: The great and terrible day of the Lord would come to exact judgment and restore His creation. See note above.

Chapter 3

v. 1-17: The Lord was going to cut off Jerusalem from all supply, and thus they would go into a terrible time of need. They would lack even the basic necessities of life. Jerusalem actually went through different times like these, specifically in times of siege and ultimately with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, which was prophesied about by Jesus in Matthew 21:1-2, Mark 13:1-2 and Luke 21:6. They had brought this upon themselves, however, because they were prideful and walked in their own ways as opposed to the way of the Lord (v. 11, 16-17).

v. 18-(4:1): Though this was a time of prosperity, the people were living in a false sense of security, for the Lord was about to take away all their blessings due to their unrighteousness. There would come a time when the people were crushed on every side, desperate for any glimpse of what they once had. A

great day of lament and mourning was on the way, yet the people were blind to it.

Chapter 4

v. 2-6: The Branch, the Messiah, would come to restore His people. See note above.

Chapter 5

v. 1-7: The Lord had build this people up and done all that there was to do for them, and yet they had rebelled. The children of Israel rebelled time and again throughout the Old Testament, and every time the Lord was right there to take them back. He did not want to see His people perish, but rather wanted them to come to repentance. He had done everything there was to do. Now it was up to the people to return to God, lest they be destroyed in His wrath.



KEY VERSES FOR THE WEEK

- **Isaiah 1:2** — God's charge against His children
- **Isaiah 1:18** — God's invitation to cleansing
- **Isaiah 2:2-3** — The future exaltation of God's kingdom
- **Isaiah 3:8** — Judah's collapse explained
- **Isaiah 4:2-6** — The Branch of the Lord
- **Isaiah 5:4** — God's lament over His vineyard
- **Isaiah 5:20** — Woe to those who reverse good and evil

Encourage participants to **underline these in their Bible**.



SECTION 1 — GOD'S CONFRONTATION OF JUDAH'S SIN

Isaiah 1:1-30

Scripture Dig 1 — The Charges Against Judah

Read **Isaiah 1:2-6**.

What is Judah accused of?

- Rebellion (v. 2)
- Ignorance (v. 3)
- Corruption (v. 4)
- Spiritual sickness (vv. 5–6)

Cross References

- **Exodus 4:22–23** — Israel called God’s “son”
- **Deut. 14:1** — Israel as God’s children
- **Hosea 11:1–4** — God’s tender care despite rebellion

Reflect:

How does knowing Israel’s privileged position deepen the seriousness of their rebellion?

Scripture Dig 2 — Empty Worship

Read **Isaiah 1:10–20**.

God rejects their sacrifices — not because sacrifices were wrong, but because **their hearts were wrong**.

Cross References

- **Micah 6:6–8** — God desires justice, mercy, humility
- **Psalms 51:16–17** — God delights in a broken spirit
- **Matthew 15:7–9** — Worship in vain
- **James 1:27** — Pure religion cares for the vulnerable

Reflect:

Where do you see religious activity today divorced from obedience and compassion?

Scripture Dig 3 — Shocking Language

Read **Isaiah 1:21–23**.

“How the faithful city has become a whore.”

Why this language?

Because sin is **spiritual adultery**.

Israel broke her marriage covenant with God.

Cross References

- **Jeremiah 2:2–5** — Israel's early devotion
- **Ezekiel 16** — Israel's unfaithfulness
- **Isaiah 54:5** — God as Israel's husband

Reflect:

What does this teach us about how God views sin?

SECTION 2 — GOD'S PROMISES OF JUDGMENT & GRACE

Isaiah 2:1–4:6

Scripture Dig 4 — “In the Latter Days”

Read **Isaiah 2:1–5**.

The mountain of the Lord is exalted above all others — symbolizing God's supremacy.

Cross References

- **Genesis 49:1, 10** — End-time expectations
- **Daniel 2:28–35** — God's kingdom crushing all others
- **Micah 4:1–5** — Parallel prophecy

Reflect:

What does the exaltation of God's dwelling place reveal about His kingdom?

Scripture Dig 5 — Why Judgment Comes

Read **Isaiah 2:6–4:1**.

Judah's sins include:

- Idolatry (2:8)
- Pride (2:17–18)
- Oppression (3:14–15)
- Moral decay (3:16–24)

- Corrupt leadership (3:8)

Cross References

- **Proverbs 16:18** — Pride leads to destruction
- **Romans 1:21–32** — The downward spiral of sin
- **Isaiah 1:21–23** — Corruption revisited

Reflect:

What does God's opposition to these sins teach us about His character?

Scripture Dig 6 — The Branch of the Lord

Read **Isaiah 4:2–6**.

This is the first major Messianic promise in Isaiah.

Cross References

- **Jeremiah 23:5–6** — The righteous Branch
- **Jeremiah 33:15** — The Branch brings justice
- **Zechariah 3:8–9** — The Branch removes iniquity
- **Zechariah 6:12–13** — The Branch builds God's temple

Reflect:

How does this promise of the Branch bring hope after the warnings of judgment?

SECTION 3 — GOD'S CONDEMNATION OF JUDAH'S SIN

Isaiah 5:1–30

Scripture Dig 7 — The Vineyard Song

Read **Isaiah 5:1–7**.

Israel is God's carefully tended vineyard — yet it produced **wild grapes**.

Cross References

- **Psalm 80:8–19** — Israel as God’s vine
- **John 15:1–5** — Jesus as the True Vine
- **Matthew 21:33–46** — Parable of the wicked tenants

Reflect:

What fruit is God looking for in your life?

Scripture Dig 8 — The Six Woes

Read **Isaiah 5:8–30**.

The “Woes” include:

1. Greed (v. 8)
2. Pleasure-seeking (v. 11)
3. Mocking God (v. 19)
4. Moral reversal (v. 20)
5. Pride (v. 21)
6. Corruption (vv. 22–23)

Cross References

- **Romans 2:5** — Storing up wrath
- **Habakkuk 2:6–20** — Woes against wickedness
- **Galatians 6:7–8** — Reaping what is sown

Reflect:

Which of these “woes” do you see most clearly in our culture today?

Scripture Dig 9 — De-Creation Judgment

Read **Isaiah 5:26–30**.

Judgment looks like **creation unraveling**:

- Darkness
- Chaos
- Emptiness

Cross References

- **Jeremiah 4:23–26** — De-creation imagery

- **Genesis 1:1–3** — Creation from chaos
- **Revelation 6:12–17** — Cosmic judgment

Reflect:

Why is it important to see judgment in light of God's holiness and justice?

GOSPEL GLIMPSES

1. Invitation (Isaiah 1:18)

“Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow.”

Cross References:

- **1 John 1:7** — Cleansed by Christ's blood
- **Matt. 11:28** — Jesus invites the weary

2. Surprising Grace (Isaiah 4:2–6)

God's grace breaks into judgment with the promise of the Branch.

Cross References:

- **Ephesians 2:1–5** — “But God...”
- **Romans 5:8** — Christ died for us while we were sinners

WHOLE-BIBLE CONNECTIONS

1. God's Faithful City & Bride

- **Isaiah 1:21–26** — From unfaithful to faithful
- **Ephesians 5:25–27** — Christ sanctifies His bride
- **Revelation 21:2** — New Jerusalem as a bride

2. The True Vine

- **Isaiah 5:1–7** — Israel as failed vineyard
- **John 15:1–5** — Jesus as the True Vine
- **Psalms 80:14–19** — Plea for restoration

THEOLOGICAL SOUNDINGS

1. The Word of God

Isaiah speaks God's very words (Isa. 1:1–2, 10).

Cross References:

- 2 Peter 1:21
- 2 Timothy 3:16

2. The Depths of Sin

Sin is rebellion against grace (Isa. 1:2–4).

Cross References:

- Romans 3:10–18
- Ephesians 2:1–3

PERSONAL IMPLICATIONS

Use these prompts for journaling or group discussion:

Gospel Glimpses

Where did you see God's grace breaking into judgment?

Whole-Bible Connections

How does seeing Jesus in Isaiah deepen your worship?

Theological Soundings

What did you learn about God's holiness, justice, and mercy?

Isaiah 1–5 as a Whole

What sin is God confronting in your life?

Where is He inviting you to cleansing, restoration, and hope?



AS YOU FINISH WEEK 1

Ask God to:

- Expose what is hidden
- Heal what is wounded
- Restore what is broken
- Prepare your heart for the rest of Isaiah

And underline the verses that spoke most deeply to you.