

The book of Isaiah can be divided into two main portions: the Judgment of God, chapters 1-39, and the Grace of God, chapters 40-66. Chapter divisions are man made and are thus not inspired by the Spirit of God. It is strange, however, that the Old and New Testaments are comprised of 39 and 27 books, respectively, just like the divisions in the book of Isaiah. Of course, the Old Testament is largely about God's Judgment and the New Testament is predominantly about God's mercy or grace.

The book of Isaiah is so vast that we have to study it one section at a time. There are 7 total sections to this Isaiah study. This first section we will be looking at covers chapters 1 – 12 and will take another 5 weeks to complete. In this first section, we will look at the sins of the people in Isaiah's day, both their personal sins (chapters 1-5) and their sins collectively as a nation under their political and spiritual leaders (chapters 7-12). Just as the Israelites were individually responsible for their own personal sins, we, too, will be responsible for and judged accordingly for our individual sins. And just as the nation of Israel, made up of individual Israelites, was judged for their collective national sins, we, too, will bear some responsibility for the judgment we receive collectively as a nation. This week our focus will be on the personal sins of the people.

### **Day 1- Isaiah Chapter 1 – God's righteous judgment on Judah and Jerusalem; the sins of the people**

Please work on your double-spaced worksheet for Isaiah 1 located in the Appendix. Look for key repeated words and mark them accordingly in your own unique way. Ask questions of the text: Who? What? When? Where? Why? & How?

What names are used for God in this first chapter?

Who are the recipients of this vision?

Who is God calling as witnesses to the disobedience of this people?

Are the two animals used for illustrations (1:3), in comparison to the disobedient people, known for their intelligence?

Yet, God says these animals are smart enough to know who feeds them. Judah and Jerusalem did not even acknowledge that God was their Provider. Before we get too condemning of this people, think of our country today. Do we give God thanks for His provision or do we even acknowledge that He has supplied all of our needs?

How does the LORD consider the people of Judah and what they have done? (Is.1: 2-6)

It looks to me like these people have kicked God off of His rightful throne and stripped Him of His power and authority over their individual lives. He is no longer seen as their moral Ruler and is no longer regarded as the Ruler of the whole universe. How do people today compare to the people of Judah in that time period?

In Isaiah 1:4-6, how did God try to get their attention? Also, see Hebrews 12:7-11.

What else can God do to them to get their attention?

What does God say about their land? (1:7)

Strangers were devouring their fields in their presence. It looks as though the LORD is about to remove Judah from their land and send them into captivity. According to the Mosaic Law, the condition upon which they were allowed to stay in the land of Israel was that of obedience. They had been disobedient. See Deuteronomy 28.

Who is the daughter of Zion who is left like a shelter in a vineyard, or like a watchman's hut in a cucumber field, or like a besieged city in 1:8? And what is this referring to? Please see: Isaiah chapters 36,37. In the Scripture, Zion can be interpreted as the city of Jerusalem, the land of Israel, or the Jewish people, depending on the context of the passage.

To whom does God compare their survival with in 1:9?

Does God approve of their religious efforts in 1:10-15?

Even after this judgment, God gives them another chance? What is this chance according to 1:16-20?

What about God's people, the Israelites or the Jews, today? Is their hope of salvation for them? Will God forgive them again if they will just return to Him? What is the condition for God's acceptance of the Jews?

What about us, the Gentiles, can the truly repentant among us have forgiveness of sins?

What has Jerusalem become according to 1:21-23?

What are the oaks that Judah has desired and the gardens that Judah has chosen in 1:29?

So, to sum up this chapter 1, what are the personal sins of the Hebrew people for which God will judge them individually?

Do you see any national sins of Israel's leadership? See Isaiah 1:21-23.

What will happen to them if they individually repent of their sin and turn back to God?

In this first chapter, we see the full circle that the people of God will experience in the rest of the book. This full circle, which consists of disobedience, punishment and exile, return to the land, repentance, and the salvation of the LORD, will occur not just one time but at least two times in their history future to Isaiah's day.

Record the theme for chapter 1 of Isaiah on the double-spaced worksheet and on the Isaiah-theme-summary chart in the Appendix.

## **Day 2 – Prophecy highlights**

We must understand some things about prophecy before we can properly interpret the text of chapters 2 through 5.

Prophecy comes from the Greek word *propheteia* (4394). *Propheteia* is made up of two Greek words, *pro* and *phemi*. Please use your word study tools (Vine's Expository Dictionary and others) to come up with a definition for prophecy.

Prophecy: the speaking forth of the mind and counsel of God. All prophecy is the "declaration of that which cannot be known by natural means." "...it is the forth-telling of the will of God, whether with reference to the past, the present, or the future."<sup>1</sup>

Isaiah wrote down many prophecies, some that would be fulfilled almost immediately in the prophet's own time and some that would be fulfilled future to Isaiah's day. Of those prophecies that would be fulfilled future to Isaiah's day, some of them would have both a nearer-to-the future fulfillment and a longer-range fulfillment. I see each of Isaiah's prophecies as referring to one of the following future times in the history of God's people (the Israelites, the Jews) yet to be written. Of course, some of this, for our understanding, is looking backwards on what is now fulfilled history. Refer to page 13.

<b>Future Times for Nation of Israel (future to Isaiah's Day)</b>
The Northern Kingdom will be taken captive by the Assyrians b/c of their disobedience & idolatry and dispersed throughout the conquered lands of the Assyrians. The Remnant, some of the N. Kingdom moves into the S. Kingdom preserving their tribes.
The S. Kingdom will be invaded by the Assyrians but not taken captive.
The Jews (the S. Kingdom) will be taken captive by the Babylonians b/c of their disobedience/idolatry; Solomon's original <u>temple</u> will be destroyed. The Jews will remain a nation in captivity.
The Remnant of God's people will return to their land after 70 years of Babylonian captivity; they will rebuild the <u>temple</u> to Jehovah (2 <sup>nd</sup> Temple).
Messiah will enter history the first time as the Suffering Servant to die for the peoples' sins.
God's people will be taken captive by Rome (70AD) & dispersed throughout the nations of the world. The 2 <sup>nd</sup> <u>temple</u> will be destroyed. The Jews will remain a nation during this dispersion.
God's people will return to their land a second time in 1948 but <u>not in faith*</u> ; they will rebuild the <u>temple (the 3<sup>rd</sup> temple)</u> to Jehovah as soon as they can & will reinstate the sacrificial system. They will return to their land the second time <u>in faith</u> probably at the end of the Tribulation just prior to the second coming of Christ. This <u>in faith</u> return is the second return referred to in Isaiah 11. This could mean there will be another dispersion of the Jews from their land.
God's people are presently in the last <b>days</b> ; this time includes the time before the time of Jacob's Trouble through the Tribulation, the Second Coming of Christ, the Millennial Kingdom, and the New Creation.**
Messiah will enter into history the second time as the Conquering King & Judge. He will rid the earth of His enemies & reign over His Kingdom from His <u>Temple</u> (the 4 <sup>th</sup> temple) in Jerusalem for 1000 years.**
God's people will be present with Him forever; He will create a new heaven & earth.**

\* from J.Vernon McGee's writings: looking like in 2021 as though they returned in faith

\*\*These last three times overlap each other somewhat.

In addition, these distinctly different, future prophecies were sometimes written down in succession of one another with great gaps of time between their fulfillments. Yet no indication is given us in the Scripture to these lapses of time.

Sometimes, these successive future prophecies will be written out of chronological order.

Please read through Isaiah chapters 2-5 and find the four prophecies that Isaiah predicts. These four prophecies, interspersed with the personal and political sins of the people, will be the subject of our lessons for the remainder of this week.<sup>ii</sup>

**Day 3 – Prophecy 1: The Temple of the LORD will be built (Isaiah 2:1-4) – Also see Micah 4:1-4**

Please do your double-spaced worksheet on chapter 2:1-5 at this time. Remember to mark key repeated words with your own unique markings. Again, ask questions of the text: Who? What? When? Where? Why? & How?

From the *Future Times for Nation of Israel* chart mentioned on day 2, there are five events surrounding the Temple(s) in Jerusalem. To which event is Isaiah 2:1-4 referring?

How does Isaiah describe this Temple and event?

Who is the “He” of Isaiah 2:3?

What does the LORD’s job description include in *the last days* described in Isaiah 2?

What will be the result for the peoples (the nations) according to Isaiah 2:4?

What does this passage infer concerning the sins of the people of Isaiah’s day and their subsequent judgment? Hint: Go on to read Isaiah 2:5.

**Day 4 – Prophecies 2 & 3: Israel/Judah and the nations of the world will be judged in the future (Isaiah 2:5-5:29)**

Please do your double-spaced worksheet on chapter 2:5-4:1 at this time. Remember to mark key repeated words with your own unique markings. I marked “the terror of the LORD” and “the splendor of His majesty,” and “when He arises to make the earth tremble,” “proud” or “pride of man,” “abased,” “humbled,” “lifted up” or “lofty,” and “in that day.” Write a symbol for time in the margin of the verses where you find “in that day,” or where you find other words that denote time. Again, ask questions of the text: Who? What? When? Where? Why? & How? This is perhaps one of the most difficult passages of Isaiah to wade through. Do not get discouraged. We will be able to understand these passages in time by the power of His Spirit. One of the reasons that I gave you the chart with the timeline of Mankind (p.13) is so that you can more easily see how God has chosen to reveal prophecy in this section and for you to make some sense out of it.

**The Near-future and future to Isaiah’s Day Judgments of the House of Jacob and Judah and their removal from the Land – Read Is. 2:5-9, 3:1-17**

Who is speaking to God about the abandoning of His people of the house of Jacob in Is. 2:6?

Why did God abandon His people, the house of Jacob, in Isaiah 2:5-9? What were their sins at this time? Were these sins personal, individual sins, or national, political sins, or both?

What do all of these sins have in common?

What near-future point in history is Isaiah referring to here?

Chapter 3:1-17 is about what will happen to Jerusalem and Judah in the near future because of their disobedience. What will God do to the House of Judah and the city of Jerusalem at this time?

Who will God judge for what has been done to His people according to Isaiah 3:13-15?

How are the daughters of Zion described in Is. 3:16-17?

What will God do to them?

**The Far-future Judgment of the Proud which includes the Gentile Nations –Read Is. 2:10-22, 3:18-4:1**

To what future times event are these passages of Scripture referring?

How do you know that these are referring to the last days?

How else is “in that day” referred to in Isaiah 2:12?

What will happen to the proud look of man in that day in Is.2:11?

What will happen to the loftiness of man in Is. 2:11?

I would like you to see some parallels concerning this day of reckoning between this Isaiah 2:10-22 passage and the book of Revelation chapter 6:12-17. This time in Revelation is referred to as the Great Tribulation period, during the sixth seal judgment. What commonality do you find between the Isaiah and the Revelation passages?

Is “the great day of their wrath” of Revelation 6:17 the same day as “the day of reckoning” of Isaiah 2:12?

What do the cedars of Lebanon, the oaks of Bashan, the lofty mountains, the hills that are lifted up, and every high tower have in common in Is. 2:13-15?

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What do the fortified walls, the ships of Tarshish, and the beautiful craft have in common?

I want you to go to Revelation 18:4-24 now and see the results of Man's pride in the account of the destruction of Babylon during the Great Tribulation period. What will be the spiritual condition of the house of Judah and Jerusalem at that time and what will be the spiritual condition of the world?

Please record the themes of Isaiah 2 and 3 on the respective double-spaced worksheets and on the Isaiah-theme-summary chart found in the Appendix. Remember, that sometimes there is more than one theme to each chapter.

**Continuation of the Near-future Judgments of the N. Kingdom or the House of Israel (God's Vineyard) and the S. Kingdom or the House of Judah (God's delightful plant)—Read Is. 5:1-29.**

Chapter 5 is a continuation of the same near-future prophecy that Isaiah promises to both houses of Israel and Judah even though there will be separate judgments for each house. Please read this chapter first before looking at the final prophecy in chapter 4. Then record what you think the theme of chapter 5 is on the Isaiah-theme-summary chart found in the Appendix. Be sure to mark the six woes to the Southern house of the nation of Israel found in chapter 5. Also, what are the sins of God's people or in this case the N. Kingdom and the S. Kingdom, in this section? Are these sins individual, personal sins, or are they the sins of the political leaders or both?

Who is "the LORD'S Vineyard" referred to in Isaiah 5:1-7? Who is "the LORD'S delightful plant?"

What are the six woes listed in Isaiah 5:8-23? What do you think the description of each of the woes would be in today's language? Are these woes for the house of Israel only, or for both the houses of Israel and Judah?

**Day 5 – Prophecy 4: The Far-future Refinement of the Remnant before the Millennial Kingdom (Is. 4: 2-6)**

The fourth and final event that Isaiah prophesies in these first 6 chapters of Isaiah is the future refinement or purification of the remnant before the Millennial Kingdom reign of the Messiah. Before we go any farther in our study, let's take a look at what or who the *remnant* is.

The first time the *remnant* is mentioned in the Old Testament in Genesis 45:7. Joseph, one of the sons of Jacob or Israel (the son of Isaac who was the son of Abraham) has just revealed his identity to his brothers, the other sons of Israel. Many years before, Joseph's brothers had sold him to some Ishmaelites and they took him to Egypt. The brothers led

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their father, Israel, to believe that the boy had been torn into pieces and devoured by an evil beast. Through God's sovereignty, Joseph arose to great power in Egypt. Joseph had rightly interpreted a dream for the Pharaoh of Egypt and his reward was to be placed as second in command to the Pharaoh. He was given charge of storing grain during seven good years of harvest and distributing that grain during seven bad years of famine. Thus, Joseph became the salvation of not only the Egyptians, but also his Israelite family as they came to take refuge in Egypt during the famine. Joseph could have been very angry with his brothers for what they had done to him back in their own land, but instead he recognized God's hand upon the situation so that the *remnant* of his family might be preserved.

The word in Genesis 45:7 for *remnant* is translated *posterity* in the KJV of the Bible. In the NIV, it is translated *remnant*. It is the Hebrew word *sherith* and means remainder, residue, survivors (especially after a slaughter), posterity, the final portion.<sup>iii</sup>

Old Testament:	New Testament:
3498, 3499 yather, yether 7604, 7605 shaar, shear 6403, 6413 palat, peletah	3005, 5275 leimma, hupoleimma

Until the time of the captivity, the remnant of Israel was the preserved descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel). From the rumors of the captivity forward, the Remnant became the portion of the entire nation of Israel who survived death by pestilence, famine or the sword brought about by the conquering nations of Assyria and Babylon. Those who survived were deported to the conquering nations as slaves and later a portion of them returned to the land of Israel. Remnant actually means 1/10<sup>th</sup>. From this point in time forward, the remnant will only be a portion of the entire nation of Israel. They are the ones who will be the faithful to Jehovah God. The Bible reveals to us that a Remnant will always exist because there is a believing portion of the sons of Israel who will remain faithful to God.

Please read Isaiah 4:2-6 and work on the double-spaced worksheet for this section as you did on the previous chapters.

When will this final future event begin?

Who is the Branch of the LORD?

What will He look like?

Who are the survivors of Israel?

What will clothe the survivors of Israel?



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Are the survivors of Israel and those who are left in Zion and remain in Jerusalem the same?

What will these survivors be called according to Isaiah 4:3?

Where is Mt. Zion?

What will the LORD create over Mt Zion?

Where have you seen this cloud by day and fire by night before for those of you who've had me as your teacher in previous studies? See Exodus 13:21,22.

What does this cloud by day and fire by night represent? What purpose does the cloud by day have?

What purpose does the fire by night have?

What will be the spiritual condition of the Remnant at this time?

What does this passage infer concerning judgment for the sins of the people of Isaiah's day? Remember that judgment and refinement both use fire to purify. Warren Wiersbe says "When prophets declare a vision of the future, they do it to encourage people to obey God today."<sup>iv</sup>

Please write the theme of chapter 4 on the double-spaced worksheet and on the Isaiah-theme-summary chart found in the Appendix.

In summary of this week's lesson: The Sons of Israel had been given every advantage to worship the one, true, LORD. They did not honor Him as God nor did they obey Him. Their sin only became progressively worse and idolatry was the game they played. God had every right to completely destroy them, but He did not. He tried everything that He could through discipline and suffering to bring the Israelites back to Himself. Then finally, He took them off into captivity, broke them of their idolatry and promised to bring them back to their land. This was accomplished, and in the meantime, God gave the Israelites some wonderful prophecies that He was going to fulfill in His own time, yet future to Isaiah's day.

Now that we have completed this section, write in the space below some of your personal sins and our national sins. At the end of your list of our national sins (political/leader sins), write down what you can do about these national sins as an individual in Christ.

<sup>i</sup> W.E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, William White, Jr., *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, Nashville, TN, Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1980, p. 492.

<sup>ii</sup> Kay Arthur and Precept Ministries Staff, *The International Inductive Study Bible*, "Guidelines for Interpreting Predictive Prophecy," Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House Publishers, 1993, pp. 2103-2105.

<sup>iii</sup> Spiro T. Zodiatas, *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*, Nashville, TN, AMG Publishers, 1994, p. 2365.

<sup>iv</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Comforted*, USA, SP Publications, Inc., 1992, p.19.