

The Prophet Isaiah



“He shall gather the lambs in His arm” (Isaiah 40:11)

A study of the prophecy of Isaiah, the son of Amoz who prophesied during the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. This great prophet was called of God in his youth to “cry aloud and spare not.” His willing answer was, “Here am I send me.” For nearly sixty years he proclaimed the will of the “Holy One of Israel” to a “sinful nation, laden with iniquity.” His was a message of repentance, retribution and restoration. This beautiful book that announces the coming Messiah and His eternal kingdom in sixty-six chapters is studied in twenty-six lessons. Emphasis is given to the historical background of the book and the prophetic announcements of the coming Christ, the Lord of Glory.

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Lesson Fourteen: *The Assyrian Invasion*

Lesson Aim: Learn what real faith in God can do for those who are beset on every side by their enemies.

Lesson Texts: Isaiah 36:1-37:38

Background Texts: 2 Kings 18:1-19:37 and 2 Chronicles 29:1-33:20

Questions for Class Discussion

1. Who is Sennacherib and what did he do? (v.1)
2. When were these things done? (v.1)
3. Who was Rabshakeh? (See: 2 Kings 18:17)
4. With whom did Rabshakeh accuse Hezekiah of conspiracy against the king of Assyria? Why do you suppose he did this? (See: Isaiah 20:1-6, vv. 5, 6, and 9)
5. Where is Lachish located? (v. 2) Why was Sennacherib there?
6. How does Rabshakeh describe Egypt? Is this an empty boast? (Cf., Ezekiel 29:6, 7; Jeremiah 37:5-11).
7. What five tactics does the Rabshakeh employ in order undermine faith in Jehovah? (vv. 7, 10, 12, 16-17, 18-20) To what altars does Rabshakeh refer? What other tactics does he employ (vv. 9 and 12)
8. Who are Eliakim, Shebna and Joah? (vv. 3, 11, 22)
9. In what manner did they appear before Hezekiah? What was Hezekiah's reaction to the report of his servants (37:1)? Unto whom did he send them? What requests did they make on his behalf?
10. What was the prophet's reply to Hezekiah? (37:6-7)
11. What was the rumor? What was the "blast" Jehovah sent? Did Sennacherib retreat? How did he die?
12. What did Hezekiah do with Sennacherib's letter? What request did he make of Jehovah? (37:14-20)
13. What reply did Jehovah give to Hezekiah?
14. Why did Jehovah spare Jerusalem at this time? (37:35)
15. What sign did God give Hezekiah of His intention to save a remnant of Judah?

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Lesson Fifteen: *Hezekiah's Folly*

Lesson Aim: See what can happen to a good man when he is lifted up with pride, but learn in this how to humble yourself before God.

Lesson Text: Isaiah 38:1–39:8

Background Texts: 2 Kings 20:1–21; 2 Chronicles 32:24–33

Questions for Class Discussion

1. When was Hezekiah sick unto death? (38:1)
2. What counsel did Isaiah give to Hezekiah?
3. How did he respond to the news of his imminent death? For what did Hezekiah ask? (38:2, 3)
4. What word did Hezekiah receive in answer to his prayer? (38:4–6)
5. What sign did Jehovah give Hezekiah in confirmation of this promise? (38:8, 22; cf. 2 Kings 20:8–11)
6. How does Hezekiah describe his experience in the psalm he penned? (38:10–20)
7. How did Jehovah heal Hezekiah of his illness? (38:21)
8. After these things, who visited Hezekiah? What did they bring? (39:1)
9. Who is Merodach–baladan? (39:1)
10. What did Hezekiah show these men? (39:2, 4)
11. Why did Hezekiah show the Babylonian ambassadors these things? (cf., 2 Kings 20:13)
12. What was Hezekiah's reaction to their visit and gift? (39:2)
13. What does Isaiah prophesy concerning Babylon after these men visit? (39:6)
14. When was this prophecy fulfilled?
15. What was Hezekiah's reaction to Isaiah's prediction? Why do you think he said what he did? (39:8)

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Lesson Sixteen: *The Greatness of God Gives Us Comfort*

Lesson Aim: See the God of Israel compared to the gods of the nations and learn that there is no God beside Jehovah.

Lesson Text: Isaiah 40:1–41:29

Background Texts: Luke 1:1–17; Matthew 3:1–6; John 1:19–34; Matthew 11:7–15; Mark 1:1–4

Questions for Class Discussion

1. Isaiah 40:1–11 form a kind of prologue for the rest of the book. What is Isaiah's theme in these verses? What unusual perspective does he use in writing these words?
2. Whose coming does Isaiah foretell? What will be the heart of his message? (40:3–7)
3. What is the significance of the "grass" and "flowers" in these verses? (40:6–8; cf. 1 Peter 1:24, 25)
4. How does the prophet characterize the approaching reign of the Messiah? (40:9–11)
5. How does Isaiah describe God? What attributes does He possess? What does this mean? (40:12–17)
6. What challenge does Jehovah make to Israel and the nations following this description? (40:18)
7. How does the prophet demonstrate the folly of Israel's idolatrous rebellion? (40:19–24)
8. What does the prophet call upon Israel to do? (40:25–27) What hope does he give to them? (Vv. 28–31)
9. Who is the righteous man from the East? (41:1–4, [hint: you may have to read ahead to be certain.])
10. What was the response of the idol worshipping infidels to God's servant? (41:5–7)
11. What does the prophet urge Israel to do when this "righteous one from the East" arrives? (41:8–10)
12. What would become of Israel's enemies and captors at this time? (41:11–16)
13. To what historical event does Isaiah 41:17–20 refer? (See: 2 Chronicles 36:22–23; Ezra 1:1–11)
14. Who is it that Jehovah wants to "see, and know, and consider, and understand"? (41:20)
15. What challenge in order to prove themselves deity does Jehovah make to the idols of the world concerning "righteous one from the East"? (41:21–29)

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Lesson Seventeen: *The Servant of Jehovah*

Lesson Aim: Learn some of the characteristics of the Messiah sent to lead men out of darkness into light.

Lesson Text: Isaiah 42:1–25

Background Texts: Matthew 3:13–17; 4:15,16; 12:14–21; 17:1–13; Acts 26:13–20; John 9:39–41

Questions for Class Discussion

1. Who is the “Servant”? (42:1; cf. Matthew 3:17; 12:14–21)
2. By what terms does Jehovah identify the “Servant”?
3. What did Jehovah mean when He said, “I have put my Spirit upon Him”? (42:1)
4. When and how does the “Servant” bring righteousness to the Gentiles? (42:1)
5. What is the character of the “Servant” as it relates in particular to His mission? (42:2, 3)
6. What would the Messiah establish in the earth? What is it? (42:4)
7. What assurance does Jehovah give His “Servant” that He will give Him a special people from among the Jews and the Gentiles? (42:5–7)
8. What New Testament text is reminiscent of Isaiah 42:7?
9. What does Isaiah command be sung in anticipation of the sending forth of Jehovah’s “Servant”? Who should sing this song? (42:10–12)
10. What would God do now that He had not done in preparing the way of Messiah? (42:13–15)
11. What would be the result of God’s vengeance upon idolatry? (42:16, 17)
12. Who is the “Servant” in 42:18–20? (cf., 41:8–16) What was His condition?
13. What was God’s intent in giving the law to Israel? (42:21)
14. What did Israel do with God’s Law? (42:24)
15. What consequences come upon them as a disobedient and sinful people? (42:22–25)

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Lesson Eighteen: *Judah's Redemption from Captivity*

Lesson Aim: Learn since there is no God but Jehovah, His word is steadfast and His promises are sure.

Lesson Text: Isaiah 43:1–44:23

Background Texts: Daniel 3:19–27; 5:1–31; 7:1–8; 8:1–4; Ezra 4–6

Questions for Class Discussion

1. Why had Jehovah poured the fury of His anger upon Jacob and Israel? (42:24, 25)
2. Even though Jehovah would deliver Judah to Babylon, how would He regard them there? (43:1)
3. What promise did He make to them concerning this ordeal? (43:2) Did He keep this promise?
4. What would Jehovah give for a ransom of Judah from captivity? (43:3) When was this ransom paid?
5. Who would God bring from the four corners of the earth? (43:5–7)
6. How is Jehovah superior to the gods of the nations? Who did He call upon to confess this? (43:8–13)
7. What did Jehovah do for Israel's sake? (43:14–17)
8. What is the new thing would Jehovah do? (43:18–21)
9. How is that Israel and Jacob had wearied Jehovah with their sacrifices? (43:22–28) What are they called to do? (v. 26)
10. Whom does Isaiah call "My Servant" in this context? (44:1–2) Who is Return? (Deuteronomy 32:15)
11. What promise does Jehovah make concerning His Spirit? (44:3–5) When was this fulfilled?
12. What assurance does Jehovah give Israel of His renewed blessings? (44:6–8)
13. How does Isaiah contrast the heathen gods with Jehovah in this context? (44:9–20)
14. What had Jehovah blotted out? (44:21–22) To what event does this refer? (cf., Hebrews 8:12)
15. How did God glorify Himself in Israel? (44:23)

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Lesson Nineteen: *The Coming Assyrian Invasion*

Lesson Aim: Learn that God will deliver Judah from their captors and bring them back to their land by which deliverance the Gentiles would believe on and glorify Jehovah.

Lesson Text: Isaiah 44:24–45:25

Background Texts: 2 Chronicles 36:22, 23; Ezra 1:1–4; Deuteronomy 30:11–14; Romans 10:6–10; 15:25–26

Questions for Class Discussion

1. What does Jehovah offer as a sign of the promised redemption of Israel? (44:23–28)
2. Who is Cyrus?
3. What would Cyrus “say” to Jerusalem? To the Temple? When did Cyrus say this?
4. What did Jehovah do for Cyrus that he might know that Jehovah alone is God? (45:1–4)
5. For whose sake had Jehovah done these things? (45:4)
6. What characteristics or qualities does Isaiah attribute to Jehovah in this chapter?
7. Who does Isaiah call a “potsherd”? (45:9)
8. Who will build Jerusalem and release the captives? (45:13) What reward would he want?
9. What is the significance of Jehovah being man’s Maker? (45:9–13)
10. Whom had God raised up in righteousness to build His city and release the captives? (45:13)
11. In what sense would the Egyptians, Ethiopians and Sabeans become slaves to Israel? (45:14) Whose slaves had they been before? (43:3)
12. What would God’s choice of Cyrus do to those that made and trusted idols? (45:16)
13. Who does God call to come and be saved along with Israel? (45:17–22)
14. What had God sworn an oath concerning? (45:23) When did He swear such an oath? (Romans 14:11)
15. Where are all the “seed of Israel” justified? (45:24, 25; cf. Romans 3:24–26; Galatians 2:23–28)

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Lesson Twenty: *The Impending Fall of Babylon*

Lesson Aim: Learn that while God would use Babylon as His instrument of judgment their willing participation would not prevent a just judgment of their sins.

Lesson Text: Isaiah 46:1–48:22

Background Texts: Daniel 2:1–13; 4:1–37; 5:1–31; 7:1–8

Questions for Class Discussion

1. With whom does Isaiah contrast Babylon's gods? What is the significance of this comparison? (46:1–4)
2. What lesson is Jehovah teaching Israel concerning idolatry? (46:5–8; cf., 1 Corinthians 8:4)
3. What characteristics does Isaiah attribute to Jehovah? (46:9–11)
4. Who or what is the "ravenous bird from the East" and the "man from a far country"? (46:11)
5. Who are the "transgressors" and "stouthearted"? How could they show themselves men? (46:8, 12)
6. Where is salvation? (46:13) Where is salvation, according to Ephesians 5:23–27?
7. Who is the "Virgin Daughter" and "Lady of Kingdoms"? What would become of her? (47:1–5)
8. Why had Jehovah given Judah into her hands? (47:6) What did she do to them? (47:7–8)
9. What were Babylon's sins? (47:1–13) In what two things did she trust for deliverance? (vv. 14–15)
10. Isaiah says Babylon would be destroyed "in a moment" and "in one day," when did this occur?
11. Who are the waters of Judah? (cf., Proverbs 5:16–18; Psalms 68:26) Where are they? (48:20)
12. With what sins does He charge them? (48:1–11) Why?
13. Why would Jehovah not destroy Israel in Babylon for their sins? (48:9–11)
14. What would become of Babylon? Who would accomplish God's pleasure upon Chaldea? (48:12–14)
15. Upon what conditions would Judah come forth from their captivity? (48:16–22)

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Lesson Twenty-one: *The Servant of Jehovah Brings Salvation to the World*

Lesson Aim: Learn that Messiah as a Shepherd will lead the obedient Jew and Gentile into the glorious Kingdom of Heaven.

Lesson Text: Isaiah 49:1-51:23

Background Texts: Revelation 1:9-20; Hebrews 4:11-16; Acts 13:44-52; John 1:1-14; Jeremiah 3:6-19

Questions for Class Discussion

1. Who now addresses the Gentiles? (49:1-4) By what name is He called? (v. 3) Why?
2. What was the primary work of Jehovah's Servant? (49:5-6) Did he fully accomplish this work?
3. Unto whom does Jehovah now send the Servant? How does Zion react to this good news? (49:7-14)
4. Of what does Jehovah assure Israel? (49:18-23) When would this occur? (49:8; cf., 2 Corinthians 6:2)
5. What will become of "the prey" in Babylon? (49:24-26)
6. Who is responsible for Israel's derelict condition? (50:1-3) Why?
7. How does the Messiah describe Himself? (50:4-7)
8. What would Jehovah do for the Messiah when He was falsely accused? (50:8, 9) Did He do this?
9. Who are they that walk in darkness? (50:10) Who are they that walk in the light of a fire? (50:11)
10. What assurance does the Servant give to the remnant concerning their redemption? (51:1-3)
11. What is the law that would proceed from Jehovah? (51:4; cf., 2:3; Luke 24:47)
12. Unto whom was this law "a light"? (Describe their characteristics. Consider Hebrews 11:6)
13. How does Isaiah contrast the wicked and the righteous? (51:6-8)
14. Of what does the Servant urge Israel not to be afraid? (v. 12) Of what are they to be assured? (v. 16)
15. What is the "cup of God's fury"? Who drank from that cup? What was the result? (51:17-23)

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Lesson Twenty-two: *The Suffering Servant of Jehovah*

Lesson Aim: Learn how the Servant of the Lord will accomplish the redemption of Israel and the salvation of the Gentiles by His death, resurrection and glorious ascension to heaven.

Lesson Text: Isaiah 52:1–53:12

Background Texts: 1 Peter 2:20–25; Romans 2:23–29; 10:1–11:36; Matthew 27:24–50; Acts 15:23–29

Questions for Class Discussion

1. Unto what does the prophet want Israel to “Awake”? (52:1; cf., 1 Corinthians 15:34)
2. Who are the *unclean* and *uncircumcised* which are not allowed to enter Zion? (See: Isaiah 56:1–7)
3. From where and from what condition is the Servant calling Israel to enter Zion? (52:2–8; 11, 12)
4. Why was God justified in taking His people back from their captors the Babylonians? (52:3, 5)
5. By what means would “Israel” know the name of Jehovah? (52:6–7; Hebrews 8:10–12; Romans 10:17)
6. How would the watchmen see “eye to eye” in the redeemed Jerusalem? (52:8; 1 Corinthians 13:12)
7. How did Jehovah redeem Jerusalem through baring His holy arm? (52:9, 10; 53:1; Romans 1:3, 4)
8. What does God say He will do with His Servant? (52:13; cf., 49:1–7; Acts 2:30–33)
9. How does Isaiah describe the Messiah? (52:14; 53:1–3) How did men react upon seeing Him?
10. What was laid upon the Servant, iniquity or chastisement? (53:4–6, 8, 11, 12; 2 Corinthians 5:17–21)
11. Concerning “our iniquity” did it originate with us or was it inherited? (53:6; cf., Romans 3:10–20)
12. What expressions in 53:7–10 indicate the mock trial, death, burial, resurrection and glorification of Jesus of Nazareth? Where in the New Testament are these things found fulfilled?
13. How is the concept of *atonement* explained in this text? (vv.11, 12; cf., Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:2; 4:10)
14. How may men appropriate this atonement? (53:11; Colossians 1:9–14; Romans 1:16, 17)
15. Explain the significance of the Servant pouring out His soul unto death, being numbered with and making intercession for the transgressors? (53:12)

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Lesson Twenty-three: *The Blessings of the New Zion*

Lesson Aim: See the universal offer of grace and learn the characteristics of the Kingdom citizen.

Lesson Text: Isaiah 54:1–57:21

Background Texts: Galatians 4:21–31; Hebrews 2:10–13; Genesis 8:20–9:17; Psalms 89; 2 Samuel 7:12–17; 1 Kings 2:1–4; Matthew 5:1–12; Revelation 21

Questions for Class Discussion

1. Who is the “barren” whom the prophet calls to sing? Why should she sing? (54:1–8; cf., Galatians 4:27)
2. Who was Israel’s husband? Why had He forsaken her? When was she ever a widow? (54:4–6)
3. What does Jehovah compare to the “waters of Noah”? (54:9; cf., Genesis 9:14, 15)
4. How does the prophet describe the redeemed nation that comes out of the captivity? (54:11–13)
5. What promise of security does Jehovah make to the New Jerusalem? (54:14–17)
6. What is the significance of being able to buy and eat without money at no cost? (55:1, 2)
7. What are the sure mercies of David? In whom would they be realized? (55:3–5, 12–13)
8. When will the time be when the Lord cannot be found? (55:6–7)
9. What conclusions can you legitimately draw from Isaiah 55:6–11 that contradict popular beliefs concerning salvation from sin?
10. What hope is given to the Gentile and the unclean in the New Jerusalem? (56:1–8) [Cite examples.]
11. How does the prophet describe Israel’s shepherds? (56:9–12) What do they do to the righteous? How is this a blessing to them? (57:1–2)
12. With whom had Judah committed adultery and where? (57:3–9)
13. Why did Judah fear the nations more than she feared Jehovah? (57:10–12)
14. Unto whom will Jehovah provide spiritual healing? (57:13–19)
15. Unto what does the prophet compare the wicked? Why is this so? (57:20–21; cf., 26:3; 32:17)

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Lesson Twenty-four: *The Confession of National Wickedness*

Lesson Aim: See the difference between true religion and hypocritical formalism learning that only the former is efficacious toward the forgiveness of sins.

Lesson Text: Isaiah 58:1-60:22

Background Texts: Zechariah 7:7-12; 1 Peter 3:8-12; Romans 3:1-31; Ephesians 2:13-22

Questions for Class Discussion

1. What did Jehovah instruct the prophet to do in Judah? (58:1)
2. If Judah delighted in the worship of Jehovah why was He displeased with them? (58:2-3)
3. What should our religious devotions reflect concerning our character and behavior? (58:4-7)
4. If Judah would repent and reform what would Jehovah cause them to do? (58:8-14)
5. What had caused God to “hide His face” from Israel? What does that mean? (59:1-8)
6. If Judah did indeed “wait for light” and “brightness,” why did they stumble in “darkness”? (59:9-13)
7. In these wicked times who is “fallen in the street” and becomes a “prey” of the wicked? (59:14-15)
8. What did Jehovah do when He saw that there was no one to intercede for Him with Judah? (59:15-16)
9. Describe the armor of Jehovah. When and for what purpose does He wear this armor? (59:17-19)
10. With whom does Jehovah make an everlasting covenant in Zion? (59:20-21)
11. While the world is in darkness upon whom does God’s light shine? (60:1-2)
12. Who would come to this city of light arising out of darkness? (60:3-5) What do they bring? (vv. 6-14)
13. What would be the conditions in this shining city? (60:15-20)
14. What would be the character of its citizens? (60:20-21)
15. Who is the “little one” and the “small one”? (60:22) What would God make of them?

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Lesson Twenty-five: *Messiah and His Mission*

Lesson Aim: See the glory of the New Jerusalem into which Messiah brings all nations for redemption.

Lesson Text: Isaiah 61:1–63:14

Background Text: Obadiah; Revelation 19:13–15; 21:1–27; Ephesians 5:21–33; Matthew 22:1–14; 25:1–13

Questions for Class Discussion

1. Whom and for what purpose did Jehovah anoint with the Holy Spirit? (61:1, 2; Luke 4:16–21)
2. Who are they that mourn in Zion? What will they do and who will help them do it? (61:3–5)
3. What would the citizen of Zion be called? (61:6; cf., 1 Peter 2:5–10)
4. What would Messiah give to Zion? (61:6, 7)
5. What will Jehovah make with the New Zion? Why? (61:8)
6. What will become of the “seed” of this people in Zion? Why would they rejoice? (61:9–11)
7. When would Jehovah rest? (62:1, 7) At that time what would He give to His people? (see: Acts 11:26)
8. What would Zion be “in the hand of the Lord”? (62:3)
9. Why would Zion no longer be known as “Forsaken” and “Desolate”? What would she be? (62:4, 5)
10. What assurance does Jehovah give to His people of their restored condition? (62:6–9)
11. What was the remnant to do in view of God’s announcements? (62:10–12)
12. Why does the prophet see “Edom” and “Bozrah”? (63:1)
13. Why is Jehovah’s servant returning from there? (63:1–6)
14. Upon seeing Jehovah’s Servant, of whom does the prophet remind Israel? (63:7–9)
15. Why mention their wicked and rebellious past? (63:10–14)

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Lesson Twenty-six: *Zion's Glorious Future*

Lesson Aim: See God bring out of the ruins of Israel a New Jerusalem that will be glorious and fill the earth with the knowledge of the Lord.

Lesson Text: Isaiah 63:15–66:24

Background Text: 2 Peter 3:12–13; Revelation 21:1, 2; Jeremiah 31:31–33; 2 Samuel 5:6–9

Questions for Class Discussion

1. Isaiah offers up a frank prayer for mercy in 63:15–19 on Israel's behalf. What does he confess?
2. For what does Isaiah pray? (64:1–3)
3. Why is Isaiah confident that God will hear his prayer? (64:4, 5)
4. What further confession does Isaiah make in Israel's stead? (64:6–8) Why?
5. For what is Isaiah pleading in 64:9–12? When would this truly be Israel's prayer?
6. List the five reasons Jehovah gave to justify the fallen condition of Judah and Jerusalem? (65:1–7)
7. What promise does Jehovah make to Jacob and Judah? Who is this "seed"? (64:8–10)
8. Who are "Fortune" and "Destiny"? (v. 11) What becomes of those that serve them? (65:12–16)
9. What are the "New Heavens" and the "New Earth"? (65:17–25)
10. How is this phrase used in the New Testament? (2 Peter 3:12, 13; Revelation 21:1, 2)
11. In the closing admonition of the book what does Jehovah ask for once more? (66:1–4)
12. of what does Jehovah assure those that heed this admonition? (66:5, 6)
13. What would be born of the travail of Jerusalem? (vv. 7–8) Why would this be an occasion of rejoicing?
14. Upon whom would God's wrath come? (66:15–17)
15. Where will God send those that escape His judgment? For what purpose? When did this happen? (vv. 18–19)