

Scripture Text

Isaiah 2-4

Context

The nation of Judah had enjoyed a season of prosperity under king Uzziah. Sadly, the Jews did not recognize God as the source of their blessings. Their increase in power and wealth made them more self-reliant and less God-honoring. The people broke the covenant God had made with them and incurred his wrath. Thus God allowed a political enemy in the north to increase in power. The Assyrians had defeated many of Judah's neighbors and was not far from attacking them.

Observation and Meaning

- What does Isaiah say will take place in the future? (2:1-4)
- Why do you think Isaiah communicated a vision of the future (2:1-4) before launching into the reasons why God has rejected Judah (2:6-4:1)?
- What are the various sins the Jews were practicing and why did it incur God's wrath? (2:6-4:1)
- How will God deal with Judah's sins?
- Why does Isaiah end this section with a second vision about the future? (4:2-6)
- How will the glorious visions of 2:1-4 and 4:2-6 come to pass?

Big Idea

God alone is able to offer us a glorious future. Trusting in our own strength, resources, abilities and leaders is not going to save us from our present troubles. Instead, we must trust wholeheartedly in God who alone is able to rescue and deliver us from our present plight and transfer us into his glorious kingdom.

Connecting to the Bible's storyline

God desires his people to trust him wholeheartedly. However man is sinful and rejects God. Yet in his lovingkindness, God sends prophets like Isaiah to warn people of their sins and beckon them to return to him. God declares that he alone is able to wash away our filth and cleanse us of our bloodstains. Further, God offers us fellowship with Him for all eternity. Forgiveness and fellowship with God are ultimately obtained through the work of Jesus Christ.

Application

- How does the glorious future of 2:1-4 and 4:2-6 motivate you in your walk with the Lord?
- What keeps you from trusting wholeheartedly in the Lord?
- Were there any warnings from 2:6-4:1 that you feel convicted to heed?

Guide for Study Leaders

Use the C.O.M.A. (Context, Observation, Meaning, Application) method to work through the biblical text.

Context

Pay attention to the surrounding verses, paragraphs, chapters, events, etc. to see how this passage fits within the context of this particular book of the Bible.

Note how this passage fits within the larger storyline of the whole Bible, i.e. how God is saving a people through Jesus Christ to live under his rule in his place.

Observation & Meaning

Make careful observations of the biblical text. Notice details such as linking words (eg. "for", "if", "therefore"), repetition, dialogue, narrative, OT quotations, etc.

To understand the meaning of the biblical text, we need to discern the author's purpose or intent: Why is the biblical author writing this?

Helpful questions to ask include:

Who is writing and to whom?

What is the situation of the author and of the readers?

Are we made aware of any problems that need to be addressed?

Are there any repeated themes, or a single idea that holds everything together?

Application

Apply God's word to the heart. Move beyond merely addressing circumstances and behaviour by asking good "heart" questions. For example: Why do we do what we do? What do we really desire?

Always connect the gospel to application. For example, what difference does knowing Christ make to our obedience to God?

Ask what the passage teaches us about God, ourselves, salvation in Christ, the church, the world, etc.