



Hello! This guide is provided to help facilitate a clear understanding of the Bible passage that was preached the preceding Sunday with a focus on applying God's truths to our lives individually and corporately. As such we encourage you to budget sufficient time for application questions. A recommendation would be to spend at least half your time pondering and discussing questions that are application focused.

Overview of Isaiah

Background and Context

Isaiah ministered for more than 40 years, through the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. His office of prophecy began in the final days of Uzziah's reign, through the war between Judah and the united kingdoms of Israel and Syria, Judah's defeat and exiled by Assyria, and the Babylonian captivity.

Isaiah Chapters 1-35

The first part of Isaiah speaks about God's judgement on Israel and Judah by Assyria. Isaiah railed against the leaders for their hypocrisy (1:10-15), greed (5:8), self-indulgence (5:11), and cynicism (5:19). The rich prospered while the poor was oppressed. The people confessed the Lord as their king with their lips, their hearts was as far from Him and their temple sacrifices were a mere sham.

Isaiah chapters 40-66

The second part focuses on the remnants' return from Babylon and their ultimate deliverance in the remote future and the fall of pagan Babylon (46:1-47:15). More than a century before Cyrus the Persian came to power, Isaiah named him as God's anointed agent to restore the remnant to the land (44:24-45:13).

He challenged the people to renew their loyalty to the Lord after they return to the land (56:1-8) and to avoid repeating idolatry and evil acts (57:3-13).

Christ in Isaiah

Beyond this future act of salvation Isaiah predicted the coming of a Servant and Savior much greater than Cyrus. This Servant would fulfill Israel's original destiny by bringing justice to the nations (42:1-4) and becoming a light to the Gentiles (49:1-7). The Servant would suffer willingly to take away the sins of His people (52:13-53:12) and thus establish a new covenant between the Lord and the new Israel (42:5-7).

Big Idea of the Text

Several ideas are communicated throughout this chapter. Firstly the identification of true and false worship among the Israelites. Secondly, a metaphorical illustration of the restoration of Zion, which

God shows and promises that He is the only one capable of bringing forth abundance of blessings and comfort to His people. Lastly, a foreshadow of final judgement and salvation, which includes the gathering of nations that were originally outside of the Jewish community of faith, the judgement of unrepentant sinners, and the coming of the new heavens and new earth.

Read Isaiah 66:1-6

The Humble and Contrite in Spirit

1 Thus says the Lord:

*“Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is my footstool;
what is the house that you would build for me,
and what is the place of my rest?*

*2 All these things my hand has made,
and so all these things came to be,
declares the Lord.*

*But this is the one to whom I will look:
he who is humble and contrite in spirit
and trembles at my word.*

*3 “He who slaughters an ox is like one who kills a man;
he who sacrifices a lamb, like one who breaks a dog's neck;
he who presents a grain offering, like one who offers pig's blood;
he who makes a memorial offering of frankincense, like one who blesses an idol.
These have chosen their own ways,
and their soul delights in their abominations;*

*4 I also will choose harsh treatment for them
and bring their fears upon them,
because when I called, no one answered,
when I spoke, they did not listen;
but they did what was evil in my eyes
and chose that in which I did not delight.”*

*5 Hear the word of the Lord,
you who tremble at his word:
“Your brothers who hate you
and cast you out for my name's sake
have said, Let the Lord be glorified,*

that we may see your joy’;
but it is they who shall be put to shame.
6 *“The sound of an uproar from the city!*
A sound from the temple!
The sound of the Lord,
rendering recompense to his enemies!
Rejoice with Jerusalem

Q1. What is God saying about himself in v1-2? See also v22-23.

Q2a. Which 2 different groups of people are being described in v2-5?

Q2b. Why does God detest the sacrifices offered in v3-4?

Q2c. What is the comfort God gives his people in v5?

Q3. What sort of worship does God delight in? How does this translate to our current context?

Read Isaiah 66:7-14

7 *“Before she was in labor*
she gave birth;
before her pain came upon her
she delivered a son.
8 *Who has heard such a thing?*
Who has seen such things?
Shall a land be born in one day?
Shall a nation be brought forth in one moment?
For as soon as Zion was in labor
she brought forth her children.
9 *Shall I bring to the point of birth and not cause to bring forth?”*
says the Lord;
“shall I, who cause to bring forth, shut the womb?”
says your God.

10 *“Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her,
all you who love her;*

rejoice with her in joy,

all you who mourn over her;

11 *that you may nurse and be satisfied*

from her consoling breast;

that you may drink deeply with delight

from her glorious abundance.”

12 *For thus says the Lord:*

“Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river,

and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream;

and you shall nurse, you shall be carried upon her hip,

and bounced upon her knees.

13 *As one whom his mother comforts,*

so I will comfort you;

you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

14 *You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice;*

your bones shall flourish like the grass;

and the hand of the Lord shall be known to his servants,

and he shall show his indignation against his enemies.

Q4. The genuine worshipper was mocked in v5. How does God answer the mockers in v7-9?

Q5. What promises are illustrated in v7-14 as God answers the mockers?

Application

Q6. How do these promises encourage us to rejoice even in the midst of suffering? (v10)

Read Isaiah 66:15-24

Final Judgment and Glory of the Lord

15 *“For behold, the Lord will come in fire,*

and his chariots like the whirlwind,

to render his anger in fury,

and his rebuke with flames of fire.

*16 For by fire will the Lord enter into judgment,
and by his sword, with all flesh;
and those slain by the Lord shall be many.*

17 “Those who sanctify and purify themselves to go into the gardens, following one in the midst, eating pig's flesh and the abomination and mice, shall come to an end together, declares the Lord.

18 “For I know their works and their thoughts, and the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and shall see my glory, 19 and I will set a sign among them. And from them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, who draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands far away, that have not heard my fame or seen my glory. And they shall declare my glory among the nations. 20 And they shall bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the Lord, on horses and in chariots and in litters and on mules and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the Lord, just as the Israelites bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the Lord. 21 And some of them also I will take for priests and for Levites, says the Lord.

*22 “For as the new heavens and the new earth
that I make
shall remain before me, says the Lord,
so shall your offspring and your name remain.*

*23 From new moon to new moon,
and from Sabbath to Sabbath,
all flesh shall come to worship before me,
declares the Lord.*

24 “And they shall go out and look on the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.”

Q6. What does Isaiah 66:15-17 and 22-24 refer to?

Q7. What are the 2 different fates declared by God, and who are they intended for?

Q8. What is the sign given to us in v19? (Matt 12:38-42, John 3:14)

Q9. Who are the survivors that are sent to the nations? What is their mission?

Q10. How can foreign nations outside of the Levitical priesthood become Levites and priests of God?
(v18-21)

Q11a. What is our role then while we await the fulfillment of this prophecy?

Q11b. How does this passage encourage us to share the gospel with urgency?

Q12. How has studying the book of Isaiah challenged you to live in light of Jesus' second coming?
(referring especially to chapter 56-66)

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