

The Word with Your Pastors
Isaiah: Prophet of Warning, Comfort & Hope Study Guide
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Third of Four Presentations ~ Fall 2021

Overview

Isaiah is the longest prophetic book in the Old Testament and the most-quoted by New Testament authors. Proclaimed and written over a period of centuries by multiple prophets, Isaiah is filled with poetic messages of warning, comfort, and hope—all intended to guide, heal, and revive God’s people, including us today. Together we will learn about the basic structure of Isaiah, the sociopolitical contexts in which it was written, and distinct features of this book. We will read carefully three passages that exemplify God’s salutary words of judgment, comfort, and hope for all.

Reflection Questions for [Isaiah 1: 2-9, 16-20](#)

1. What is warning and judgement?
2. What is the purpose of God’s warning and judgement?
3. How, or in what circumstances, do we need to hear God’s word of warning and judgment today?

Reflection Questions for [Isaiah 40: 1-11](#)

1. What is comfort?
2. What is the purpose of God’s comfort?
3. How, or in what circumstances, do we need to hear God’s word of comfort today?

Reflection Questions for [Isaiah 65: 17-25](#)

1. What is hope?
2. What is the purpose of God’s hope?
3. How, or in what circumstances, do we need to hear God’s word of hope today?

Next Session: *Minor Prophets: Short Books, Big Themes* with Pastor Ruud

Isaiah 1: 2-9, 16-20

² Hear, O heavens, and listen, O earth;
for the Lord has spoken:
I reared children and brought them up,
but they have rebelled against me.

³ The ox knows its owner,
and the donkey its master's crib;
but Israel does not know,
my people do not understand.

⁴ Ah, sinful nation,
people laden with iniquity,
offspring who do evil,
children who deal corruptly,
who have forsaken the Lord,
who have despised the Holy One of Israel,
who are utterly estranged!

⁵ Why do you seek further beatings?
Why do you continue to rebel?
The whole head is sick,
and the whole heart faint.

⁶ From the sole of the foot even to the head,
there is no soundness in it,
but bruises and sores
and bleeding wounds;
they have not been drained, or bound up,
or softened with oil.

⁷ Your country lies desolate,
your cities are burned with fire;
in your very presence
aliens devour your land;
it is desolate, as overthrown by foreigners.

⁸ And daughter Zion is left
like a booth in a vineyard,
like a shelter in a cucumber field,
like a besieged city.

⁹ If the Lord of hosts
had not left us a few survivors,
we would have been like Sodom,
and become like Gomorrah.

¹⁶ Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
remove the evil of your doings
from before my eyes;
cease to do evil,

¹⁷ learn to do good;
seek justice,
rescue the oppressed,
defend the orphan,
plead for the widow.

¹⁸ Come now, let us argue it out,
says the Lord:
though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be like snow;
though they are red like crimson,
they shall become like wool.

¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient,
you shall eat the good of the land;
²⁰ but if you refuse and rebel,
you shall be devoured by the sword;
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.

³ A voice cries out:
'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our
God.

⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵ Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

⁶ A voice says, 'Cry out!'
And I said, 'What shall I cry?'
All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand for ever.

⁹ Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
'Here is your God!'

¹⁰ See, the Lord God comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.

¹¹ He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Isaiah 65: 17-25

For I am about to create new heavens
and a new earth;
the former things shall not be remembered
or come to mind.

¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice for ever
in what I am creating;
for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy,
and its people as a delight.

¹⁹ I will rejoice in Jerusalem,
and delight in my people;
no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it,
or the cry of distress.

²⁰ No more shall there be in it
an infant that lives but a few days,
or an old person who does not live out a lifetime;
for one who dies at a hundred years will be
considered a youth,
and one who falls short of a hundred will be
considered accursed.

²¹ They shall build houses and inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

²² They shall not build and another inhabit;
they shall not plant and another eat;
for like the days of a tree shall the days of my
people be,
and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their
hands.

²³ They shall not labour in vain,
or bear children for calamity;
for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord—
and their descendants as well.

²⁴ Before they call I will answer,
while they are yet speaking I will hear.

²⁵ The wolf and the lamb shall feed together,
the lion shall eat straw like the ox;
but the serpent—its food shall be dust!

They shall not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
says the Lord.