

# LIFE CHURCH



LORDSHILL — CENTRAL — WEST END



## Seeing God

A TEACHING SERIES IN ISAIAH

14 WEEK  
DEVOTIONAL



## Seeing God

### **A teaching series for Life Church from Isaiah.**

Digging Deeper Bible study – for use in groups or as an individual. This Bible study is to go alongside the Isaiah teaching series at Life Church Southampton. You will find that we will cover passages in the Bible study that we don't cover on a Sunday or in our Life Groups. This is designed to help you dig even deeper into the book of Isaiah. We would encourage you, if possible, to attend Sunday meetings or catch up on the Podcast, follow up in Life Groups with the Application notes, buy and read the Isaiah daily devotional that will be on sale at all sites and finally work on this Bible study in a small group or on your own if you want to dig even deeper into the whole book.

This Bible Study is designed for you to do in your own time, so have a go at answering the questions – then join with a group to discuss your answers together if possible. It is designed to complement the Isaiah devotional book that many of you are reading. However, if you don't have this book, this study will still work independently; just read the relevant passages in Isaiah and answer the questions!

# Introduction

Isaiah 46v5 “With whom will you compare me and count me equal? ...I am God and there is none like me.”

So why are we studying Isaiah? Isaiah is one of those books that every Christian tends to say is ‘brilliant’ but when you ask them why, not many seem to know! Our hope is that at the end of this series, if you dig deep in your own personal devotion – you will get a greater glimpse of the God that Isaiah saw – you would see God through the pages of this Old Testament [OT] prophet.

Isaiah is set from 740 – 680 BC. Isaiah served as a prophet during the time when Israel was divided into two Kingdoms; the northern Kingdom of Israel and southern Kingdom of Judah. Isaiah’s ministry saw Judah slowly decline and eventually get carried off into exile at the hands of the Babylonians. However, his message is full of hope for the future.

Isaiah calls God ‘the Holy one of Israel’ twenty-six times. This phrase is derived from the Hebrew word ‘Qadosh’ carries a concept of being ‘completely set apart’ or ‘entirely in its own league’. This is only used six times in the rest of the Bible. The Israelites have lost their way and Isaiah sees getting a bigger view of God is the answer to many of the Israelites problems. Despite their lack of faith, seeing God is the answer. Isaiah’s name literally means “the Lord who saves”. Isaiah is a book about the salvation plan of a mighty all-powerful God.

The book is clearly split in two halves. The first 39 chapters are known as the **books of Judgment**. This half of the book spells out what God will do to the people of Israel unless they turn from their sinful behaviour.

The final 27 chapters are known as the **book of comfort**. They console the Israelites with God’s love and mercy and a promise of restoration to come.

In Isaiah we have the Bible in miniature. 39 books OT and 27 books of new – all centred around the saviour Jesus Christ. Isaiah reveals God’s character uniquely amongst the OT prophets. Seeing the supremacy, sovereignty and

majesty of God, yet also seeing the promise suffering servant Jesus Christ with breath-taking accuracy.

Isaiah also has a deeply Trinitarian feel with Father (63v16, 64v8), Son (7v14, 9v6), Holy Spirit (32v14-15 and 44v3) all seen throughout the Prophet's writings.

Isaiah also reveals the depths of the Gospel. The first half of Isaiah describes the vast gulf between God's character and our own. Using the compelling logic of a gifted barrister to pass a guilty verdict on all. Isaiah leads us to an awareness of the depravity of our own sin and the greatness of God's salvation plan for us.

As you dwell on these pages, ask God to give you an ever increasing revelation as to the depths of your sin and the outlandish salvation he has attained for you.

**“With whom will you  
compare me and count me  
equal? ...I am God and there  
is none like me.”**

Isaiah 46v5

## Isaiah Devotional Reading Plan

We plan to follow Alec Motyer's devotional book in Isaiah. In this booklet there is an accompanying Bible study for you to complete each week if you want to dig a bit deeper into God's word. The reading plan is based on a Monday – Friday 5 days a week plan. Therefore, you have two 'grace days' to catch up each week!

Please don't worry if you get behind. This is there to help and serve you, take it at your own pace.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Week</b>	<b>Daily Devotional</b>	<b>Bible Passage - Isaiah</b>
10 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> Sept	1	Day 1 – 5	c1 – c2v21
17 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> Sept	2	Day 6 – 10	c2v22 – c6v13
24 <sup>th</sup> – 28 <sup>th</sup> Sept	3	Day 11 – 15	c7v1 – c10v4
1 <sup>st</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> Oct	4	Day 16 – 20	c10v5 – c14v32
8 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> Oct	5	Day 21 – 25	c15v1 – c22v25
15 <sup>th</sup> – 19 <sup>th</sup> Oct	6	Day 26 – 30	c23v1 – c27v13
22 <sup>nd</sup> – 26 <sup>th</sup> Oct	7	Day 31 – 35	c28v1 – c32v20
29 <sup>th</sup> Oct – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Nov	8	Day 36 – 40	c33v1 – c37v38
5 <sup>th</sup> – 9 <sup>th</sup> Nov	9	Day 41 – 45	c38v1 – c41v20
12 <sup>th</sup> – 16 <sup>th</sup> Nov	10	Day 46 – 50	c41v21 – c45v25
19 <sup>th</sup> – 23 <sup>rd</sup> Nov	11	Day 51 – 55	c46v1 – c50v3
26 <sup>th</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup> Nov	12	Day 56 – 60	c50v4 – c54v17
3 <sup>rd</sup> – 7 <sup>th</sup> Dec	13	Day 61 – 65	c55v1 – c59v19
10 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	14	Day 66 – 71	c59v20 – c66v24

# Week 1 – God’s People have gone astray

Daily Devotional 1 – 5 Isaiah 1 – 2v21

Isaiah effectively puts the nation of Judah on trial for their sin at the start of Chapter 1. The people who were supposed to be ‘a holy people’ are a “Sinful nation” (Isaiah 1v4).

Q1. What are God’s people accused of in Isaiah 1v2-6?

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At first glance, it appears God is rejecting the very acts of worship he previously required of his people in Leviticus.

Q2. From reading verses c1v10-20, why is God rejecting what he had previously commanded the Israelites to do?

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Application Q1 – In what ways today can we be in danger of being like the people of Judah?

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“How the faithful city has become a whore” (Is1v21). The covenant God made with Israel after the exodus was viewed as a marriage covenant (Is54v5). Isaiah uses very strong language here.

Application Q2 - What does this tell you about God’s view regarding sin?

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In chapter 2 we see in verse 2 a beautiful picture of the nation’s streaming uphill towards “the Lord’s temple”. This is Isaiah prophetically looking into the future and seeing the beautiful bride of Christ his church. Read revelation 21v1-3. These nations are the church, the Bride of Christ.

Application Q3. How do you view the church today? Do you see it as God sees it?

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Despite God's promise we see the people of Judah are putting their trust in other things.

Q3. What 'things' can you identify in verses 6 – 8?

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Application Q4. What 'things' do we, in a 21<sup>st</sup> century western culture, put our trust in other than Jesus?

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Verse 11 and verse 17 bring to our attention a common theme through Isaiah.

Q4. What is this theme?

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Close by asking God for forgiveness for anything that you have put excessive trust in other than Jesus.

[Pray](#) that we would be a people who are totally devoted followers of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.



## Week 2 – Encountering the King

Daily Devotional 6 – 10 Isaiah c2v22 – 6v13

This section begins with 2v22 – a powerful summary to stop trusting in man. Chapter 3 continues to build on this theme explaining the frailness of Jerusalem precisely because of its trust in man rather than God. However, Isaiah 4v2 introduces this concept of a ‘branch of Yahweh’.

Q1. Chapter 4v2-6 describes this branch and its function. What or who is this likely referring to?

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In chapter 5 Isaiah changes tact from a straight word to a prophetic song. People were not heeding the warning of chapters 1 – 4 and so inspired by Psalm 80 Isaiah likens Israel to a vineyard in his well-crafted song. The 7 woes of verse 8 – 30 are picked up by Jesus in Matthew 23 about the leaders in Jerusalem. A stark reminder for us that this text is still relevant today.

Application Q1. Chapter 5v20 talks of calling evil good and good evil? In what areas of our culture is that true today?

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Application Q2. Perhaps more dangerously, in what areas of church and specifically in your life can that be true today?

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**BIG PICTURE CONNECTION** – Isaiah 5 points to the destruction of those who don’t bear fruit. Although Jesus is the only one who didn’t deserve to be destroyed like the unfruitful vine of Isaiah 5, Jesus took this destruction in our place on the cross. And now, through faith in him, any failed vine can be united to the True Vine and begin to bear good fruit (John 15).

Q2. Read Isaiah 5, Psalm 80 and John 15. How do they relate? What does Jesus mean when he says “I am the true vine”?

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After the sober introduction to Israel's sinfulness and the promised judgment and grace to come, Isaiah 6 introduces us to Isaiah and his commission to proclaim God's message.

Q3. How did Isaiah respond when he saw a vision of God in chapter 6v1-5?

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Application Q3. What is the overwhelming characteristic of God that the angels proclaim in verse 3? Does this have any implications for us today?

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Isaiah's sin is atoned for through the altar, and he is restored and commissioned to proclaim his message, being warned that the people will continue in unbelief. God promises to use Isaiah even though his message will seemingly fall on deaf ears.

Application Q4. Are you facing any situations presently whereby you are being called to persevere without seemingly obvious 'fruitfulness'?

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Application Q5. Are there any specific things / works / areas of Mission that God has called you to presently? How are you outworking his calling on your life?

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Pray that we would be a people who know what we are called to both individually and corporately. Pray that we would work tirelessly fulfilling God's call on our lives and persevering in the face of hardship or lack of fruit.

## Week 3 – Christmas is Coming

Daily Devotional 11 – 15 Isaiah c7v1 – 10v4

At this point in history, God’s people are divided into two kingdoms, Israel in the north and Judah in the south. Israel has formed an alliance with Syria. Ahaz (the king of Judah) refused God’s help and tried to bribe support from the surrounding nations (you can read about this in 2 Kings 16v8).

God again speaks to King Ahaz and instructs him to ask God for a sign (c7v10)?

Q1. What is Ahaz response? Why does he respond like this? (did Ahaz really want to know what God would say?)

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Application Question 1 – Are there any areas in life for us that we are busy ‘forming alliances and pressing on’ and we don’t really want God disrupting our plans?

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God in his infinite Grace offers the southern Kingdom of Judah the sign of a child called “Immanuel,” which means “God with us” (7v14).

Q2. What could this sign of meant in the original context?

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Matthew 1v23 quotes this passage in Isaiah to show that this message was ultimately fulfilled in Jesus. However, in Isaiah, judgment continues throughout the rest of chapter 7 and into chapter 8 as the people refuse to listen to God. The Assyrian army will eventually destroy Syria, the northern kingdom of Israel, and even the southern kingdom of Judah for their unbelief. God calls Isaiah and a faithful remnant “not to walk in the way of this people” (Isaiah 8v11-17).

In the midst of God’s judgment gloom and despair we get an outrageous message of hope in Chapter 9 in this well-known passage.

Application Question 2 – Have you ever been in a seemingly desperate situation? How do the opening verses of Chapter 9 comfort you in a seemingly hopeless situation personally or in the world today?

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Q3. What 4 titles does Isaiah use for this promise son in 9v6? What do these titles tell us about what Jesus is like?

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Application Q3. Which of these attributes of the Saviour do you feel least acquainted with? (prayer that God by his Holy Spirit will help you see more of who He is)

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Following this majestic hope in the midst of judgment on Judah, Isaiah turns his attention to the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Israel follows a similar theme to Judah in that c9v8 – 10v4 follows a hard-hearted refusal to hear the ‘Word of God’ and a confident self-reliance which will not come to pass (see9v8-10).

Q4. What warning do we learn from the people of Israel and Judah’s downfall?

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Application Q4. How can we be sure to avoid the same mistakes?

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**Pray** together that the ‘good news’ of the gospel would permeate every area of our lives and society regardless of how hopeless the situation feels. Pray remembering the 4 attributes revealed about Jesus in Chapter 9v6.

## Week 4 – Drawing on the Depths

Daily Devotional 16 – 20 Isaiah c10v5 – 14v32

Chapter 10 continues the theme of judgment but this time on Assyria. After he has used Assyria to judge the Northern Kingdom of Israel, Assyria in turn will be judged for their arrogance.

Q1. What does this tell you about God’s sovereignty over nations and rulers?

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Application Q1. How does this affect the way we see the world today?

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From 10v20 we begin to see the preservation of a remnant and chapter 11 and into 12 bring a future of real hope.

Q2. What is Isaiah referring to at the start of Chapter 11 where he says “a shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse”?

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Q3. Read 2 Samuel 7v12-16. How does this align with Isaiah’s stump of Jesse?

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As you continue to read Isaiah 11 it increasingly refers to the coming Messiah - Jesus. Isaiah 11v6-10 clearly has not yet been fulfilled even though the Messiah has come. This seems to refer more to Christ’s second coming, see Romans 8v18-27 and Revelation 21.

As you start chapter 12 read verses 1–2 with the context of Isaiah commissioning in chapter 6 in mind.

Q4. How does the exulting praise of Isaiah 12v1–2 fit in light of this?

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Isaiah in verse 3 says “with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation”. Application Q2. How do we practically outwork this on a daily basis?

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Isaiah 13 begins the next section in Isaiah. In the coming chapters Isaiah shows us that God is the sovereign King, who judges all nations and moves all history along according to his gracious purposes. He is always in control.

Chapter 13 prophesies the downfall of the great Superpower Babylon. Although Isaiah is telling the historical events he constantly references “the Day of the Lord”.

Q5. What does Isaiah mean when he says “the Day of the Lord”? Why should Babylon be more terrified of the “Day of the Lord” than the day of their earthly fall?

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The judgment of the nations continues into chapter 14 and specifically the devil is alluded to and the context of spiritual warfare appears.

Application Q3. How does knowledge of the ‘superpowers’ being in God’s control and one day facing his judgment affect our view of the world?

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As you finish this week’s readings, pray that you would learn to “Draw water from the wells of salvation”, like Isaiah did. You need to know the depravity of your sin, and to dwell in the magnitude of your salvation. As Paul put it in Ephesians 3v16-19;

<sup>16</sup>I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, <sup>17</sup>so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, <sup>18</sup>may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, <sup>19</sup>and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

## Week 5 – Unequally yoked

Daily Devotional 21 – 25 Isaiah c15v1 – 22v25

God’s prophetic judgment (or oracles as they are known) against the nations continues in these chapters. Often they make difficult reading but it is important to remember the depths of Humanity’s Sin.

Chapter 15 and 16 continues with God’s judgment against the pagan nation of Moab.

Q1. In chapter 15v5 Yahweh is the speaker and he appears moved and compassionate on a sinful idolatrous nation. What does this show you about the character of God?

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Chapter 16v6 show us the root of Moab’s sin. Pride. In verses 4 and 5 Isaiah seems to be suggesting Moab could have been secure if it humbled itself before God. God deals with this pride and arrogance severely. Pride is a killer.

Application Q1. How does this serve as a warning to us today?

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As you read chapters 17 and 18. Isaiah’s next prophecy against the northern kingdom of Israel– Ephraim. Ephraim sort to secure itself with an alliance with Damascus. Later Jerusalem tried to be self-sufficient – neither worked.

Read Deuteronomy 6v10–19.

Q2. What light does this shed on the condemnation of the northern kingdom of Israel, here referred to as Ephraim (Is17v4–14)? Note, in particular, Isaiah 17v10.

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When Paul speaks to the church in 2 Corinthians 6v14 about being “unequally yoked” he is speaking of more than just marriage. As Ephraim found out the hard way, putting our trust in the wrong nation/business partner has consequences.

Application Q2. How does this principle affect our workplace/business relationships as Christians today?

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Isaiah continues his oracles into Egypt. These judgments are both 'Striking and healing'. God proclaims judgment against Egypt (Is19v1–15) and then restoration for Egypt and the nations (Isa19v16–25).

Q3. Read Revelation 5v9 – How is Isaiah c19 v16-25 beginning to point to this day?

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Q4. What are the various ways that nations will be blessed, according to Isaiah 19:18–25?

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Read chapter 22 regarding God's judgment on Jerusalem. Verses 7 to 11 were Jerusalem's attempts at man-made security. Hezekiah secured the water supply into the city with outstanding engineering. They strengthened their defences. However, Verse 12 shows what God really wanted; dependence on Him.

Application Q3. In what ways can we be like Jerusalem? Securing our defences and supplies instead of turning to our God?

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Close this week with a moment of honesty with yourself. Are you busy focusing on partnerships with pagans, building self-sustaining armies and security systems. Pension funds and savings (not that they are wrong in themselves)? Or is your security found in Jesus?

Pray that we would be a people that find our security in Him.



## Week 6 – True Security

Daily Devotional 26 – 30 Isaiah c23v1 – 27v13

Following the judgment on Tyre in chapter 23, chapter 24 – 27 then bring to a climax God’s judgments on the nations with the message of judgment and salvation for the whole world. There is a ‘safe-haven’ as is revealed in chapter 26v4; “Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the rock Eternal”. This is our true security.

Isaiah 24v1–20 describes the violent dismantling of this present age and it’s replacement with global worship. The people have rejected God’s revealed will in order to construct their own alternative social order. This sin (Isa. 24:5) leads to a curse (Isa. 24:6).

Q1. Where else in the Old Testament have we seen this pattern? What are the effects of this curse (Isa. 24:6–13)?

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In Isaiah 25v6-9 we get a glimpse of our future banquet. Jesus himself gave a taste of this banquet with the feeding miracles (Mark 6v30-44 and 8v1-9) and also the parable of the 10 Bridesmaids (Matt 25v1-13)

Q2. What does this passage tell us about the eternal banquet we can look forward to? Specifically, what do the descriptions of the food and wine indicate about the way God treats us? What does the repetition of ‘all’ indicate?

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Q3. In light of Isaiah 55v1-3, who is invited and how much does it cost to attend this banquet?

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Application Q1. How does the promise of a future banquet affect us in the present?

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The city is an important image in Isaiah 24–27 (see Is24v10, 12 Is25v2 Is26v1–2, 5 Is27v10. Isaiah views the entire world culture as a “lofty city” (Is26v5)

because it is a place of imagined safety and prideful self-sufficiency. But God will destroy it and establish a “strong city” for his people.

Q4. What is the primary characteristic of those who will be in God’s city (Isa. 26v1–4; see also Is7v9, Is12v2)?

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Application Q2. In what ways is the mind-set of the “lofty city” seen in today’s society, and how are we tempted to embrace it?

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We then move into chapter 27 and Isaiah refers back to the vineyard for a third time. (3v13-15, 5v1-7).

Q5. What are the specific ways in which the vineyard story of Isaiah 27:2–5 is similar to that of Isa. 5:1–7?

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Q6. What does the message of Isaiah 27 show us about God when contrasted against the ruined vineyard of Isaiah 5?

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**Pray** that we would be a people that find our true security in Jesus. In our eternal destiny. That one day we would sit at such a glorious banquet table and therefore we would not look for security from the world. We would know that God never abandons us, just like he never abandoned the vineyard.

## Week 7 – Take God at his Word

Daily Devotional 31 – 35 Isaiah c28v1 – 32v20

Chapter 28 signifies the start of a new section of Isaiah full of ‘Interim Fulfilments’ which act as assurances that the greatest predictions can be trusted. Fulfilments against Assyria and Israel that were set in context and visibly fulfilled and spoken of here. Warnings of judgment and promises of Grace are strung through this section. Each judgment beginning with the word ‘Woe’.

The first proclamation of woe is against God’s people: The northern kingdom of Israel, here called “Ephraim” (Isa. 28:1–6), and the southern kingdom of Judah (Isa. 28:7–13). Because the leaders scoff at Isaiah’s message as beneath their intelligence (Isa. 28:9–10). God will now only speak to them by the foreign tongue of Assyrian invaders (Isa. 28:11–13).

Q1. How does this relate to Isaiah 6:9–12?

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Application Q1. How is this also a warning for today?

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Review Isaiah 28:14–16 closely. Jerusalem’s leaders rejoiced over their alliance with Egypt for protection from Assyria.

Q2. Why would Isaiah call their agreement with Egypt a “covenant with death” (Is28v15)? Where is the real source of security?

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God responds to Israel’s sin in verse 16. Read 1 Peter 2v4-8 and Romans 9v33.

Q3. How is this promise ultimately fulfilled in the New Testament?

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In chapter 29 the people of Jerusalem (here called “Ariel”) are rebuked for hypocritical worship. They “honour me with their lips,” God says, “while their hearts are far from me” (Is29v13). Jesus quotes Isaiah words to the Pharisees in Matthew 15v8–9.

Q4. What does this warning tell us about what God desires for our worship?

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Application Q2. How could this warning apply to us today?

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The stubbornness of Israel described in Isaiah 30:1–17 comes to an unexpected crescendo in verse 18.

Q5. How does God respond to their stubbornness? What does this tell us about God’s character?

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Is 30:19–26 show us how this grace will redeem Israel once they turn from their pact with Egypt. Assyria will then be dealt with. Chapter 31 continues to promise security does not lie with the Egyptians or earthly allegiance but with God.

Reflect on whether your security lies more with people or God.

[Pray](#) and ask God for his help to see him as the true security. Ask God to help you worship from the heart and not as the pharisees did.

## Week 8 – Ahaz, Hezekiah and obedience?

Daily Devotional 36 – 40 Isaiah c33v1 – c37v38

As you begin to read into this section. Chapters 33 – 35v10 present an eschatological view. Although we can see some historical events it is far less clear and primarily concerned with eternity.

Q1. What does Isaiah 34 teach us about eternal judgment?

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Application Q1. How is this relevant to us today?

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Note here that the judgment described in chapter 34 seems to be an intensification of the curse put on humanity at creation (Isaiah 34; see Gen. 1:2; Gen. 3:17–18), while salvation is described as a reversal of the curse and restoration of pre-fall flourishing (Isaiah 35; Genesis 1–2).

Q2. What in these chapters leads to such conclusions?

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The command of 35v4 to “be strong and do not fear” is echoed throughout scripture. Why should we be strong? The rest of verse 4 – “your God will come”. When we fear the answer is not to steel ourselves but to put our trust in the ultimate security found in Jesus.

Application Q2. What fears are you carrying in life presently today?

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Chapters 36 and 37 are grounded back in history with King Hezekiah. In 701 BC Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, sent an army with Rabshakeh, an Assyrian military officer, to Jerusalem to pressure King Hezekiah to surrender.

Q3. In what ways is the situation described in Isa 36v1–9 similar to that of Isa 7v1–9, which involved Hezekiah’s father, Ahaz?

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Q4. How does Hezekiah respond differently to his Father before Him? (see 37v1-2, Isaiah 7v10-12)

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Application Q3. How do we respond when God is trying to speak to us? Are we ready to listen to Him?

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Hezekiah was ready to listen where Ahaz his father in his arrogance refused help from God. Are we ready to respond when God speaks to us or are we too busy going our own way?

**Pray** that each of us would be soft-hearted and ready to hear from God which direction he wants us to go.

## Week 9 – Bad choices

Daily Devotional 41 – 45 Isaiah c38v1 – c41v20

As you enter into Isaiah 38, you enter into a new section of Isaiah. Isaiah 38 to 55 comprises the book of the servant and largely begins to prophesy more clearly that these promises will be fulfilled through a servant King – ultimately through Jesus Christ.

At the outset however, Isaiah focuses on Hezekiah. It is worth noting historically the events of chapters 38 and 39 happened before chapters 36 and 37. God showed great mercy on Hezekiah and allowed him to live another 15 years (see 38v1-5). However, Hezekiah's great sin is to forget the promises of God and in his fear of Assyria be lured into partnership with Babylon (39v1-8) contrary to God's command. Ultimately it was showing off to Babylon that led to Judah's downfall. Look up 2 Chronicles 32v24-31.

Q1. What does this teach us about King Hezekiah?

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Application Q1 – Do we ever seek to impress others like Hezekiah did instead of giving all the glory to God?

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Through Isaiah, God tells Hezekiah of his people's future exile, when everything "shall be carried to Babylon" (Isa. 39:6).

Read 2 Kings 24:10–25:21. Jerusalem fell and the people were exiled to Babylon as Isaiah prophesied.

Q2. What were the key events in the exile of Judah?

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As soon as Hezekiah's downfall is prophesied, Isaiah shifts his gaze back to the outrageous promises of God in Isaiah 40 – 42. He no longer addresses just his 8<sup>th</sup> century BC contemporaries but rather addresses the future exiled generations in Babylon (Babylonian exile was 586 BC).

Q3. What are the key messages of comfort in Isaiah 40v1-11 for the exiled people in Babylon?

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Q4. What attribute of God do each of the following verses draw out?

40v12.....

40v12-14.....

40v15-17.....

40v22-23.....

40v25-28.....

Isaiah 40 v12-31 shows God is the creator and therefore powerful to deliver his comforting promise of v1-11. In Isaiah 41 – Isaiah offers a second guarantee – Yahweh is the world ruler and guardian of his people.

Application Q2. What life circumstances are you going through presently where you are doubting some of God's promises over your life? How do these chapters help to reassure you?

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**Pray** that we would be a people that remember the vastness and immensity of our Creator and that this would give us a confidence in our Faith and in Life, knowing he is sovereign, powerful and faithful.



# Isaiah 10 – God’s surprising deliverance plan

Daily Devotional 46 – 50 Isaiah c41v21 – c45v25

Isaiah 41 and into 42 looks at the promised saviour. Initially in Isaiah 42v1-9 the Servant is best explained as a true and faithful Israel. It is the nation as it should be, faithful to their calling and mission.

Q1. Who is the ‘true servant’? What is this servant called to do?

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Application Q1. How do these verses act as a comfort to us when we think on what God has called us to do?

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In c42v18-25 Isaiah turns his attention to Israel – who is also frequently referred to as God’s ‘servant’. In the early verses of Isaiah 42 he describes a servant who will change the entire world. However, he then addresses quite clearly that the nation of Israel is in no way up to the task and a greater servant is needed.

Q2. What do these verses tell us about the nation of Israel?

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Application Q2. In what way do these verses serve as a warning to us?

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Chapters 43 and 44 continue to expand on Israel’s sin and God’s redemption plan with a particular focus on forgiveness from sin. Isaiah 43v25 perhaps sums up this section – It is the Lord who “blots out your transgressions”. This section is a timely reminder that only God can save and forgive sins. There is nothing you or I can do to “add to our salvation”.

Application Q3. In what ways do you get tempted to try to ‘add to your salvation’?

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C44v6-23 focuses on idolatry. Again highlighting that there is only one true God.

Application Q4. What are the gods of the age today in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Western culture? How should we respond to these false gods? (Read Isaiah 41v21-24)

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In Isaiah 44:24–45:8, we hear of God’s surprising plan to use Cyrus the Great, leader of the rising Persian empire, to conquer Babylon and release Israel to return to their land.

Q3. How does Israel respond to this plan (Is 45:9–10)?

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Q4. How does God reply (Is 45:11–13)?

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God’s plan is not always what we expect. Yet he is God and not us. God’s plan is also often bigger than we realise. Here he goes beyond the return of his people to Jerusalem. He has worldwide salvation on his radar. (Is 45:14–25).

Q5. What does Paul’s use of Isaiah 45:23 in Philippians 2:9–11 tell us about the One to whom the world must submit?

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**Pray** that we would catch a glimpse of God’s bigger plan for us. Thank God for his incredible deliverance plan in sending Israel’s true servant Jesus Christ. Thank God for his incredible promises in Isaiah 42v1-9 about Jesus Christ.

# Isaiah 11 – His Glory, not ours

Daily Devotional 51 – 55 Isaiah c46v1 – c50v3

Chapter 46 begins with a prediction of the fall of Babylon’s gods. However powerful these gods felt in the present situation and captivity to the Israelites, God is completely sovereign over them and they will pale into insignificance.

As you start reading chapter 46, notice the stark contrast between the false gods of Babylon and the real God.

Q1. What trait in particular is contrasted in the first 5 verses of Isaiah 46?

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Q2. What is the second contrast in verses 5 – 13?

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The reality of our mighty God does not always feel as clear as in this passage. When facing a ‘god of this age’ remind yourself of this powerful contrast. These Babylonian gods who felt irresistibly powerful at the time were pathetic compared with the true and living God.

The theme of Babylon falling continues in chapter 47 and 48 with the return home of the exiles. However, chapter 48 shows that although some of the Israelites were coming out of exile and physically coming home their hearts are still far from God.

Q3. How does chapter 48v1-8 show that in many ways the Israelites are just as sinful as the Babylonians?

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Verses 9 – 11 reveal God’s motive for restoring the people of Israel. Read God’s promise to Abraham in Genesis 12v1-3.

Q4. How do these two passages relate to one another?

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Some people may struggle with God's glory being his greatest motive. However, it lifts our eyes off ourselves. God's will is for your good and His glory. It goes very wrong when we get this the wrong way round and think it is about our glory!

Application Q1. In what ways in our individualistic culture can we get it the wrong way round and think God wants to glorify us?

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Application Q2. What have the first 50 chapters of Isaiah taught us about how what God thinks when we get this the wrong way round?

.....

Isaiah 49 brings the second 'servant song' (the first was Isaiah 42). Israel will return from exile in Babylon but the problem of sin will still remain. We learned back in Isaiah 42 that Israel failed to be the 'light to the nations' they were called to be. But in chapter 49 we have our answer, the promised messiah Jesus Christ.

Q5. Look up Hebrews 4v15. How does verse 4 relate to this?

.....

Application Q3. How does this aspect of Jesus comfort you throughout trial and discouragement?

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Q6. Pick out the promises of God fulfilled in Jesus in chapter 49

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As you finish today, re-read Isaiah 49 and thank God for his promises fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Reflect on the fact that your life is all about his Glory.

**Pray** that we would delight in this truth as his followers.

# Isaiah 12 – An unlikely King

Daily Devotional 56 – 60 Isaiah c50v4 – c54v17

We approach Holy ground indeed as we approach some of the most powerful scriptures from Isaiah. As the servant King Jesus is displayed in chapters 50 and 51 into chapters 52 and 53 there is a clear focus on the ‘sin-bearing’ work of our Lord and servant King Jesus Christ.

In the next section of the servant song we see the servant sustaining others through his teaching.

Q1. What, specifically, do we learn about Jesus in Isa 50v4-9?

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Into chapter 52 Israel longs for God to “awake” from his supposed slumber and redeem them (Is 51:9–11). God turns their cry back on them, calling them to “awaken” because redemption draws near.

Q2. What are the central elements of this glad proclamation of salvation in Isa 52v7–11?

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Read and re-read 52v13 onwards and 53.

Q3. Look up the following passages. Find which passages in Isaiah they are quoting from. What do they display about how the NT writers interpreted Isaiah prophecies?

1 Peter 2v22-25

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Acts 8v32-35 -

.....

Q4. Read chapter 53v10. Who was ultimately responsible for putting Jesus on the cross? What does this tell us about God?

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We have no understanding for a love like this. Read 1 John 4v7-12. This reminds us what Isaiah 53v10 was for. We have been receivers of the most incredible love through the atoning work of Jesus.

Application Q1. How does John immediately point to how we outwork this love? Are you outworking His great Love today with those around you? Who is God calling you to love more today?

.....

Isaiah 54 and 55 then gives the consequence of this great sacrifice. Here he starts with Zion (Israel) in ch54 and then to the world in ch55.

Q5. How does Isaiah use the metaphors of Israel as a barren woman (Is 54v1–3) and widow (Is 54v4–8) to show the glorious salvation provided by the servant’s work? What is he trying to show us?

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Read 54v10. Look up Psalm 89v34 and Romans 8v38 – 39.

Application Q2. How does this triplet of promises assure and comfort us?

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Finish marvelling at the outrageous work of what Jesus did for us as the suffering servant Isaiah prophesied. Thank God for his sacrifice. If you are in a Bible study, break bread and wine together.

## Isaiah 13 – A Great Invitation

Daily Devotional 61 – 65 Isaiah c55v1 – c59v19

The great invitation of Isaiah 54 now extends to the world in Isaiah 55. The living water of eternal Life is spoken of by Jesus himself to the women at the well in John 4v14. Those who drink from this water will never thirst again. Jesus is to be our ultimate satisfaction; he quenches every thirst.

Q1. Read Isaiah 55v6 and then 2 Corinthians 6v1-2. What do these 2 passages tell us about the urgency of the message?

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Application Q1. How should this affect the way we live?

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Q2. Isaiah 55v8-9 are very commonly quoted. In the context of Isaiah what does it mean?

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Application Q2. What do verses 10 and 11 suggest to us about the power of sharing the gospel? How is this both a comfort to us when it seems to fall on deaf ears and also a provocation to us?

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As we read Isaiah 56 to 59 we see historically the waiting captives returning from Babylon. However, although in one sense they have been 'saved' they are still awaiting their ultimate salvation through the blood of Jesus.

Application Q3. Read Isaiah 56v1. In what sense are we 'saved' and yet still awaiting our salvation?

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Q3. What does God promise to give the foreigners who trust in him (Is 56v6–8)?

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Q4. How does Is 56v8 expand the vision of Is11v11–12? How does this shed light on what Jesus says in John 10v16?

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A common term of phrase is found in Isaiah 57v21 – “there is no peace... for the wicked”

Q5. In the context of Isaiah 57 what does this mean?

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Q6. On the contrary verses 14-19 seem to point to those who ‘find peace’. What are the characteristics of this group? Contrast these with the characteristics found in v1-13.

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Application Q4. How do we make sure we are those that stay humble and contrite?

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Q7. What does true godliness look like, according to Isaiah 58:6–14? How does this provide a similar picture to what we read in James 1:27?

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Application Q5. What might this look like today?

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**Pray** that we would always be humble and always thirst after God. Pray also that we would proclaim the gospel boldly and clearly knowing “it will not return empty”.



# Isaiah 14 – The Saviour changes everything!

Daily Devotional 66 – 71 Isaiah c59v20 – c66v24

Here enters with a suddenness the Servant of the Lord. But this time not as a suffering servant but as a conquering King.

Q1. What two things mark out the saviour in Is 59v21?

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Isaiah 60 foresees humanity uniting together in knowing the true God. God’s glory will be displayed for his people as a light shining in darkness.

Q2. What will the nations do at this time (Is 60v:3–9)?

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Q3. Read Revelation 21v22-27. Although the fulfilment of Is 60v3-9 has begun in Jesus incarnation, what does this passage in revelation suggest?

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Application Q1. How do we live in light of the truth of revelation 21v22-27? How does it affect us on a daily basis?

.....

Q4. Read Luke 4:16–21. What does Jesus’ quotation of Is 61v1–2 teach us about his identity and mission?

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Some interpreters have noted that Jesus stopped his quotation mid-sentence, leaving out, “and the day of vengeance of our God” (Is 61v2)

Q5. Does this imply there is a difference between the primary agendas of his first and second comings? If so what is the difference?

.....

Q6. As you read into Isaiah 63v1-6 read revelation 19v11-16. How does this give us a greater understanding of what Jesus will do when he returns?

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Isaiah 63v7 to 64v12 is an extended prayer. Where the people of God are calling on God and remembering all he has done. Focus in on Isaiah 64v4.

Application Q2. How do we apply this verse in our walk with God today?

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In Isaiah 65 and 66 the prayer has now ended. Isaiah ends with a vision of two contrasting eternal destinies.

The faithful remnant from every nation worshiping God in his new creation (Is 66v19–23) will be gloriously blessed. The second destiny is eternal destruction (Is 66:15–18, 24).

Q7. What is Isaiah seeking to accomplish in the readers by ending with these two divergent destinies?

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Application Q3. Read back to chapter 65v17-25. How do these verses comfort and motivate us to persevere until the end in the midst of suffering and hardship?

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Close by praying that we would catch a glimpse of the conquering saviour. That one day he will rule and reign again. Thank God together that he did not treat us as our sins deserved by showed grace.

**Pray** for those who don't yet know Jesus as their Lord and saviour.

**Well done for digging deeper into God's word. Our prayer is for you to continue be blessed as you go on seeing more and more of God.**

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