

Good evening and thank you for joining us! Tonight we kick off our study in the book of Isaiah, so would you please turn to Isaiah 1?

And just as we do whenever we kick off a new book study, we need to spend a few minutes doing an introduction and some background.

You Bible students will remember that the Old Testament is divided into four major sections.

**SHOW PIC** The first section is the law: Genesis through Deuteronomy. In the law, God gave His people principles by which they were to live according to His righteous standards. The law shows us how sinful we are.

**SHOW PIC** The second section of the old testament is Joshua, thru Esther, which deals with history. In this section, we see God working in and through His people, each providing an illustration of spiritual principles for our own growth.

**SHOW PIC** The third section is Job through Song of Solomon, which are the books of poetry. The poetry is both powerful and extremely practical.

**SHOW PIC** The final and fourth section of the Old Testament are the books of prophecy. This section is divided into two sections: the major prophets and the twelve minor prophets. The major prophets are called the major prophets not because the books

they wrote are more important, but simply because the books they wrote are longer. **CLOSE PIC**

The primary call of the prophet was not so much to foretell the future as it was to speak forth the heart and mind of the Lord. And yet there is indeed an element of foretelling in prophecy.

Isaiah 46:9 Remember the former things of old,  
For I am God, and there is no other;  
I am God, and there is none like Me,  
10 Declaring the end from the beginning,  
And from ancient times things that are not yet done,  
Saying, 'My counsel shall stand,  
And I will do all My pleasure,'

No other writings, no other holy book dares to foretell the future. Yet one-third of the Bible deals with future events. God proves who He is by speaking about things before they happen.

As is the case with most of the prophets, we don't know much about Isaiah's life because the focus was on Isaiah's message from the Lord. We do know, however, that he lived in Jerusalem, was married, and that he had at least two sons.

Jewish tradition tells us that Isaiah's father was King Uzziah's brother. We know that Isaiah frequented the court and was close to a number of kings. So its very possible that Isaiah was of royal lineage.

Jewish tradition also tells us that Isaiah was sawn in half by wicked King Manasseh. Hebrews 11 talks about those who were sawn asunder for their faith, a reference many believe is directed to Isaiah.

The Book of Isaiah has been called “the miniature Bible.”

There are sixty-six chapters in Isaiah just as there are sixty-six books in the Bible.

Chapters 1 through 39 talk about the shortcomings and sins of the people of Judah and Israel and they deal with the law and government—just as the first thirty-nine books in the Bible deal with the law, government, and the shortcomings of God’s people. But in chapter 40, suddenly a new direction is taken, for there we read **Isaiah 40:1 Comfort, yes, comfort My people!” Says your God.**

Chapters 40 through 66 constantly speak of Jesus.

Throughout the Book of Isaiah, we read of Jesus’ incarnation, of the virgin birth. We read of His ministry to Gentiles. We read of His miracles, His suffering, His resurrection, ascension, and exaltation. And we’ll read of the millennial kingdom.

Isaiah’s name reflects his message. “Isaiah” means “Jehovah is Salvation.” This book is quoted more times in the NT than any other prophet.

We're gonna study chapters 1-2, and the title of tonight's message is XXXX

Let's pray

Isaiah 1

1 The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

The combined reigns of these 4 kings began in 740 bc and lasted 60 years.

Remember, after the reign of King Solomon, the Hebrew nation became embroiled in a Civil War. The northern ten tribes seceded. They became known as "The Kingdom of Israel." Their capitol was Samaria.

The southern two tribes remained faithful to King Solomon's rightful heir, Rehoboam. "The Kingdom of Judah" maintained Jerusalem as its capitol. Isaiah ministered to the southern kingdom, before and after the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel.

And these were troublesome times. The king on the throne, Uzziah, was a good and godly man. He reigned 52 years. His obedience to God created stability and prosperity. For the next 18 years Uzziah's son, Jotham, followed in his father's footsteps.

But Jotham's successor, Ahaz, rebelled. His 19 years of idolatry set the nation of Judah on a collision course with God's judgment.

And God's means of discipline came in the form of the ferocious, and brutal Assyrian army. Isaiah lived in the shadow of this Assyrian threat.

For about 20 years, Isaiah spoke to both the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. After Israel's fall to the Assyrians in 722 B.C., Isaiah continued to prophesy to Judah.

So think about this. For 40 years Isaiah had heard the Assyrian train rumbling down the tracks - getting closer to a collision. The mission God had given him was to warn Judah and Jerusalem that unless the nation repented, they'd suffer the same plight as their sinful sister, Israel.

2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth!

For the LORD has spoken:

"I have nourished and brought up children,

And they have rebelled against Me; For over 700 years, since He brought Israel out of Egypt, God had parented his people. He was a loving, patient Father. He provided, and taught them faithfully.

Yet the Jews chose to rebel.

3 The ox knows its owner

And the donkey its master's crib;

But Israel does not know,

My people do not consider."

When you think of an ox, you don't think of an ox's brilliance. In fact, to this day we say, "He's as dumb as an ox."

And think about what a donkey is known for—it's stubbornness. And yet God says both the ox and the donkey are smarter and wiser than His people, for at least they know their master.

At this point, Judah was experiencing a time of unparalleled prosperity. And yet, as is so often the case, because times were good, apathy had crept in. Deuteronomy 6, "10 "So it shall be, when the LORD your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build, 11 houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant— when you have eaten and are full— 12 then beware, lest you forget the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage

What an important word for us. Beware when things go well because the tendency can be to be dumb as an ox, as stubborn as a mule, and to forget the blessings of God.

4 Alas, sinful nation,  
A people laden with iniquity,  
A brood of evildoers,  
Children who are corrupters!  
They have forsaken the LORD,  
They have provoked to anger  
The Holy One of Israel,

**They have turned away backward.** If you're not pursuing God you're headed backwards.

Isaiah's favorite title for God appears in verse 4, "the Holy One of Israel."

Of the 31 times this phrase appears in the Bible, it's used 26 times in Isaiah. It speaks of God's perfect purity. And in light of His holiness, it makes Israel's sin that much more deplorable.  
5-6

**5 Why should you be stricken again?**

**You will revolt more and more.**

**The whole head is sick,**

**And the whole heart faints.**

**6 From the sole of the foot even to the head,**

**There is no soundness in it,**

**But wounds and bruises and putrefying sores;**

**They have not been closed or bound up,**

**Or soothed with ointment.** Judah is still licking its wounds from their last divine spanking - yet they have persisted in their sin and rebellion. The nation won't even give itself a chance to heal.

**Hebrews 12:6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens,  
And scourges every son whom He receives**

The Lord disciplines His kids. If you're a child of God expect a spiritual spanking from time to time. But its always for our benefit, that we would learn from our mistakes.

7-9

7 Your country is desolate,  
Your cities are burned with fire;  
Strangers devour your land in your presence;  
And it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.

8 So the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard,  
As a hut in a garden of cucumbers,  
As a besieged city.

9 Unless the LORD of hosts  
Had left to us a very small remnant,  
We would have become like Sodom,  
We would have been made like Gomorrah. Ten of Israel's 12  
tribes - the northernmost tribes - had been wiped out by the  
Assyrians. Only a remnant - just two tribes remained - Judah and  
Benjamin.

And now they were surrounded by Assyrian troops. V8 says like  
"a hut in a garden of cucumbers." I suppose you could say the  
nation of Judah was in a real pickle!

10 Hear the word of the LORD,  
You rulers of Sodom;  
Give ear to the law of our God,  
You people of Gomorrah: To stress the depth of their sin and  
certainty of their judgment he refers to Judah as Sodom and  
Gomorrah.

11-14

11 "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?"



Says the LORD.

“I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams  
And the fat of fed cattle.

I do not delight in the blood of bulls,  
Or of lambs or goats.

12 “When you come to appear before Me,  
Who has required this from your hand,  
To trample My courts?

13 Bring no more futile sacrifices;  
Incense is an abomination to Me.

The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies—  
I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting.

14 Your New Moons and your appointed feasts  
My soul hates;

They are a trouble to Me,

I am weary of bearing them.” You know the church is bad when  
God no longer wants to attend the service. Religious ritual is  
worthless if a person is guilty of rebellion in their heart.

Obviously, expressions of worship are important. It’s important to  
show love in tangible ways. But God won’t be played. He hates it  
when a person goes through the motions without the devotion.

15 When you spread out your hands,  
I will hide My eyes from you;  
Even though you make many prayers,  
I will not hear.

Your hands are full of blood. What an irony, bloody hands - guilty  
hands - lifted up in worship to God. God ignores such prayers.

16-17 describes what God desires of His people:

16 "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean;  
Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes.  
Cease to do evil,  
17 Learn to do good;  
Seek justice,  
Rebuke the oppressor;<sup>[fn]</sup>  
Defend the fatherless,  
Plead for the widow. A sincere faith doesn't just cease to do evil.  
It learns to do good!  
V18 is a well known verse

18 "Come now, and let us reason together,"  
Says the LORD,  
"Though your sins are like scarlet,  
They shall be as white as snow;  
Though they are red like crimson,  
They shall be as wool.

**SHOW PIC** Nothing is as pristine as a freshly fallen snow. It blankets everything - even the dirt - with a purity! This is what happens to our past when God forgives us. His pardon sticks to us like fluffy, clean snow. Judah can avoid God's judgment and be clothed in His purity if they repent... His promise is for us too!

**CLOSE PIC**

19-20

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. Judah has a choice. It's up to them. Obedience will bring blessing. Rebellion will bring ruin.

21-22

21 How the faithful city has become a harlot!

It was full of justice;

Righteousness lodged in it,

But now murderers.

22 Your silver has become dross,

Your wine mixed with water. There was a day in the past when Jerusalem once loved God and stood for truth, but her righteousness was diluted.

Hey in today's world, compromise is common. Better to stand our ground and refuse to budge and face man's consequences than God's.

23 Your princes are rebellious,

And companions of thieves;

Everyone loves bribes,

And follows after rewards.

They do not defend the fatherless,

Nor does the cause of the widow come before them. This is what God expects from leaders. They're to keep the peace, have integrity, and to defend the weak.

Interestingly you don't typically hear political candidates value these principles.

24 Therefore the Lord says,  
The LORD of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel,” “Ah, I will rid Myself  
of My adversaries,  
And take vengeance on My enemies. God now addresses Judah,  
introducing Himself with titles showing His power and majesty. He  
is the LORD of hosts, which refers to the armies of heaven.  
25-26

25 I will turn My hand against you,  
And thoroughly purge away your dross,  
And take away all your alloy.  
26 I will restore your judges as at the first,  
And your counselors as at the beginning.  
Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful  
city.” Notice, God punishes to purify. His goal is to restore, and  
reestablish Jerusalem, but first He cleans house.

Here’s a promise for the future. This name "city of righteousness."  
looks to the day when Jesus returns to Earth to establish His  
Kingdom. He’ll rule the world from Jerusalem. Then finally,  
Jerusalem will be known for its righteousness.  
27-29

27 Zion shall be redeemed with justice,  
And her penitents with righteousness.  
28 The destruction of transgressors and of sinners shall be  
together,  
And those who forsake the LORD shall be consumed.  
29 For they shall be ashamed of the terebinth trees  
Which you have desired;

And you shall be embarrassed because of the gardens  
Which you have chosen. **SHOW PIC** You've seen folks cut their  
shrubbery in artistic shapes and designs? Believe it or not, this is  
nothing new. **CLOSE PIC** The ancient pagans worshipped fertility  
gods by growing groves and trimming the trees in the shape of  
phallic symbols. God saw this idolatry and said that Judah would  
one day be ashamed and embarrassed.

30-31

30 For you shall be as a terebinth whose leaf fades,  
And as a garden that has no water.

31 The strong shall be as tinder,  
And the work of it as a spark;

Both will burn together,

And no one shall quench them. Even though they went through  
the religious motions and ritual, they were still spiritually dry. And  
as dry trees, dry gardens, and dry tinder are ready to burn, so  
was an unrepentant Judah ready to feel the fires of God's refining  
judgment.

## Chapter 2

1 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah  
and Jerusalem. This prophecy (continuing on through Isaiah 4) is  
directed towards the southern kingdom Judah and its capital  
Jerusalem.

2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days Pause here. Latter  
days is synonymous with the term "Day of the Lord."

Today is the day of man. Rebellious men are having their say, getting their way - but the Day is coming when God will have the final say! Isaiah sees that day

2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days

That the mountain of the LORD's house

Shall be established on the top of the mountains,

And shall be exalted above the hills;

And all nations shall flow to it. "The mountain of the LORD's

house" is in the center of Jerusalem. We call it The Temple

Mount, or Mount Moriah. **SHOW PIC** When you go to Israel you

can travel to this very spot, and stand where Jesus will rule the

world. The Bible teaches that all nations will come once a year to

worship Jesus on this mountain. **CLOSE PIC**

3 Many people shall come and say,

"Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,

To the house of the God of Jacob;

He will teach us His ways,

And we shall walk in His paths."

For out of Zion shall go forth the law,

And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. During the millennium,

the citizens of earth will acknowledge and submit to the Lordship

of Jesus. It will be a time of perfectly administered righteousness

on this earth.

Verse 4 is a famous verse. It speaks of the Messiah

4 He shall judge between the nations,

And rebuke many people;

They shall beat their swords into plowshares,  
And their spears into pruning hooks;  
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
Neither shall they learn war anymore. Jesus will orchestrate what has eluded mankind since Cain killed Abel - a genuine and lasting peace. Today, Israel and Hamas are killing each other just a few miles from the mountain of the LORD's house, but one day, when Jesus returns, He will bring true peace.

**SHOW PIC** There's a stone wall at the United Nations that bears an inscription. It's the second half of Isaiah 2:4. Ironically, it was a gift from the former Soviet Union. And it's no surprise godless atheists would leave off the first half of verse 4 **CLOSE PIC**, "He shall judge the nations, and rebuke many people..."

There can be no real peace without judgment. Righteousness won't come until Jesus judges the nations, and rebukes the wicked.

5-6

5 O house of Jacob, come and let us walk  
In the light of the LORD.

6 For You have forsaken Your people, the house of Jacob,  
Because they are filled with eastern ways;  
They are soothsayers like the Philistines,  
And they are pleased with the children of foreigners. Sadly, our country has also forsaken God for a smorgasbord of "eastern ways." Rather than remain true to our Judeo-Christian heritage,

American culture has embraced eastern mysticism, and  
paganism. Biblical truth is no longer our bedrock.

7-9

7 Their land is also full of silver and gold,  
And there is no end to their treasures;  
Their land is also full of horses,  
And there is no end to their chariots.

8 Their land is also full of idols;  
They worship the work of their own hands,  
That which their own fingers have made.

9 People bow down,  
And each man humbles himself;  
Therefore do not forgive them. Their worship of foreign gods, of  
riches, and of idols was a rejection of the LORD.

10-11

10 Enter into the rock, and hide in the dust,  
From the terror of the LORD  
And the glory of His majesty.

11 The lofty looks of man shall be humbled,  
The haughtiness of men shall be bowed down,  
And the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. How will the  
earth be transformed from its current corruption to the glory of the  
Messiah's reign? It will happen by the victory of the Messiah in  
the day of the LORD of hosts.

12-19

12 For the day of the LORD of hosts  
Shall come upon everything proud and lofty,



Upon everything lifted up—

And it shall be brought low—

13 Upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up,  
And upon all the oaks of Bashan;

14 Upon all the high mountains,  
And upon all the hills that are lifted up;

15 Upon every high tower,  
And upon every fortified wall;

16 Upon all the ships of Tarshish,  
And upon all the beautiful sloops.

17 The loftiness of man shall be bowed down,  
And the haughtiness of men shall be brought low;

The LORD alone will be exalted in that day,

18 But the idols He shall utterly abolish.

19 They shall go into the holes of the rocks,

And into the caves of the earth,

From the terror of the LORD

And the glory of His majesty,

When He arises to shake the earth mightily. Revelation depicts cataclysmic terrors that will rock this Earth just prior to Jesus' return. The upheaval will be so severe, humans will hide in holes and caves from "the wrath of the Lamb." Jesus, the Lamb of God, will roar like a lion!

Apparently, Isaiah saw the same vision foreseen by John in Revelation. The inhabitants of earth will try to duck God's judgment, but they'll fail.

20 In that day a man will cast away his idols of silver

And his idols of gold,  
Which they made, each for himself to worship,  
To the moles and bats,  
21 To go into the clefts of the rocks,  
And into the crags of the rugged rocks,  
From the terror of the LORD  
And the glory of His majesty,  
When He arises to shake the earth mightily. When God shakes  
things up, mankind will run for cover, but you can't escape God.  
Either you run into God's arms of love now, or you'll run in futility  
from His wrath then.

22 Sever yourselves from such a man,  
Whose breath is in his nostrils;  
For of what account is he? It makes no sense to look to the help  
of man when God is pouring out His judgment