

# Commentary Notes - Isaiah

by Walter Beuttler

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*Walter Beuttler's sermon on Isaiah explores the prophet's life, the structure of his book, and the profound messages of salvation and judgment within it.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 6:1

**Topics:** "Prophetic Ministry", "Messiah Reign"

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## Description

Walter Beuttler preaches about the Prophet Isaiah, highlighting his significance as the 'prophet of salvation' and his sublime writing style. Isaiah, a man of strong personality, faithfully served Jehovah and fearlessly proclaimed unwelcome truths. The Book of Isaiah, unique in literary qualities, is divided into two main parts, denunciatory and consolatory, portraying the Messiah as a mighty King and a suffering Lamb. The message of the book emphasizes the holiness, justice, and salvation through faith in the Redeemer. The sermon delves into the historical interlude, judgments on nations, and the restoration of Israel, culminating in the reign of the Messiah.

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## Transcript

### A. THE PROPHET ISAIAH

1. The name Isaiah signifies "the Salvation of Jehovah" and is most appropriate since the salvation of Jehovah was the subject of his prophecies. Thus Isaiah became "the prophet of salvation"
2. He was married to a woman whom he calls "the prophetess" and who bare him at least two sons, (7:3, 8:3, 18) whose names, like his own, were divinely appointed for signs
3. Isaiah was a man of good social position in Jerusalem and was familiar with the Jewish monarchs although the traditional claim that he was of royal blood is open to considerable doubt
4. He was one of the most sublime of all the prophetic writers and excelled in poetry of high order, brilliance of imagery and versatility of expression
5. No other prophet approached Isaiah either in the horizon of his message, or in the grandeur and dignity of his manner of speech
6. Isaiah was also of strong and commanding personality, became a statesman and wielded a tremendous influence for good in national affairs

7. He was a true prophet as well as a faithful servant of Jehovah, willing to pay the price of true patriotism and unswerving fidelity to God
8. In faithfulness to both God and his nation he declared the most unwelcome truths with great earnestness and boldness during the reigns of five kings, towards whom he maintained an uncompromising attitude whenever necessary
9. Isaiah had a long ministry and is generally recognized as one of the greatest of the prophets
10. Tradition places his death in the reign of Manasseh and declares it to have been a most terrible martyrdom. Isaiah, having resisted some of Manasseh's idolatrous acts, was seized by his orders and, having been fastened between two planks, was sawn asunder

## B. THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

1. The book of Isaiah, although possessing a fragmentary character and appearing to be a compilation, is unique in literary qualities and compositeness
2. The key word of Isaiah is "salvation" and its key phrase "The Holy One of Israel"
3. Because of its subject matter the book has been called "The Gospel according to Isaiah," as it contains all the fundamental doctrines of the Bible
4. The book has the distinction of having been more frequently quoted in the New Testament than any other book except the Psalms
5. Isaiah is readily divided into two main parts between chapters thirty-nine and forty
6. The first part of the book is chiefly denunciatory and represents the Messiah as a mighty King and Ruler
7. The second part of the book is chiefly consolatory and reveals the Messiah as a suffering Lamb and a meek and lowly Redeemer
8. Isaiah has the same number of chapters as the Bible has books, divided like the two parts of the Bible
9. The first part, containing thirty-nine chapters, corresponds largely with the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament
10. The second part, containing twenty-seven chapters, corresponds largely with the twenty-seven books of the New Testament
11. Dispensationally speaking, the cross marks the dividing line between the first and second parts of the book of Isaiah
12. Of the second part chapter fifty-three is the central chapter just as the cross is the central theme of the second part of the Bible

## C. THE MESSAGE OF THE BOOK

1. The holiness, majesty, supremacy, and exclusiveness of the Divine Ruler
2. The sovereignty, righteousness, and justice of the government of God

3. The unutterable sorrow of the heart of God in his personal experience of the cross

4. Salvation by grace through faith in the Redeemer

(With due acknowledgment to Pulpit Commentary and G. Campbell Morgan -- Living Messages of the Books of the Bible)

PART ONE -- JUDGMENTS, 1 - 39

ISRAEL AND JUDAH, 1 - 12

A. JEHOVAH'S COMPLAINT, 1:1-4:6

1. How does God describe his people in 1:2-23?

(1) Filially, 1:2? As ungrateful children who rebelled against God as their benefactor

(2) Nationally, 1:3-8? As being in a state of desolation and affliction

(3) Religiously, 1:10-15? As having a mere form of godliness without a godly character

(4) Morally, 1:16-23? As being unclean, corrupt, and exceedingly degenerate

2. Note the principal truth in 1:10-17: The very worship which God ordained may become sin by the sinfulness of the worshipper

3. To which event does the prophet refer in 1:24-31: To Israel's cleansing preparatory to establishing the millennial kingdom

4. What does Isaiah predict in 2:1-4? A theocratic form of government which will be restored under Christ during the Millennium

5. What will precede the fulfillment of 2:1-4 in the light of 2:5-22? The chastisement of Israel and the judgment of the nations

6. Give the reason for God's reproach of the women, 3:16-24: Immodesty, pride, wanton manners, love of dress and ornaments

7. Who is the "Branch of the Lord," 4:2? Christ

8. What is described in chapter 4? The future kingdom under Christ

B. JEHOVAH'S VINEYARD, 5:1-30

1. Of whom does the parable in 5:1-7 speak?

(1) Of Israel as a well cultivated vineyard

(2) Of Judah as God's pleasant plant

2. Give the descriptive points of the parable from:

(1) 5:2 - The vineyard was planted with a purpose

- (2) 5:2, 4 - Everything possible was done for it
- (3) 5:4 - God's disappointment with the fruit
- (4) 5:6 - Protection is removed and rain withheld
- (5) 5:6 - It is given over to desolation

3. Point out the reason for the woes in 5:8-30: Their great ungodliness

#### C. ISAIAH'S VISION, 6:1-13

1. The timing of this vision suggests what, 6:1? That God reigns though earthly thrones are vacant

2. Show how God is revealed in 6:1:

- (1) In his majestic sovereignty
- (2) In the supremacy of this sovereignty
- (3) In the exclusiveness of his sovereignty

3. The use of the seraphim's wings in 6:2 is symbolic of what? Of humility, reverence, and service

4. In 6:3 the seraphim make three affirmations about God. Point them out:

- (1) The holiness of God
- (2) God as being the Lord of hosts
- (3) The earth's fulness of the glory of God

5. What do the effects of the seraphim's worship in 6:4 suggest?

- (1) The power of worship
- (2) The response of God to worship

6. How did the vision of God affect Isaiah, 6:5? As a man undone and of unclean lips

7. Suggest five requisites of a call from God to ministry as seen in:

- (1) 6:1-4- A revelation of God
- (2) 6:5 - A revelation of self as seen by God
- (3) 6:6-7 - Divine cleansing
- (4) 6:8 - A personal call
- (5) 6:9-13 - A divine commission

#### D. THE SYRO-EPHRAEMITIC PERIOD, 7:1-10:34

1. Point out the cause of Ahaz's fear in 7:1-2; II Kings 16:5-6: The confederacy of the kings of Syria and Israel against Judah
2. What was the design of the confederacy in 7:6? To remove Judah's line of kings established by divine covenant
3. Explain 7:9b in the light of the context: Their unbelief will only bring the fulfillment of their fears
4. What was Ahaz's reason for declining the sign offered in 7:10-12? He does not want the salvation of God and therefore finds a plausible excuse for not wanting a sign
5. Explain the Emmanuel prophecy, 7:10-16, in its:
  - (1) Local aspect - That by the time a child is born and grows up, the enemies of Judah shall be destroyed
  - (2) Prophetic aspect - The ultimate coming of Christ, the true Emmanuel
6. Note the prediction in 7:17-25: The invasion of Judah by Egypt and Assyria
7. How is the Assyrian invasion described, 8:5-10? As an overflowing flood
8. What was the ground of Isaiah's confidence, 8:11-18? The voice of the Lord, i.e., Isaiah heard from God
9. Israel's only hope is what, 9:1-7? A divine child whose coming the Lord guarantees
10. Give the reason for the continuing chastisement in 9:8-10:4: Israel's incorrigibility and refusal to turn to God
11. For what reason did judgment come upon Assyria in 10:5-19? For her pride in her accomplishment of Israel's defeat
12. How does God comfort the remnant, 10:20-27? With the prospect of Assyria's eventual overthrow at the hands of God

#### E. THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM, 11:1-12:6

1. Who is the "Branch" in 11:1? Christ
2. Give the source of Christ's qualification, 11:2: The Spirit of the Lord with which Christ was endued without measure, John 3:34
3. How does 11:3-5 relate to 11:12? It demonstrates and applies the meaning of the manifest qualifications imparted by the Spirit
4. Give a descriptive statement concerning the kingdom of Christ from:
  - (1) 11:3-5 - It is righteous in character
  - (2) 11:6-8 - It is in a state of tranquility
  - (3) 11:9 - It is universal in extent
  - (4) 11:10-16 - Christ is the ensign

(5) 12:1-6 - Christ is the object of worship

## JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS, 13-27

### A. JUDGMENT ON GENTILE NATIONS, 13:1-23:18

1. Of what is Babylon a type, 13:1-14:23? Of the confusion into which the entire social order of the world will fall during the end time

2. Who is the personage basically addressed in 14:9-17? Satan, the real ruler of this world, Eph. 2:2, the organizer of the world confusion and cause of the distress and perplexity of nations characterizing the end time with men's hearts failing them for fear, Luke 21:25-28

3. What is described in 14:12-15?

(1) The fall of Satan resulting from his attempt to exalt himself to equality with God

(2) The spirit which dominates and energizes world rulers, namely, Satan-inspired lust for power coupled with a desire for the homage of men due only to God

4. Give the significance of the fact that both Satan and Babylon are simultaneously addressed in 14:12-17: The imprint of Satan's character is on the entire world system

5. What is described in 14:7-8? The joyfulness of the nations resulting from the removal of Satan's influence upon the earth

6. What does God do in 14:24-27? God again promises deliverance from the oppression of Assyria

7. Of what is Israel warned in 14:28-32? Of further wars and oppressions because judgment is not yet completed

8. Against whom is judgment pronounced in:

(1) 15:1-16:14? Moab (7) 21:1-10 Babylon

(2) 17:1-3? Damascus (8) 21:11-12? Edom

(3) 17:4-11? Israel (9) 21:13-17? Arabia

(4) 17:12-14? Assyria (10) 22:1-25? Jerusalem

(5) 18:1-7? Ethiopia (11) 23:1-18? Tyre

(6) 19:1-20:6? Egypt

### B. JUDGMENT ON THE WHOLE EARTH, 24:1-27:13

1. What, in general, does the prophet describe in 24:1-27:13? The coming desolation of Judah, both imminent and ultimate

2. What, specifically, is described in:

(1) 24:1-20? God's end time judgments on the world at large

(2) 24:21-22? Judgment upon those who were instrumental in producing the great wickedness that brought the world

to disaster

(3) 24:23? The glorious reign of Christ during the kingdom age

(4) 25:1-26:19? Israel's song of praise for its restoration

3. To what are the people called in 26:20-21? To withdraw into God during the time of judgment

4. Point out the general content of:

(1) 27:1 - God's triple judgment upon the supernatural powers of darkness, possibly a reference to the beast, the false prophet, and Satan, Rev. 19:20, 20:1-3

(2) 27:2-6 - God's care for his vineyard manifested in the protection and establishment of his people

(3) 27:7-11 - The punishment of Judah "in measure," i.e., in forbearance and moderation, being carefully adjusted to the degree of the offence, no more, but also no less

(4) 27:12-13 - An encouraging promise of Judah's restoration appended to the gloomy prophecies

## FALL AND EMANCIPATION OF ISRAEL, 28-35

### A. JUDGMENT OF EPHRAIM, 28:1-13

1. What does the prophet do in the beginning of chapter 28? After his prophetic eye glanced over the entire world and into the far distant future, he now focuses his attention on the conditions of his own time and his own people

2. Give the general content of:

(1) 28:1-6 - The humiliation of Ephraim through the siege and fall of Samaria, II Kings 17:1-6, (vv. 1-4) coincident with God's offer of favour to Judah, (vv. 5-6)

(2) 28:7-13 - Judah's sinfulness in following the evil example of Ephraim despite God's offer

3. Point out the meaning of the following verses as bearing on Judah's truculent attitude toward the prophet's expostulations :

(1) 28:9 - Whom does he think he is teaching, mere babies that have just been weaned?

(2) 28:10 - His whole teaching is nothing but an accumulation of endless elementary precepts unsuitable for grown up men

(3) 28:11 - Because they refused to hear his word, God will now speak to the mockers in the Assyrian's incomprehensible language

(4) 28:12 - God had promised rest through obedience, but they rejected the rest by rejecting the conditions

(5) 28:13 - The Assyrian conquerors will now lay down their rules against which they will rebel to their own hurt

#### B. WARNING TO JUDAH, 28:14-31:9

1. What does the prophet do in 28:14-22? He denounces Judah's rulers for seeking to procure Judah's safety by a secret alliance with Egypt against Assyria

2. What, in effect, is God's reply in 28:16-21? Their supposed security is to become their insecurity

3. Give the general thought of the parable in 28:23-29: That the chastisement of God will be commensurate with the need and his purpose

4. Read 28:23-29 in the R.V. and in that light comment on the following portions:

(1) 28:24 - When God uses the plow of disciplinary suffering he uses discretion. Therefore he will plow only to the necessary extent

(2) 28:24 - The sharp teeth of God's harrow are not used for the sake of giving us a harrowing experience, but to break up the big clods into level ground. Therefore the painful harrowing will last only long enough for his purpose

(3) 28:25 - God is methodical in his procedure and sure of his purpose

(4) 28:26-27 - God does not use any harsher means to accomplish his purpose than is absolutely necessary

(5) 28:28 - In the harsh process God does not crush the grain, he only frees it from the chaff, (observe R.V. margin)

(6) 28:29 - God's methods, though sometimes seemingly so bewildering and frustrating, are nevertheless "of effectual working," (margin, R. V.)

5. Point out the reasons for the woe in 29:1 from:

(1) 29:13 - They paid mere lip service to the worship of Jehovah so that their outward religion in form had no corresponding inward religion of heart

(2) 29:15 - They secretly contrived to obtain the aid of Egypt and sought to conceal their plans from the prophet and God

6. Point out the reasons for the woe in 30:1 from:

(1) 30:1-7 - They rebelled against the council of the Lord by his prophet and concluded their alliance with Egypt in defiance of God's warning

(2) 30:8-11 - They told the prophets to prophecy of pleasant things and to use no longer the expression "the Holy One of Israel" which was a constant reminder of their irreligious religion

(3) 30:12 - They despised the word of the Lord by his prophets and relied on the rich gifts sent to Egypt and obtained by the oppression of the people

(4) 30:15-17 - For relying on the swiftness of Egypt's horses rather than on returning to God

7. What does God do in 30:18-26? He counter-balances the announcement of the terrible woes with renewed promises of divine forbearance and help

8. Comment on:

(1) 30:18 - The seeming delay of the announced judgments was not to be taken as an evidence that they would never arrive, but as a desire on the part of God to give time to repent and seek his face (2) 30:20-21 - God's prophets shall no longer have to hide themselves from persecution which had commenced in Judah during the reign of Joash, (II C-hron. 24:19-22), and like a shepherd keep them in the right way

9. What is announced in 30:27-33? Assyria's destruction by the "Mighty One of Israel"

10. Point out the reasons for the woe in 31:1 from:

(1) 31:1 - Their continued reliance on Egypt and stubborn refusal to seek God for help

(2) 31:3 - Because God will make sure that their supposed security will become their insecurity

11. God makes what promise to Judah in 31:4-9? That upon her return to God he will defend Jerusalem and defeat Assyria

#### C. JERUSALEM'S DELIVERANCE, 32:1-33:24

1. What is foretold in 32:1-8? The kingdom of Christ

2. For what reason are the women denounced in 32:9-12? For their selfcomplacency and indifference to what the prophet had to say

3. What is the only remedy for the nation's ills, 32:13-20? The outpouring of the Holy Spirit which alone can enable man to produce the righteousness resulting in a state of quietness and confidence

4. To whom is the woe in 33:1 addressed and why, 33:1-12? To Assyria, because God will destroy the Assyrian army, (II Kings 19:35-37), cause Sennacherib to be murdered, and deliver Jerusalem

5. Point out Hezekiah's mistaken foreign policy, II Kings 18:13-16: He followed a policy of appeasement by buying off Sennacherib, with the Lord's treasures, though unsuccessfully

6. Comment on:

(1) 33:13-14 - The might of God demonstrated in the overthrow of the Assyrians strikes terror in the hearts of the irreligious and reveals him as a consuming fire, (Heb. 12:29)

(2) 33:15 - None can endure the revelation of the holy presence of God but the godly

(3) 33:16-17 - Those who possess the qualifications are privileged to:

a. Live in the constant presence of God

b. Find in God a perpetual refuge

c. Receive all necessary sustenance

d. Behold the king in his beauty

7. What is described in 33:18-24? A tranquil Judah with Christ as king

#### D. END TIME PROPHECIES, 34:1-35:10

1. What in general is the subject matter of 34:1-17? The divine vengeance against the enemies of God as a recompense for their treatment of Zion

2. To what extent has the judgment upon Idumea, 34:5-17, been fulfilled? It is now, and has been for over one thousand years, one of the most desolate places on earth

3. What, in general, is the subject matter of 35:1-10? The flourishing state of Israel after the execution of these judgments

#### HISTORICAL INTERLUDE, 36-39

##### A. SENNACHERIB'S CHALLENGE, 36:1-37:38

1. Ascertain the approximate date of "the fourteenth year of King Zedekiah," 36:1: B.C. 713

2. Who invaded Judah in 36:1? Sennacherib, king of Assyria

3. To what does Rabshakeh make reference in:

(1) 36:6? To Judah's alliance with Egypt whom he regards as an untrustworthy broken reed

(2) 36:7? To the religious changes which Hezekiah had made in II Kings 18:4 and which Rabshakeh assumed to have provoked the displeasure of Hezekiah's God

4. What does Rabshakeh attempt to do in 36:8-22? To provoke the people's disloyalty to Hezekiah and surrender to the Assyrian army

5. What is Rabshakeh's challenge in 36:18-20? Blasphemous defiance of Jehovah

6. Comment on 37:1-38: God answers Sennacherib's challenge, Rabshakeh's blasphemy, and Hezekiah's prayer by smiting the Assyrian army and causing the murder of Sennacherib

##### B. HEZEKIAH'S ILLNESS, 38:1-39:8

1. What, in particular, distressed Hezekiah, 38:10? Not being permitted to live a normal span of life for he was only thirtynine, II Kings 18:2

2. What is apparent from 38:5-6? That Hezekiah's illness occurred prior to Sennacherib's defeat

3. Hezekiah's prayer is characterized by what, 38:1-8? By deep earnestness and fervent supplication

4. Where should 38:21-22 be chronologically placed? Between verses 6 and 7

5. Give the general content of "the writing of Hezekiah" in 38:9-20: He reviews his feelings upon the bed of affliction and glorifies God for his deliverance

6. What light does II Chron. 32:24-26 shed on 39:1-4? That pride of heart motivated Hezekiah to show all his treasures to the Babylonian ambassadors who thus were enticed to covet them

7. Comment on:

(1) 39:5-8 in the light of II Chron. 32:26 - Hezekiah's repentance deferred, but did not prevent, the ultimate loss of the treasures to Babylon

(2) 39:5-8 in the light of 38:1 - God, foreknowing Hezekiah's mistake and its results, intended to terminate his life, but instead acquiesced to his supplication notwithstanding the consequences

PART TWO - COMFORT, 40-66

COMING OF THE MESSIAH, 40:1-48:

A. MESSAGE OF COMFORT, 40:1-5

1. What relation does 40:1 have to the second part of the book? It is the key note

2. The pronouns "my" and "your" in 40:1 suggest what? That God's people, though deeply afflicted, were nevertheless not cast off and disowned

3. To what time does 40:1 look forward? To the termination of the yet future Babylonian captivity

4. Give the thought of 40:3-5: For the revelation of God in Christ, the restoration of the nation and the final establishment of Christ's kingdom, the way must first be prepared by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the

just

5. To whom does 40:3 refer in the light of Matt. 3:1-3? To John the Baptist

B. JEHOVAH'S INCOMPARABLE MIGHT, 40:6-41:29

1. How is God's incomparable might emphasized in:

(1) 40:6-8? By comparing man's temporary existence upon earth with the eternal word of God

(2) 40:12-17? By comparing the greatness of creation with the insignificance of the nations

(3) 40:18-26? By comparing his omnipotence with the impotence of idols

(4) 40:27-31? By comparing his might with the weakness of man

2. What will this incomparable might of God accomplish for Israel, 40:9-11? It will bring about the fulfillment of God's promises in the national restoration of Israel in spite of all natural circumstances to the contrary

3. Point out the conditions which underlie 40:27-31: The prophet views God's people in the Babylonian captivity discouraged and complaining that God, no longer caring for them, had no regard for their sufferings and so forsook them without any intention to do them justice

4. What is evident from 40:27? That God overheard their complaints without the people being aware of it
5. In order to encourage the exiles, to what does God direct their attention in 40:28? To his eternity, sovereignty, omnipotence, and omniscience
6. Give the essence of 40:29-31: Divine enabling to endure their providential circumstances will be granted to those who wait upon the Lord
7. Enumerate the specific results of waiting upon the Lord as seen in 40:31:
  - (1) An ability to rise with the strength of eagles' wings above the stresses and distresses of life (Eph. 2:6)
  - (2) An ability to remain in the competitive race for the prize of our high calling (Heb. 12:1-2)
  - (3) An ability to continue our Christian walk in the monotony of the mundane things of our daily life, (Eph. 5:15), namely a walk:
    - a. Before God in sanctification, Gen. 17:1
    - b. After God in obedience, II Kings 20:3
    - c. With God in fellowship, Gen. 5:22
8. What is announced in 41:1-7? The coming deliverer whom God in his incomparable might will raise up to the astonishment of the terrified nations
9. Identify "the righteous man from the east," 41:2: Cyrus the Great, King of Persia, a land lying east of Babylon. He was to become God's instrument of terminating the Babylonian captivity
10. What are the nations doing in 41:5-7? They are seeking the protection of their idol deities against Cyrus and his Medo-Persian army
11. Ascertain the historical fulfillment of 41:5-6: While the weaker nations gave themselves up as lost at the approach of Cyrus, the stronger nations, Lydia under Croesus, Babylon under Nabonidus, and Egypt under Amasis, made an alliance against Cyrus, but without success .
12. The prophet does what in 41:8-20? He turns his prophetic eye from the termination of the Babylonian captivity to its approach and promises divine aid in enduring this trying period
13. Specifically, what does God promise in:
  - (1) 41:8-9? God's unwavering faithfulness
  - (2) 41:10? Divine strength to endure
  - (3) 41:11-12? The weakening of their enemies
  - (4) 41:13-14? Divine assistance and encouragement
  - (5) 41:15-16? God-given aggressiveness and victory
  - (6) 41:17-19? Refreshing in the midst of suffering

14. Give the thought of 41:20: What God has wrought by his might will be so evident, that his hand will be unmistakably recognized and he as "the Holy One of Israel"

15. Whom does God challenge in 41:21-29? The nations with their idol gods. Jehovah and his worshippers are viewed as being on one side, the idol gods and their worshippers on the other

16. Specifically, to what are the idol gods and their worshippers challenged in:

(1) 41:22-23a? To produce fulfilled predictions

(2) 41:23b? To perform works comparable to those of God in substantiation of their claims

17. In 41:25-27 God proves his superiority to idols in two ways. How?

(1) He foretold the coming of Cyrus the Great as Israel's deliverer from the captivity

(2) He dared to announce these tidings long before their fulfillment

18. God's challenge to the idol worshippers reaches what conclusion in 41:28-29? God's challenge meets with stony silence. There is no answer. The idols can neither predict nor perform. Therefore their claim to deity is void

### C. ISRAEL'S PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION, 42:1-43:28

1. Whose coming is announced in 42:1-7? Christ, the Servant of the Lord, chosen and sustained by God

2. How is God's servant described in:

(1) 42:2? As not recommending himself by glamour, nor advertising his wares like a noisy marketeer

(2) 42:3? As having a compassionate attitude toward broken humanity

(3) 42:4? As not failing to accomplish his divinely appointed task ("He shall not burn dimly nor be bruised")

(4) 42:5-6? As having been appointed by the Almighty to become a light to those in darkness in accordance with the righteous purpose of God

(5) 42:7? As coming with a message and acts of deliverance

3. Give the general content of 42:9-17: An announcement of the coming deliverance of Israel from Babylon, and a call on the nations for a song of jubilant praise for what they are going to witness

4. To what, specifically, is reference made in:

(1) 42:9? To a new thing in the world's history, namely, the voluntary restoration of a captive people to their own land

(2) 42:16? To captive Israel, which could see no way of release from the seemingly interminable Babylonian captivity. Yet darkness was made light before them when

they were voluntarily released by the favour of Cyrus (3) 42:17? To Israel's idolatrous oppressors who will be powerless to prevent her release and the resurgence of her

national life

5. How is the Lord's perfect servant described in 42:18-21?

(1) As being blind, i.e., he shall not be wrongly influenced and deflected from the will of God by what he sees, e.g., he shall not "judge after the sight of his eyes," Isa. 11:3

(2) As being deaf, i.e., he shall not be wrongly influenced and deflected from the will of God by what he hears, e.g., he shall not "reprove after the hearing of his ears," Isa. 11:3

6. Of what is Israel reminded in 42:22-25? That they have deserved their afflictions and have therefore no just reason for complaint

7. Give the general content of 43:1-7: Renewed promise to Israel of preservation and deliverance

8. What, in particular, is promised in 43:2? The divine presence and preservation in the deep waters of trouble and the burning fire of testing

9. Point out the general content of:

(1) 43:18 - God again challenges the gods of the nations to predict and perform as he does

(2) 43:14-21 - Having made the challenge to the heathen gods without response, God is now citing two events which he is about to accomplish as proof of his deity, namely:

a. The conquest of 'unconquerable' Babylon, (vv. 14-15)

b. The release of Israel from the Babylonian captivity and restoration to her own land

(3) 43:22-28 - The reproach of captive Israel for her sins of omission and commission

D. REDEMPTION OF ISRAEL FROM BABYLON, 44:6-48:22

1. To what does the prophet refer in 44:1-5? To the spiritual regeneration of Israel when God will pour out his Spirit upon her in response to her confessed need

2. Comment on 44:5: Instead of the non-Jews looking scornfully on in mockery, many shall come to partake in the honor of being a Jew and pronounce themselves to be worshippers of Jehovah

3. What is God doing in 44:6-20? He contrasts himself with the impotence and futility of idols because Israel, with her hereditary propensity to idolatry, would be exposed to and easily tempted by the idolatry in Babylon during her long captivity

4. To what does 44:21-28 look forward? To Israel's deliverance from Babylon and the rebuilding of Jerusalem with its temple through the instrumentality of Cyrus in accordance with the word of the prophets and in spite of the false sayings of the soothsayers

5. What is unique about the reference to Cyrus in 44:28? That this mention of his name occurred more than a century before his birth

6. What is described in 45:1-8? The capture of Babylon by Cyrus the Great

7. Note the three reasons for God's favour to this heathen king, 45:3-8:

- (1) That he might acknowledge the true God
- (2) To perform God's pleasure toward Judah
- (3) That the nations might know He is God

8. What does God do in 45:9-13? He warns Israel not to call in question God's mode of action and choice of instrument by using a heathen king as their deliverer

9. Note the reading of 45:11 in the R.S.V.: . . . Will you question me about my children, or command me concerning the work of my hands ?"

10. What does God tell them in effect, 45:11, R.S.V.? That since He is God he can do as he pleases

11. Give the general content of 45:14-25: The conversion of the Gentile nations will follow the restoration and salvation of Israel

12. To what great event is reference made in 46:1-2? To the severe blow dealt to idolatry in general, and to the Babylonian form of it in particular, when the victorious Persians under Cyrus substituted their own non-idolatrous religion and carried the Babylonian idols themselves into captivity

13. Note an interesting contrast in 46:3-8: The people have to carry their idol gods, but God carries his people

14. To what purpose does God make this contrast with idols in 46:3-8? To impress Israel to learn from the fate of the Babylonian idols and put their confidence in God

15. What does God do in 46:9-13? He seeks to prevent Israel from falling into idolatry by:

- (1) Recollecting God's mercies in the past, (v. 9)
- (2) Considering his power to predict events, (v. 10)
- (3) Renewed promise of deliverance by Cyrus, (v. 11)

16. Give the general subject matter of 47:1-15: The sudden and unavoidable fall of Babylon

17. What reasons are given for Babylon's overthrow in:

- (1) 47:6? Her cruel treatment of the Jewish captives
- (2) 47:7-8? Her pride and wantonness
- (3) 47:9, 13? Her addiction to various forms of magic, sorceries, and prognostications

18. Give the salient points of the three sections of chapter 48, namely:

- (1) 48:1-11 - God complains because Israel had not called upon him in truth and righteousness
- (2) 48:12-15 - God exhorts Israel to acknowledge the superiority of Jehovah to idol deities in view of his eternity and omnipotence as demonstrated in the predicted coming of Cyrus and their deliverance from

## Babylon

(3) 48:16-22 - God reminds Israel of his leading in the past and assures them of his leading in the future

19. Comment on:

(1) 48:10-11 - God cured Israel of idolatry once and for all in the furnace of affliction during the Babylonian captivity

(2) 48:18, 22 - The peace for which they long is not contingent on their deliverance from Babylon, but upon obedience and righteousness

## REJECTION OF THE MESSIAH, 49-57

### A. MISSION OF THE LORD'S SERVANT, 49:1-53:12

1. Point out the general content of 49:1-12: God's attestation of Christ, the Servant of Jehovah, and his mission

2. What do we learn concerning Christ in:

(1) 49:1? He was called and named from the womb, (Matt. 1:20-23)

(2) 49:2? He was equipped and preserved by God

(3) 49:3? He was appointed to be God's servant

(4) 49:4-5? He was recompensed by God notwithstanding his seeming failure

(5) 49:6-9? He was not only to restore Israel, but also to be a light and a deliverer to the Gentiles in darkness and bondage of sin

3. Give the thought of 49:10-12: The believing remnant of Israel will come from the remotest parts of the earth under the sovereign care of Jehovah and despite all obstacles

4. What does God do in 49:13-26? He comforts Israel and assures them that she has not been forgotten and that God will yet judge her oppressors in a manner that will cause the nations to acknowledge Israel's God

5. For what are the exiles in Babylon rebuked, 50:1-3: For regarding themselves permanently rejected without adequate cause, when in actuality they had rejected God

6. What, concerning Christ, do we learn from 50:4? The secret of his ministry, namely that he was taught by God "morning by morning," (John 8:28):

(1) How to speak ("how to speak")

(2) What to speak ("a word")

(3) When to speak ("in season")

(4) To whom to speak ("to him that is weary")

7. Note the literal rendering in 50:4: "That I shall know how to sustain with a word him that is weary"
8. What, concerning Christ, is shown in:
- (1) 50:5-6? His obedience to the call of the cross
  - (2) 50:7-9? His determined surrender to the will of God and confident reliance on his help
9. Who is addressed in:
- (1) 50:10? The godly in darkness who are exhorted to trust in the character of God
  - (2) 50:11? The ungodly who stir up trouble and who will be hurt by the very trouble they stir up
10. What does God do in 51:1-23? He comforts his captive people with the certain prospect of speedy deliverance and the punishment of the oppressor
11. To what is Zion exhorted in 52:1-6? To arise from captivity in joyful anticipation of finding herself free when she does arise
12. What is the subject matter of 52:7-12? The day of deliverance from the Babylonian captivity and the return of the vessels to Jerusalem with the messengers running ahead to announce the glad tidings of the exiles' approach
13. How is Christ, the Lord's servant, revealed in:
- (1) 52:13? In his high exaltation
  - (2) 52:14? In his deep humiliation
  - (3) 52:15? In the far reaching effects of his work
14. Of whom does 53:1-2 speak? Of Christ in his vicarious sacrifice
15. The prophet is aware of what in 53:1? That his message will largely fall on unbelieving ears
16. Comment on:
- (1) 53:2 - He shall grow up under the fostering care of Jehovah like a fresh sprout from the stump of a felled tree and as a root that draws nourishment from a hidden source
  - (2) 53:3 - "He was despised, and forsaken of men, A man of pains, and acquainted with disease," (Hebrew), and "one from whom men held themselves aloof"
  - (3) 53:4 - "Surely our diseases he did bear, and our pains he carried," (Hebrew). Those who saw Christ suffer imagined that he was made to suffer by God for his own sins
  - (4) 53:5 - He suffered the chastisement which brought us peace by putting an end to the enmity between sinful man and an outraged God
  - (5) 53:6 - "The Lord hath made to light on him," (Hebrew), our iniquities, i.e., he "made him to be sin for us who knew no sin," II Cor. 5:21

- (6) 53:7 - He remained silent when he could have vindicated himself and that under extreme provocation
- (7) 53:8 - He was taken away "by a violence which cloaked itself under the formalities of a legal process"
- (8) 53:9 - They assigned him his grave with the thieves that were crucified with him, yet he was buried "with a rich one after his death," (due to the intervention of Joseph of Arimathaea, Matt. 27:57-60)
- (9) 53:10 - "Yet it pleased the Lord to crush him by disease," (Hebrew), in that God saw with satisfaction the selfsacrifice of his son and his accomplishment of redemption
- (10) 53:11 - Because of the travail of his soul he shall see the happy results of his sufferings, namely, the formation of the Church as his satisfying reward (11) 53:12 - "I will place him among the great conquering ones of the earth" and like the great of the earth he too receives his spoil as a reward for his vicarious sufferings

## B. PROMISES AND EXHORTATIONS TO ISRAEL, 54:1-59:21

1. In general, with what does 54:1-17 deal? With the restoration of Israel as the wife of Jehovah in her beauty and security

2. Comment on:

- (1) 54:10 - Israel is assured of God's unchangeable faithfulness
- (2) 54:11-13 - Beauty is to follow affliction, and peace is to follow tempest
- (3) 54:13 - The prophet sees the day when men shall be taught of God. John 6:45
- (4) 54:14 - Israel shall enjoy national stability when she practices national righteousness
- (5) 54:15-17 - All the circumstances of God's people are under the control of divine providence to work out HIS purpose, not the purpose of those who afflict them

3. What does the prophet do in 55:1-7? He passes from the glorious future of the previous chapter to the unsatisfactory present by exhorting those with a desire for God to respond to God for spiritual and eternal values which transcend human

means of payment

4. Comment on 55:1-7: The affections of the great mass of Israelites were set on worldly things, such as adding house to house and field to field, (5:8), things which do not really satisfy, for worldly things can never satisfy the heart, not even the heart of the worldly

5. Point out the general content of 55:8-13: A renewed assurance of deliverance from Babylon because the promise of their deliverance seemed so impossible of fulfillment

6. To what are the people exhorted in 56:1-8? To observe the law, especially the law of the sabbath, notwithstanding the fact that they were in captivity

7. To what does "my salvation" in 56:1 refer: To the deliverance from the Babylonian captivity

8. Point out the general content of 56:9-12: Rebuke of the leaders of Israel for their greediness, neglect of duty, and love of revelry

9. Give the general content of:

(1) 57:1-14 - Severe rebuke of Israel for her manifold idolatrous practices

(2) 57:15-21 - God's promise of divine help to the humble and penitent to the exclusion of the wicked

10. Of what does God complain in:

(1) 57:1? The general apathy toward the fate of the righteous

(2) 57:4? The mockery of the righteous by sinners who were more appropriate objects of scorn

11. Comment on:

(1) 57:15 - God seeks to impress his people by his exalted majesty and holiness, yet condescending to make his abode with a humble spirit and a contrite ("bruised")

heart

(2) 57:21 - All of God's promises are of no avail apart from forsaking evil ways and practicing acts of righteousness

### C. INSTRUCTIONS AND WARNINGS, 58:1-59:21

1. To what does God call his people in 58:1-14? To true godliness by showing the difference between real religion and the mere pretence of it

2. Give the thought of:

(1) 58:1-2 - The people's transgression consisted of making religion a mere matter of outward observance without devotion of heart

(2) 58:3 - They complain that God ignores their fasting in which they engage without benefit

(3) 58:3-7 - God replies that the mere formality of a fast without obedience to other provisions of the law does not in itself make them acceptable before God (4) 58:8 - When obedience to the other provisions of the law become the rule of conduct, then there will be recovery from the low estate to which their disobedience had brought them

(5) 58:9 - God's response to their prayers will be assured when they respond to his requirement of righteousness

(6) 58:10-12 - If their hearts will go out in compassion to their needy fellow-men, then the Lord's compassion will go out to them in continual guidance and material sustenance

(7) 58:13-14 - True delight in God is not a mere emotional attitude toward God, but a practical dedication to God in our daily mode of living

3. What, in particular, displeased the Lord in 59:14-15? The wide-spread inequity which existed in that the innocent were condemned, the guilty acquitted and the righteous persecuted

4. Explain 59:16:

(1) God looked in vain for some champion of the oppressed to arise, but found none to resist the unrighteous and protect the innocent

(2) Therefore God is obliged to intervene himself in order to bring deliverance and establish righteousness

5. Comment on:

(1) 59:19 - In the time when God's people are up against overwhelming odds because of the onslaught of the enemy, the Spirit of the Lord will come to their assistance by raising an "armed defence" against him

(2) 59:20 - Repentant Israel shall be saved by the coming of Messiah

REIGN OF THE MESSIAH, 60-66

A. RESTORATION OF ISRAEL, 60:1-66:24

1. Give the subject matter of 60:1-22: The glories of the restored Zion

2. Specifically, what is described in:

(1) 60:1-4? The glory of the Lord upon Zion

(2) 60:5-9? Zion's wealth and influence

(3) 60:10-14? Zion's reconstruction and position

(4) 60:15-18? Zion's honor and prosperity

(5) 60:19-22? Zion's crowning glories

3. What does 61:1-62:12 contain? A soliloquy of Christ the Servant of the Lord

4. What is described in:

(1) 61:1-3? The two-fold mission of the Servant of the Lord, namely:

a. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, i.e., the opening of the day of grace at his first advent

b. To proclaim the day of vengeance of God, i.e., the judgment of the nations at his second advent

(2) 61:4-9? The restoration of Israel's cities and compensation for her sufferings

(3) 61:10-11? Israel's worshipful rejoicing in righteousness

(4) 62:1-12? The Servant's persistence in accomplishing Jehovah's gracious purpose toward Zion to a place of preeminence among the nations and to the delight of the Lord

5. What is described in 63:1-6? The day of the Lord's vengeance upon his enemies

6. Give the general subject matter of 63:7-64:12: A supplication unto God by the Babylonian exiles

7. What are the exiles doing in:

(1) 63:7-14? They praise God for his loving kindness with thanksgiving and confession of their many failings

(2) 63:15-19? They pray for deliverance from sin and suffering

(3) 64:1-5? Not content with praying for God's favour, they also ask for a manifestation of the divine Presence

8. Comment on the reference to the Holy Spirit in:

(1) 63:10 - This reveals the emotional nature of the Holy Spirit in that he can be "grieved," or "provoked" by the sins of God's people

(2) 63:11-14 - This reveals the personality of the Holy Spirit as by him the people were led from the time they came out of Egypt, Hag. 2:4-5, until they came into the land of their rest

9. Observe the literal meaning of 64:4: "Who worketh for him that waiteth for him"

10. In 64:5 God is said to meet whom:

(1) Those to whom righteousness means so much that they practice righteousness with rejoicing

(2) Those who are mindful of God's ways and show their respect by walking in them

11. Point out the complaint in 64:6-7: That notwithstanding the sinful state of the people, all continue in indifference and lethargy with none to stir himself up enough to lay hold of God in intercession

12. In what state do we see the exiles in 64:8-12? In a state of humility and contriteness, confessing their plight and supplicating God for a mitigation of their sufferings

13. Point out the general subject matter of 65:1-66:24: God's answer to the Babylonian exiles

14. Give the content of:

(1) 65:1-7 - God expostulates with the exiles for having ignored him by continuing in practices offensive to God for which reason their sufferings will not be mitigated

(2) 65:8-10 - God promises to preserve a remnant, however, of those that sought him

(3) 65:11-16 - But God will not spare those who refused to heed him and who made their choices without regards to the pleasure of God

(4) 65:17 - God's final answer to a sinful world is the dissolution of the present earth and the creation of a new one

(5) 65:18-25 - The conditions of the kingdom age characterized by joyfulness and longevity free from violence

15. Comment on 65:1: God might give to others the opportunities which we reject
  16. Note God's reply to the exiles in 66:1-4: God rebukes the ungodly exiles about to return from captivity for intending to rebuild the temple and restore its worship without any intention on their part to turn from their sinful ways
  17. Explain 66:2 - Even though God has made all things and all men, he will not regard all men equally, but favour those who are of a poor, ("humble") and contrite spirit and who have a high regard for his word
  18. Of what does God complain in 66:3-4? Of making religious sacrifices with an irreligious heart and without heeding God's requirements
  19. What does God do in 66:5-14? He addresses the godly exiles who revere his word and encourages them to rejoice in their approaching peace and comfort in a restored Jerusalem
  20. Give the thought of:
    - (1) 66:7-8 - A whole nation will be birthed at once with the return of the exiles in great numbers, a strange event without precedence
    - (2) 66:9 - "Should I arrange all the necessary circumstances for this event and then not complete it?" God assures the doubting exiles that he who has commenced this process will also consummate it
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