

# **Read the Bible in a Year**

Week 37 – February 13<sup>th</sup> – February 19<sup>th</sup>

**Read on Your Own this Week:**

*Psalms 109-111*

*Matthew 25-28*

**Readings in Class:**

Isaiah 13-27

## **Introduction to Isaiah**

If there is a prophet that could be singled out as “The Prophet,” Isaiah is someone who fits the bill. It is through Isaiah that we have some of the clearest language about Jesus in the entire Old Testament. Isaiah is writing in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. He is active from about 740 BC when he was called in the year King Uzziah died to around 681 BC when he records the death of an Assyrian General Sennacherib in 681 BC. Covering almost 60 years, Isaiah’s work is also a literary masterpiece that covers three main sections: Chapters 1-39, 40-55, and 56-66.

Isaiah speaks to the Southern Kingdom of Judah as the Northern Kingdom of Israel is taken into exile in 721 BC. Chapters 1-39 describe the coming judgment upon the nations and the people of Judah with also a promise of deliverance following the pending judgment. 40-55 are perhaps some of the most Christological sections in the book as God describes a servant who will suffer and die on behalf of his people and bring them back from exile. 56-66 detail the final coming of God’s Kingdom and the final judgment into salvation or wrath that await the coming of the reign of God.

## **A Brief Summary of Isaiah**

1. Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem 1-12
  - a. The Nations flow to Zion 2:1-5
  - b. The Song of the Vineyard 5:1-7
  - c. Isaiah’s Call 6:1-13
  - d. Immanuel 7:1-25
2. Oracles on the Nations 13-23
  - a. Babylon 13:1-14:23
  - b. Philistia 14:28-32
  - c. Moab 15:1-16:14
  - d. Syria and Northern Kingdom 17:1-14
  - e. Egypt 18:1-19:25
  - f. Tyre and Sidon 23:1-18
3. Cosmic Judgment 24-27
  - a. God’s Banquet 25:6-8
4. Samaria and Jerusalem 28-33
5. Judgement and Salvation 34-35
  - a. The Highway of Salvation 35:1-10
6. Historical Epilogue & Example 36-39

7. The Suffering Servant 40-55
  - a. Comfort, Comfort my People! 40:1-31
  - b. Cyrus will lead Israel out of Exile 44:24-48:19
  - c. By His Stripes we are Healed 52:13-54:17
8. Final Judgement and Reign of God 56-66
  - a. God fights alone for Salvation 63:1-6

## **How to Read the Prophets**

The Prophets are men who come to speak on Behalf of God. The Prophets will often seek to do a few major things.

First, they will act as covenant lawyers. They will show how the People of God have broken faith with God and breached the covenant. They will point out the consequences for falling away from the living God and point people back, mostly unsuccessfully, to repentance and grace.

Second, they will declare the verdict of Judgment that speaks to the current situation for Israel, but they will use language and themes that depict the final judgment and action of God on the last day. Creatively, they will weave the story of the People of Israel into a global narrative that tells the story of God with his creation. And through the broken and shattered relation that Israel has with God, God is able to recreate and renew. This will play out not just for Israel but also for all the world.

## **Jesus in Isaiah**

No other prophet covers the life of Jesus so clear and vividly as Isaiah does. He is the most quoted Prophet in the New Testament when referencing the life of Jesus in the Prophets.

The Two best examples that we have concerning Isaiah discussing the coming work and person of Jesus are in Chapter 7 when Isaiah asks King Ahaz to ask God for a sign that will give confidence that God will rescue the people from the upcoming military strike from Assyria that just took out the Northern Kingdom. When Ahaz fakes piety to not take God up on giving Him a sign, Isaiah then proclaims that God will give a sign. God's sign is that a virgin will conceive and bear a son and His name will be called Immanuel.

The Second and most well known passage is the Suffering Servant Passage in Isaiah 53. Throughout Chapters 40-55 we are told about a Servant who will do God's bidding. Then in Chapter 53, the climax of the Suffering Servant who will suffer and die for the sins of the people. He will be stricken, smitten, and afflicted. By his stripes we will be healed and like a lamb who is led to her shearers is silent, so too will he not open his mouth. This Suffering Servant is clearly seen as Jesus Christ, who will go through on the cross what Isaiah 53 describes. Acts 8 will make this point explicit when Philip will tell the Ethiopian Eunuch that the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 53 is Jesus.