

## THE EPIC OF EDEN: ISAIAH

# Session 1—First Things

- How many chapters are in the book of Isaiah? \_\_\_\_\_
- Why is Isaiah identified as the greatest of the major prophets?
  - Because of his statements about the \_\_\_\_\_
  - Isaiah is quoted more than \_\_\_\_\_ times in the New Testament
  - Isaiah is known as the \_\_\_\_\_ gospel
- What barriers do we encounter when studying the book of Isaiah?
  - What is a \_\_\_\_\_?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ is Isaiah talking to and \_\_\_\_\_?
  - How do I go about \_\_\_\_\_ prophecy?

### Prophet Talk in Biblical Studies

- Former vs. Latter Prophets
  - Former prophets include: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Latter prophets include: \_\_\_\_\_
- Major vs. Minor Prophets
  - Major prophets include: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Minor prophets include: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Difference? \_\_\_\_\_
- Office vs. Gift
  - Isaiah held the \_\_\_\_\_ of the prophet, not just the \_\_\_\_\_

### The Hermeneutics of Prophecy (*Hermeneutics = the science of interpreting Scripture*)

- Prophetic books are not \_\_\_\_\_
- Prophetic books are \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ and are organized around \_\_\_\_\_
- The oracles are extremely \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ is king!
- What is our task? To \_\_\_\_\_ the other \_\_\_\_\_ of the conversation

## The Structure of the Book of Isaiah

Isaiah chapters _____ - _____	Isaiah chapters _____ - _____
_____ Things . . . Israel's _____ and impending _____ A description of Israel as she _____	_____ Things . . . Israel's _____ of _____ after judgment A description of Israel as she _____

## Three Different Audiences & Three Different Theological Movements

Isaiah's _____	Chapters _____ - _____	742-700 BCE	Yahweh's covenant _____ against (and the nations)
The _____	Chapters _____ - _____	605-539 BCE	Yahweh's _____ of Israel (and _____ of the nations)
The _____	Chapters _____ - _____	539-400 BCE	Yahweh's _____ _____ for Israel . . . and the _____!

**Isaiah 42:9** *“Behold, the former things have come to pass, now I declare new things; before they spring forth I proclaim them to you.”*

Questions, comments, aha moments:

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# Session 2—The Office of the Prophet

### The Office of the Prophet

#### ■ Office vs. Gift

- Gift: A temporary \_\_\_\_\_ resulting in an \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (see Numbers 11:16–17, 24–25; 1 Samuel 10:10–11)
- Office: A \_\_\_\_\_ office in Israel’s government (see Deuteronomy 13; 18)

#### ■ What is a theocracy?

- *theos + kratos* = “the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_”
- Three human officers: \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_
- In Israel’s government it was the \_\_\_\_\_ who was the most powerful figure. Why? He \_\_\_\_\_ for God
- Legislation that defines the office of the prophet
  - Deuteronomy 13:1–5  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - Deuteronomy 18:9–12  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Divine Intermediaries

- An omen is anything that is \_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_ the future
  - Casual: Reading \_\_\_\_\_ in a mystical light
  - Contrived: Actively solicited \_\_\_\_\_
    - Extispicy: reading the \_\_\_\_\_ of a slaughtered animal

■ Deuteronomy 18:15

- ▶ “Yahweh your God will raise up for you a prophet like me [Moses] from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him.”
- ▶ In God’s kingdom it is “The \_\_\_\_\_ of God for the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. \_\_\_\_\_ to God”

## The Messenger of the Divine Council

■ The concept of the royal court in heaven

- The prophet was understood as a human who was caught up into the actual \_\_\_\_\_ of the Almighty
- Standard prophet-talk:
  - ▶ “ \_\_\_\_\_ ”
  - ▶ “ \_\_\_\_\_ ”
- The prophet is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Great King. He speaks \_\_\_\_\_ the word that he has heard
- Isaiah 6:1–9
  - ▶ What is happening to Isaiah? \_\_\_\_\_
  - ▶ What is the authority that he has? \_\_\_\_\_

## The Prophetic (or Covenant) Lawsuit (*rib*)

- Yahweh is \_\_\_\_\_ his people. On what grounds? \_\_\_\_\_
- Language of the \_\_\_\_\_
- The prophet becomes Yahweh’s \_\_\_\_\_ who comes with \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_
- Standard format of a Prophetic Lawsuit
  - See pages 28–29 in the study guide
- Isaiah chapter 1 \_\_\_\_\_ the message of the book  
**Isaiah 6:8** *Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I. Send me!”*

Questions, comments, aha moments:

## THE EPIC OF EDEN: ISAIAH

# Session 3—The Life and Times of Isaiah the Prophet: Part I, The Divided Monarchy

### The Divided Kingdom (Monarchy) 931-586 BCE

■ How did the United Kingdom of Israel become divided? \_\_\_\_\_ war in 931 BCE resulted in parallel kingdoms

● Northern Kingdom = \_\_\_\_\_

● Southern Kingdom = \_\_\_\_\_

In the south . . .

▶ the sons of \_\_\_\_\_ rule,

▶ the \_\_\_\_\_ is located,

▶ the \_\_\_\_\_ is serving

### Three Events that Shape Isaiah's Life

● Syro-Ephraimite Wars (734-732 BCE) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

● Collapse of the Northern Kingdom (722 BCE) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

● Sennacherib's Campaign (701 BCE) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Isaiah's Kings

● Uzziah \_\_\_\_\_

● Jotham \_\_\_\_\_

● Ahaz \_\_\_\_\_

- Hezekiah \_\_\_\_\_
- Manasseh \_\_\_\_\_

## Jeroboam's Cult (1 Kings 12:25-30)

### ■ Jeroboam I, first king of the Northern Kingdom

- Yahweh approved a \_\_\_\_\_ split of the kingdom, but did not approve a \_\_\_\_\_ split (see 1 Kings 11:26-12:24)
- In his insecurity, Jeroboam made \_\_\_\_\_ and set them up in \_\_\_\_\_ (the northern border of Israel) and \_\_\_\_\_ (the southern border of Israel)

### ■ The Golden Calf and Baal

- Represents the deity of \_\_\_\_\_
- Images of Baal portrayed according to his \_\_\_\_\_
  - Arm raised holding a lightning bolt = god of the \_\_\_\_\_
  - Mountains under his feet = god of the \_\_\_\_\_
  - Stalk of wheat = god of \_\_\_\_\_

### ■ Baal's companion, Asherah

- \_\_\_\_\_ goddess of the ancient world
- Pillar figurines of Asherah found in \_\_\_\_\_, always in a \_\_\_\_\_ context, not in temples

### ■ Syncretism

- Jeroboam blended the worship of Yahweh with the worship of Baal
- The reason the Northern Kingdom is cursed? \_\_\_\_\_

## Back to Isaiah

- Isaiah is preaching from \_\_\_\_\_
- His audience? \_\_\_\_\_
- He is aware of the \_\_\_\_\_ that has occurred
- He is speaking to his audience about their \_\_\_\_\_

**Hosea 8:5-6** "He has rejected your calf, O Samaria, saying, 'My anger burns against them!' How long will they be incapable of innocence? For from Israel is even this! A craftsman made it, so it is not God; Surely the calf of Samaria will be broken to pieces."

Questions, comments, aha moments:

## THE EPIC OF EDEN: ISAIAH

# Session 4—The Life and Times of Isaiah the Prophet: Part II, The Assyrian Empire

### The Assyrian Empire 745–612 BCE

#### ■ Who are the Assyrians?

- An empire that “instituted a level of \_\_\_\_\_ that disallowed \_\_\_\_\_”
- Rose in 745 BCE under Tiglath Pileser III
- Believed the best way to conquer the world was to:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ their opponents,
  - create a level of \_\_\_\_\_ that left their opponents unable to rebel in the future, and
  - take whole populations and \_\_\_\_\_ them to the far reaches of the empire

### The Assyrians in Israel’s Experience

- We cannot \_\_\_\_\_ Isaiah’s world without interacting with these three military events:
  - Syro-Ephraimite Wars (734–732 BCE) (Assyrian king Tiglath Pileser III)
  - Collapse of the Northern Kingdom (722 BCE) (Assyrian king Shalmaneser III)
  - Sennacherib’s Campaign (701 BCE) (Sennacherib)

### The Assyrians in Real Space

- The Assyrians live in the \_\_\_\_\_ valley
- They understood the \_\_\_\_\_ River to be their natural boundary
- Tiglath Pileser III’s goal in leading military campaigns beyond the natural boundary of the Euphrates River was to control the \_\_\_\_\_. In order to do that he needed to control the \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Ahaz the Faithless King and the Syro-Ephraimite War (Isaiah 7-12)

### ■ Isaiah 7:1-2

- Major players:
  - Pekah—king of \_\_\_\_\_
  - Rezin—king of \_\_\_\_\_
  - Ahaz—king of \_\_\_\_\_
  - Tabel—potential \_\_\_\_\_
- Why is the north attacking the south? They want to take \_\_\_\_\_ off the throne and place \_\_\_\_\_ on it

### ■ Isaiah 7:3-16

- More characters
  - Isaiah
  - Ahaz
  - Immanuel
- Assyrians on the move
  - Israel (the Northern Kingdom) and Aram-Damascus want to \_\_\_\_\_ the Assyrians
  - Israel (the Northern Kingdom) and Aram-Damascus want \_\_\_\_\_ to join them against the Assyrians
  - Ahaz says \_\_\_\_\_ so Israel (the Northern Kingdom) and Aram-Damascus march on \_\_\_\_\_
- What should Ahaz do?
  - He should call upon the \_\_\_\_\_
  - Instead he comes up with his \_\_\_\_\_ plan
- Isaiah tells Ahaz to ask for a \_\_\_\_\_
  - The sign is the child named \_\_\_\_\_
  - The message is not about the \_\_\_\_\_
  - The message is about the message the boy's \_\_\_\_\_ is bringing and the boy's \_\_\_\_\_
- Ahaz \_\_\_\_\_ the word of the prophet
- Ahaz's plan: he \_\_\_\_\_ gave the kingdom of God away to the Assyrians

■ Immanuel

- im (with) + nu (us) + el (God) = “God is with us”

■ The “virgin”

- Hebrew word is *almah* which may be mean:

- A young woman of \_\_\_\_\_ age
- A young woman until the \_\_\_\_\_ of her first child

- Greek translations

- Septuagint = *parthenos* = virgin
- Later Greek translations = *neanis* = young woman

- Matthew 1:18

- If the people would \_\_\_\_\_ God’s plan, God would \_\_\_\_\_ them, but if they were more \_\_\_\_\_ of Rome than their God, then God \_\_\_\_\_ save them

- The point: if Ahaz will trust in his true sovereign he will be \_\_\_\_\_ in ten to twelve years. If he follows his own plan God \_\_\_\_\_ him

## Isaiah 9:2-7 The Child

- God is sending a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

**Isaiah 7:9** *“If you will not believe, you will not stand at all.” (Richter’s translation)*

Questions, comments, aha moments:

## THE EPIC OF EDEN: ISAIAH

# Session 5—Hezekiah and the “Poster Child” of Biblical Archaeology

Hezekiah: an [\_\_\_\_\_] faithful king

- Real Time (see timeline): Sennacherib’s campaign in 701 BCE

### Hezekiah vs. Sennacherib (Isaiah 36–39)

- The “Poster Child” of Biblical Archaeology

- The perfect picture of the blending of the \_\_\_\_\_ discipline with the \_\_\_\_\_ discipline
- Three biblical accounts
  - 2 Kings 18–19: the \_\_\_\_\_-exilic national history of Israel
  - Isaiah 36–38: the \_\_\_\_\_ account
  - 2 Chronicles 32: the \_\_\_\_\_-exilic account
- A treasure trove of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ evidence

- In Assyria

- 705 BCE: King Sargon II dies and Sennacherib inherits the throne
- Region-wide \_\_\_\_\_ against Assyria
- Sennacherib begins his campaign against the \_\_\_\_\_

- In Judah

- Hezekiah rebels and makes preparations for \_\_\_\_\_, specifically siege (2 Chronicles 32:1–8; 2 Kings 18:2–7)

Preparations	Archaeological Evidence
Secure his _____ source	The Siloam Tunnel/Hezekiah's Tunnel The Siloam Tunnel Inscription
Refortify his _____ city	The Broad Wall in Jerusalem
Refortify _____	Excavations prove Assyrian destruction Sennacherib's marble panels depict the battle at Lachish
Stockpile _____	"Iemelek jars" _____ to the king

■ Sennacherib comes from Lachish to Jerusalem, and mocks Hezekiah for his \_\_\_\_\_ in Yahweh (Isaiah 36:1–7; 2 Kings 18:7–20, 29–30)

■ Hezekiah \_\_\_\_\_ God and his prophet (Isaiah 37:6–7)

■ Yahweh \_\_\_\_\_ victory (Isaiah 37:28–35)

- Sennacherib's account of his campaign on the Taylor Prism

- Names \_\_\_\_\_

- Does not claim \_\_\_\_\_ over Jerusalem

*"As for \_\_\_\_\_, the Judean, I besieged forty-six of his fortified cities and surrounding smaller towns, which were without number . . . He himself I locked up within \_\_\_\_\_ his royal city, like a bird in a cage . . . He, Hezekiah was overwhelmed by the awesome splendor of my lordship . . ."*

## Judah's Perspective

■ They have been \_\_\_\_\_ from the superpower of the ancient Near East

■ This is the story of a king who \_\_\_\_\_ to believe and as a result received the \_\_\_\_\_ of his God

**Isaiah 37:20** *"And now, O Yahweh our God, deliver us from his hand so that all the kingdoms on earth may know that you alone, O Yahweh, are God!" (Richter's translation)*

Questions, comments, aha moments:

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# Session 6—The Message of the Latter Things

### The Literary (and Theological) Structure of the Book

Isaiah 1–39 The Former Things	Isaiah 40–66 The Latter Things
Israel as she _____	Israel as she _____
Audience? Isaiah's lifetime (742–700 BC)	Audience? The Exile (chapters 40–55) 605–539 BC The Return (chapters 56–66) 539–400 BC
Era of prosperity and peace The audience _____ to believe Isaiah's message	Time of profound anxiety Survivors are looking back at their past with _____ and _____

### Real Time: What Happened in 587/586 BC?

- The \_\_\_\_\_ have defeated the Assyrians and are now the new superpower
  - Nebuchadnezzar marches on Judah
  - The Southern Kingdom of Judah collapses and Jerusalem is destroyed
  - The people of Israel are dragged off into \_\_\_\_\_ in Babylon because they \_\_\_\_\_ the message of the prophet
- The audience
  - They are fully aware that they have lost \_\_\_\_\_ due to their own stupidity
  - They believe there are no more \_\_\_\_\_

### The Message of Isaiah 40

- Into this situation a voice cries out, “Comfort, O comfort my people . . .” (Isa. 40:1–2)
- The language of \_\_\_\_\_

- Yahweh is \_\_\_\_\_ on Babylon to bring the exiles home
  - He is coming with his \_\_\_\_\_
  - He is marching with his \_\_\_\_\_ —the captives themselves become the soldiers of his army
- The incomplete return of the exiles
- Babylonians conquered by the Medo-Persian Empire and Cyrus the Great (539 BC)
  - The Edict of Cyrus allows the exiles to go home; a \_\_\_\_\_ returns to Israel
  - The return is \_\_\_\_\_
    - The post-exilic prophets continue to speak of a \_\_\_\_\_ that is not yet complete
    - The intertestamental books (written between the return and the coming of Jesus) talk about the scattered ones that need to come \_\_\_\_\_
    - Everyone in the community of faith realizes that they've come home but the \_\_\_\_\_ has not been restored

## Isaiah 40:3 in the New Testament

- The “voice crying out in the wilderness”
- Every one of the gospel writers announces the ministry of the Christ with the ministry of \_\_\_\_\_
  - Each of the gospel writers recognizes that John the Baptist is a prophet tasked with identifying the \_\_\_\_\_!
- In this restoration Yahweh, the Creator of the cosmos, is going to march on the \_\_\_\_\_ and every exile of \_\_\_\_\_ is coming home!
- “Be Ye Glad”

**Isaiah 40:1–3** *“Comfort, O comfort My people,” says your God. ‘Speak kindly to Jerusalem; And call out to her, that her warfare has ended, That her iniquity has been removed, That she has received of the LORD’S hand Double for all her sins.’ A voice is calling, ‘Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.”*

Questions, comments, aha moments:

## THE EPIC OF EDEN: ISAIAH

# Session 7—The Book of Isaiah and the Servant

### The Servant (42:1-53:12)

- Who is the hero of the latter things? The \_\_\_\_\_
- Who is the foil? The \_\_\_\_\_

### The Servant Songs

The Songs	The Servant Described as . . .
Isaiah 42:1-9	Someone who _____ clearly God's will and thereby brings about justice A light to the Gentiles
Isaiah 49:1-13	_____ clearly God's command Rescues the exiles A light for the Gentiles
Isaiah 50:4-11	_____ faithfully One who truly knows Yahweh and suffers as a result True light vs. false light
Isaiah 52:13-53:12	One whose death will somehow _____ his people from their failures, but will be _____
(Isaiah 61:1-4)	Jesus reads this passage in the synagogue about himself

### Isaiah 53—Who is this person?

- Possible suggestions:
  - Israel
  - The Remnant

- Ideal Israel
  - Isaiah
  - Jeremiah
  - Zerubbabel
  - Moses
  - Hezekiah
- The former things chronicle the problem: Israel has \_\_\_\_\_ as Yahweh's servant (Isaiah 42:18–20)
  - The latter things introduce Yahweh's solution to the problem: a \_\_\_\_\_ who:
    - \_\_\_\_\_ clearly God's will (ch. 42)
    - \_\_\_\_\_ clearly God's command (ch. 49)
    - \_\_\_\_\_ faithfully (ch. 50)
    - Whose death will somehow \_\_\_\_\_ his people from their failure (chs. 52–53)
    - As Christians the answer is obvious: \_\_\_\_\_

## The New Testament

- Matthew 8:14–17: “He himself took our infirmities”
- John 12:37–38: “Who has believed our message?”
- Matthew 11:2–6: “Tell John what you \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_”
- Jesus is viewed by the New Testament writers as the second Servant, the new Israel, the one who \_\_\_\_\_

**Isaiah 42:1** *“Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights.”*

Questions, comments, aha moments:

## THE EPIC OF EDEN: ISAIAH

# Session 8—The Book of Isaiah and the Idol

### The Servant's Foil: the Idol

#### ■ What is an idol?

- The \_\_\_\_\_ manifestation of one of the many deities of the ancient world
- They \_\_\_\_\_ their gods by making statues of them and believed these statues to be the incarnation of their deities. They called them *'elōhim* (“gods”) or a *sélem* (an “image”)
- Israel calls an idol a *pésel* (“a thing \_\_\_\_\_”)

### Polytheism vs. Monotheism

#### ■ Polytheism

- The deities themselves \_\_\_\_\_ from “primordial stuff”
- Multiple gods mean multiple \_\_\_\_\_ of power
- Multiple sources of power means \_\_\_\_\_ power
- Deities \_\_\_\_\_ and pantheons grow
- Deities \_\_\_\_\_ humans (to clothe them, feed them, take them out hunting, and to keep them happy)
- As deities derive from “primordial stuff” they may be \_\_\_\_\_ by “primordial stuff”  
= magic

#### ■ Monotheism

- Exodus 20:3–4: “no other \_\_\_\_\_ before Me”
- Deuteronomy 12:1–5: “\_\_\_\_\_ their idols”
- Deuteronomy 6:4: the \_\_\_\_\_ of ancient Israel—“Hear oh Israel! Yahweh is our God! Yahweh alone!”

### What Do the Idols Look Like?

- The Babylonian *mīs-pi* ritual (the “opening of the mouth” or “mouth washing” ritual)

- Image was \_\_\_\_\_ in a special locale within the temple
- Ritual \_\_\_\_\_ of the image
- \_\_\_\_\_ determines if image is to be formed and when
- Artisans are chosen in the same fashion (by divination)
- Finest of items used in design
- Either \_\_\_\_\_ out of wood (overcast with precious metal) or cast from metal (mold)
- While the image is being crafted it is \_\_\_\_\_
- Image is placed in a sacred \_\_\_\_\_ or orchard next to a canal with its face directed toward the sunrise
- As it awaits the dawn, the statue undergoes “divine \_\_\_\_\_”
- At dawn, the statue is “\_\_\_\_\_” and the “mouth-washing” ritual is performed
- Image is \_\_\_\_\_ by water
- Craftsmen then ritually \_\_\_\_\_ from the process

## Isaiah’s Take?

### ■ Isaiah 44: The Idol Parody Song

- 1–5 So who \_\_\_\_\_ who?
- 6–8 Israel’s commission as \_\_\_\_\_
- 9–11 Irony of “mere \_\_\_\_\_” here
- 12–17 Irony of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the craftsman, what sort of “god” is this?
- 18–20 Israel’s \_\_\_\_\_ condition

## Biblical Implications?

### ■ Humanity . . .

- Was created in the \_\_\_\_\_ of God (Gen. 1:26–27)
- Rebelled against that role and chose the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of their idols (Isa. 44:18–19)

### ■ Jesus is . . .

- “the \_\_\_\_\_ of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15)
- “the exact \_\_\_\_\_” of God’s being (Heb. 1:3)

- The one who repairs the image in us, making us \_\_\_\_\_ creations (2 Cor. 5:17)
- The one to whose \_\_\_\_\_ we are being conformed (Rom. 8:29)
- The \_\_\_\_\_ self into which we are being transformed (Col. 3:9–10)

■ In Christ we are restored to our God-ordained role as the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Almighty

## How Does Isaiah’s Message Speak to Us Today?

<p><b>Isaiah 43:10</b> “You are my _____”</p>	<p><b>Acts 1:8</b> “You will be my _____”</p>
<p><b>Isaiah 49:6</b> “I will give you as a _____ to the nations”</p>	<p><b>John 8:12</b> “I am the _____ of the world” [Matthew 5:14] “You are the _____ of the world”</p>

**Isaiah 66:8** “Who has heard of such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall a land be born in one day? Shall a nation be delivered in one moment?” (NRSV)

Questions, comments, aha moments: