

WEEK 1

ISAIAH

THE LORD SAVES

CHECK-IN

Before you dig into the passage

Ask your group how they feel about studying Isaiah. What attitudes are you bringing to the study? What are your hopes for this study? Pray together before you discuss the passage.

READ

Isaiah 1:1-9

As the text is central to the discussion, read the week's text together. Consider using a few different translations.

OBSERVE

*Make text-based observations (**What?**)*

Guide your group to make observations from the text. Focus on elements such as words, grammar, structure, tone, literary devices, genre, etc.

1. Discuss Isaiah 1:1. Give your group a brief overview of the context and background of Isaiah:
 - a. Who is the author? Who did he write to?
 - b. What is "the vision"? (*Discuss how Isaiah's vision is a divine revelation of God, not merely a dream.*)
 - c. During what period of Israel's history did Isaiah's ministry take place? How does Isaiah fit within the whole narrative of Scripture?
2. What scene is depicted in verses 2-3?
 - a. Who is the judge?
 - b. Who is the accused and what is the charge?
 - c. Who (or what) are the witnesses? (See Deut. 30:15-20; 31:28)

3. How is Israel described in v. 3? How are Israel and these animals similar? How are they different?
4. Consider verses 4-8:
 - a. What is the tone of these verses? How is this tone indicated?
 - b. Which 4 nouns indicating privilege are used for Israel in verse 4, and which 4 adjectives are used to describe how it was corrupted?
5. What aspect of God's character is shown in verse 9? What is the cause for the difference between Sodom/Gomorrah (which was destroyed except for Lot and his family) and Zion? (*It's only by God's grace that Zion wasn't completely destroyed, and not due to the people of Zion's behaviour!*)

INTERPRET

*What does the passage mean (**So what?**)?*

Based on the observations, what did the text mean to its original audience? What is God saying?

1. What does Isaiah's name mean? How would this strike his audience?
2. What is the significance of the heavens and the earth being God's witness?
(*Could Israel claim ignorance about what God desired?*)
3. What is Isaiah saying about God's people's response to his gracious action?
4. How would you put verse 5 in your own words?

APPLY

*What should we do and why (**Now what?**)?*

In light of the meaning of the text in its context, what principles apply to us today?

1. Can anyone today claim ignorance of God and his will? Read Romans 1:18-32.
2. In what ways is the Church (universal) similar to Israel?
3. In what ways are you truly seeking God? In which areas of your life are you currently rebelling against God?
4. Do you believe that "The LORD (and only the LORD) saves"? What or whom do you tend to put your trust in? What effect does that have?
 - a. What would it look like to trust in Jesus alone for your every need?
5. If you have received God's grace through faith in Christ, how should you interact with those who have not repented and trusted in Jesus?

6. If you are a believer but feel estranged from God, instead of like his child, what can you do to remember your identity in Christ and to pursue living closer to God? *Assure this person that when we seek God with all our hearts, he will be found!*

PRAYER

Pray with your group in response to this week's passage.