

WEEK 4

ISAIAH

THE LORD SAVES

CHECK-IN

Before you dig into the passage

Ask your group to share if and how their week was marked by regular confession and repentance. How have you been praying for leaders and people in authority this past week (1 Timothy 2:1-2)? How have you been praying for the lost and have you shared the gospel with anyone recently?

READ

Isaiah 2:1-22

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. How does Isaiah describe the future state of Zion (v. 2-4)?
2. What draws "the nations" to "go up to the mountain of the Lord"?
3. How is the actual state of Zion (v. 6-9) contrasted with the ideal state? (*Isaiah makes five contrasts.*)
4. What repetition do you notice in v. 6-8? What four things did the people take pride in/rely on? (*If you have more time, compare this with Lev 19:26, Deut 4:9-20, 7:1-6, 17:16-17, 18:9-14, 25-26.*)

3. What repetition do you notice in verses 10-21?
4. What do the prideful and unrepentant try to do in the face of God's majesty and what is the result?
5. What exhortations does Isaiah give his audience?

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 the new Zion, established as the "highest of the mountains" symbolise? (*Temples were usually built on high geographical points to be closer to heaven. The historical city of Jerusalem is located below the Mount of Olives to the East.*)
2. What do we learn about God from the promise of all the nations "flowing" to the mountain of the Lord? (*This does **not** mean all religions are the same and valid ways to God! Jesus is the only Way, Truth, and Life. But, it does mean that God's plan for mankind always included his desire to reach the whole world.*)
3. What would "the nations" have had to acknowledge for them to come to the "mountain of the Lord"? What effect will this have on the relationship between nations?
4. How might Isaiah's audience have responded to his description of the future Zion?
5. What does it mean "to walk **in** the light of the Lord" (as opposed to walking **to** the light of the Lord)? (See also Ps. 27 and Ps. 43)
6. What does the repetition in verses 10-21 show about God?

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. In what ways does the Church seem inferior or unimpressive today? How does Isaiah 2:1-22 provide hope for the Church? (See 1 Cor. 1:26-29)

2. What things in your life give you a (false) sense of independence, security, wealth, or strength? (What “tall towers” exist in your life?)

- How have or how will these things let you down, leaving you with a sense of emptiness and disappointment? Why should these things not be your source of hope and fulfillment?
- What makes God alone worthy of your trust and devotion?
- What would it look like to trust in God alone for all you need and for him to have your full focus and devotion, putting the things you mentioned in their proper place?

3. What signs of pride are visible in your life? (See the article by Fabienne Harford on *Desiring God*.)

- Fault-finding
- A harsh spirit
- Superficiality
- Defensiveness
- Presumption before God
- Desperation for attention
- Neglecting others

4. Do you believe that God alone can make you happy forever? Why or why not? What keeps you from fully enjoying God and living for his glory alone?

5. How can you “walk in the light of the Lord” and what effects might this have on the world around you? (see 1 Peter 2 and 1 John) Commit to doing one thing this coming week to walk in the light of the Lord.

6. If “the Day of the Lord” were today, how would you respond to the “terror” and “splendor of [God’s] majesty”? On what basis would you be able to stand in God’s presence? (See *Hebrews 4:14-16. Those who have trusted in Christ will have no need to hide in fear, but rather can stand in confidence because of Jesus.*)

PRAYER

Lead your group in prayer of adoration, declaring God’s majesty together.