

WEEK 6

ISAIAH

THE LORD SAVES

CHECK-IN

Before you dig into the passage

Ask your group to share how they have applied the teaching from last week. What struggles and growth have you experienced in the areas of leadership and/or pridefulness? How has the gospel encouraged you this past week in your areas of struggle? How can this group keep praying for you and holding you accountable? What evidence of God's work in you would you like to thank him for?

READ

Isaiah 5:1-30

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 like words, grammar, structure, tone, literary devices, genre, etc.

1. What do you notice about the vineyard song (v. 1-7)?
 - a. How would you describe the tone in this love song? How does it change?
 - b. In what ways is the owner's devotion to his vineyard shown?
 - c. What was the owner's expectations of his vineyard and how were they met (or not met)? How does the owner then respond to the vineyard?
 - d. What two questions are asked of the audience?
 - e. In this extended parable, who is the owner and who is the vineyard? What "fruit" was expected and what was produced instead?

2. How is God's accusation against his people justified in the next section (v. 8-30)? In other words, what reasons for producing wild grapes/"stink-fruit" (each introduced with "Woe...") are given?
3. What specific judgments does God pronounce against his people as a consequence for producing rotten fruit? (Each is introduced by "therefore...")
4. What evidence of death and decay do you notice in verses 8-30?
5. How would you describe the tone of the woe oracle?

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 would the original audience's response have been to the two questions asked in the song? What does this reveal about God?
2. In this extended parable, how would Isaiah's audience have been shocked and surprised by his application? Why?
3. How do verses 15-17 aid the understanding of the purpose of each of the woes and judgments?
4. What does the image of an animal pulling a cart with ropes (v. 18-19) reveal about the people of Judah's relationship with sin?
5. What does verse 26 reveal about God? (*We see God's sovereignty and judgment of sin, but note also how God first warns his people before he "whistles" for the nations to come. See 2 Peter 3:9.*)
6. What does the tone throughout this passage reveal of the person of Isaiah and his feelings towards the people of Judah? What does it reveal about God and how he feels about his people? (*Spend some time looking at other relational terms God uses to refer to the people of Judah and Jerusalem in the previous 4 chapters.*)

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. How would you answer the question “What has God done for you?” (*Do not only think of things like provision and protection [though these aren’t insignificant], think especially of what he has done for us in Christ. Read Ephesians 1 and Romans 8 for example.*)
2. What prevents you from recognising the abundance of God’s grace available in Christ?
3. Are you bearing fruit (Fruit of the Spirit, a life of godliness, making disciples, etc.) that is consistent with the abundance of grace God has invested in you?
 - a. What good fruit in your life can you praise God for?
 - b. Which of the “woes” apply most to you and how? What reasons for fruitlessness are evident in your life? What good fruit does God require in its place?
4. The solution for our “rotten fruit” is not to try harder at producing good fruit - it’s Jesus Christ, the only One who consistently produced the fruit God requires. Read John 15 and discuss how the gospel provides an answer both for the means to produce good fruit and protection from God’s judgment when we don’t.
5. How do you relate to those who do not know Christ? Do you weep over them like Isaiah and prioritise sharing the gospel and prayer, are you indifferent, or are you judgmental?

PRAYER

Lead your group in a prayer of lament and petition, modelling Isaiah’s identification with and love for the people of Judah. Thank God for his love for people, pray about the evil in and around us, and ask God to send you to reach unbelievers with the gospel so they might also be recipients of his lavish grace (See again 2 Peter 3:9)