

ISAIAH

THE LORD SAVES

CHECK-IN

Before you dig into the passage

Ask your group to share what they have been learning about God and his Word recently. How has God spoken to you through his Word? How have you been encouraged by God? How have you been challenged by him?

READ

Isaiah 9:8-10:4

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 repetition do you observe in this passage, and how is the passage structured around this refrain?
2. Describe the acts of judgment against Israel that Isaiah prophesies in Isaiah 9:8-21.
3. What is the reason for God's judgment against Israel? What attitudes are evident? How did people respond to God's prior judgment? (v. 9-10, 13)
4. What, ultimately, is the effect of the people of Israel's rebellion against God? (v. 17)
5. In what two ways is the image of a burning fire used as a metaphor? (v. 18-19)

6. What change do you notice in Isaiah 10:1-4 and what indicates this change?
7. What question does Isaiah present to his audience and what is his answer?

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 it mean that God's word/message was "sent" and "has fallen"? What does this reveal about God and the exercise of his judgment? What does this reveal about people? (*God's judgment is fair! No one could claim they were ignorant, therefore not accountable.*)
2. What purpose does Isaiah's description of God's past judgment against Israel serve to his audience (Judah)? What does Isaiah want his audience to understand?
3. What does the image of God's "outstretched hand" symbolise here? What does it symbolise elsewhere in Scripture? (*Compare Exod. 15:12; Deut. 4:34; 5:15; and 7:19 with Jer. 21:5; Ezek. 6:14; and Zeph. 2:13.*)
4. What is the anger of God?
5. What does the metaphor of a burning fire that "consumes briars and thorns" (v.18) illustrate about the nature of sin?
6. What does Isaiah's tone and the use of a question reveal about his attitude towards the people of Judah?
7. What does Isaiah's answer to his own question reveal about the similarities between Israel and Judah?

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 does this passage serve as an encouragement, and how does it serve as a warning?
2. How do you feel about or respond to the doctrine of the wrath of God?
3. How can the anger of God be removed from you? Read John 3:36, Rom. 2:5, 5:9 and 1 Thess. 5:9-11.

4. How would you personally respond to Isaiah's question (v. 3)? On what basis would you stand secure on the day of judgment? Would your life have the same conclusion as Judah, or are you sure of your salvation in Christ?
5. In a time of need, do you turn to and "inquire of the LORD of hosts" (v. 13) or do you tend to be more self-reliant (as in verse 9-10)? How could you grow in humility and dependence on God? Is there a current struggle in your life that could be an opportunity to rely more on God?
6. What do you fear most in life, and what effect does this fear have on you and those around you? How could a deeper understanding of the wrath of God and the salvation that is possible in Christ be a source of encouragement in your fears?
7. How have you recently experienced the self-destructive nature of sin in your own life (v. 18)?
8. How have you witnessed people using each other to their own advantage (v. 20-21)? How should you respond as a believer? (See Matthew 5:13-16!)
9. Believers do not have to fear the judgment of God on the final day, but will still experience his discipline. Read Hebrews 12:1 -13 and discuss how we ought to respond to God's discipline.

PRAYER

Lead your group in a prayer of praise, thanking God for providing a way for all who believe in his Son, Jesus Christ, to be called sons and daughters of God who need not fear the judgment of God.