

Isaiah 40-66

**FOURTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
9:30 PASTOR'S CLASS
SPRING, 2019**

Introduction

Chapters 40 to 48 have as their main theme the proclamation that God is about to restore the exiled Jews in Babylon to their own land, referring to the time when the words spoken by Hezekiah (39:5-7) have been fulfilled. In these chapters, the prophet is concerned to show the supremacy of the God of Israel over the nations and their gods, and that God's purpose is to be accomplished through Cyrus.

Chapters 49 to 55 show the prophet turning his attention to Israel's glorious future, and consists of words of encouragement spoken to overcome the doubts, hesitations and difficulties which the message of the preceding chapters aroused in many minds. These chapters also contain three of the servant passages in which the mission, sufferings and atoning death of the Lord's Servant are set forth.

Chapters 56 to 59 deal with the conditions of the covenant that have been kept and those which have been broken. The prophet rebukes the leaders of the community in Jerusalem for their idolatry, exposing the sins that separate them from God.

Chapters 60-61 show us the Mediator and his achievement in gathering his people.

Chapters 62 to 66 contain the inspired vision of Zion, when God shall have fulfilled all of his purposes towards her, and clothed her with his glory.

Our hope and prayer is that the learning that takes place in this class will provide you with a better knowledge of the Bible and a deeper love for Christ and his people. Please attempt to answer the week's questions before the class. Being prepared will allow you and others to participate more effectively in the discussions, bringing everyone to a greater level of understanding of God's Word and a deepened fellowship.

Commentary

The commentary we will be using is the same as was used in the 2018 Spring semester: *Isaiah—Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries* by J. Alec Motyer. A limited supply will be available for sale on a first come, first served basis. It is suggested you purchase your commentary, which is available from a variety of online vendors, among them, Amazon and Christianbook.com.

Recommendations for Table Discussion

There will be some who are more eager to share around the table than others. Please be respectful and kind as the discussion unfolds, recognizing there are varying levels of Biblical proficiency and levels of comfort in sharing. Your table hosts are wonderful brothers and sisters who are there to love and support you, and will do their best to foster a safe, welcoming environment that is profitable and edifying for everyone present.

Additional Resources for Further Study

- *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary* by J. Alec Motyer (InterVarsity Press)
- *The Book of Isaiah (3 Vol. Set)* by E.J. Young (Eerdmans)
- *The Book of Isaiah* by J.N. Oswalt (Eerdmans)

Thank you for spending the time to take this class and contributing to the fellowship and mutual learning around your table. Our hope is that the effort you put into this class will be rewarded many times over in your daily Christian walk and in the years to come.

Schedule

Week	Date	Scripture	Teacher
1	6-Jan	Isaiah 40	Robert Norris
2	13-Jan	Isaiah 41	Robert Norris
3	20-Jan	Isaiah 42:1—43:13	Robert Norris
4	27-Jan	Isaiah 43:14—45:25	Scott Redd
5	3-Feb	Isaiah 46 and 47	Scott Redd
6	10-Feb	Isaiah 48—50:3	Scott Redd
7	17-Feb	Isaiah 50:4—51:16	Scott Redd
8	24-Feb	Isaiah 51:17—52:12	Scott Redd
	3-Mar	Missions Week	
9	10-Mar	Isaiah 52:13—53:12	Scott Redd
10	17-Mar	Isaiah 54	Scott Redd
11	24-Mar	Isaiah 55	Scott Redd
12	31-Mar	Isaiah 56-57	Scott Redd
13	7-Apr	Isaiah 58-59	Robert Norris
14	14-Apr	Isaiah 60	Robert Norris
	21-Apr	Easter	
15	28-Apr	Isaiah 61—63:6	Robert Norris
16	5-May	Isaiah 63:7—64:12	Robert Norris
17	12-May	Isaiah 65	Robert Norris
18	19-May	Isaiah 66	Robert Norris

January 6, 2019—Week 1..... Isaiah 40

1. What great facts are proclaimed by God to give comfort to his people in the opening 11 verses of this chapter?
2. How does this prophecy find fulfillment in the New Testament?
3. How does God view nations (verses 15-17) and what should we learn?
4. How is God described in comparison to people on earth, and how does he prove his greatness (verses 21-29)?

January 13, 2019—Week 2 Isaiah 41

1. The nations make new idols in their fear. How are these idols shown to be worthless?
2. Regarding the reference to Cyrus in verses 2-25, what is God's relation to this mighty conqueror and to the events of history in general?
3. How does God describe the one whom he has predicted to come (verse 25)? What is the reason that God makes these predictions (verse 27)?
4. What does God conclude about molded images (verses 28-29)?

January 20, 2019—Week 3 Isaiah 42:1—43:13

1. God's ideal servant as described in Isaiah 42:1-4 is a picture of the Lord Jesus. How is he equipped for his task? What is said about his relation to God, the purpose and scope of his mission, and the fulfillment of his work?
2. Explain the significance of the bruised reed and smoking flax (Isaiah 42:3-4).
3. What does God promise to do for his people Israel in their distress? What witness will Israel bear to God when redeemed by his saving power?
4. What does the Lord call the nations to do (Isaiah 43:8-9) and how does God describe himself?

January 27, 2019—Week 4 Isaiah 43:14—45:25

1. What was the new thing that God was about to do, greater even than his deliverance of Israel at the Red Sea?
2. How does 43:22-28 show that Israel was not justified by works but only by free grace? What further gift did God have in store for his redeemed people and what blessings will it bring?
3. What is the effect of idolatry on the mind of the worshipper (44:18-20)?
4. What is said in 44:24-45 concerning God's power in creation and in human history? What will God do for and through Cyrus? How does this bring us comfort?

February 3, 2019—Week 5..... Isaiah 46 and 47

1. What is the difference between the gods of Babylon that have to be carried by beasts (46:1-4) and the God of Israel who carries his people?
2. What power does God claim (46:10)? What does this show about his actions?
3. Whom does God address in chapter 47 and what is her future?
4. What sins brought about Babylon's downfall? What was God's judgment upon her? What did she assume was her security against future disaster (47:8-13)?

4. Although 49:1-6 applies to the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul uses part of it in Acts 13:47 to describe himself and Barnabas. How is this?

5. How the Lord does answers Israel's doubts:

a. that the Lord has forsaken her?

b. that her children are taken away and lost to her?

c. that Babylon was too strong to give up its prey?

d. that her covenant relation with Jehovah is broken?

1. What qualities are revealed in this picture of God's Servant?
2. How are these qualities fulfilled in Christ?
3. How does the example and experience of the Servant enable us to count upon God to do good for us, and on what conditions?
4. What comfort and encouragement can we derive from 51:1-6? What divine reassurances are given to those who are frightened by the hostility of men?

February 24, 2019—Week 8Isaiah 51:17—52:12

1. In the face of the seeming hopelessness of Zion's condition, how and why does God promise to act on her behalf?
2. What is required of Zion, and how does this speak to a backsliding Christian?
3. How does the picture of Zion's joy (52:7-12) give us hope for the future?
4. The apostle Paul applies this passage in Romans 10:14-15 and 2 Cor. 6:17. How should his applications of these verses speak to us?

March 10, 2019—Week 9Isaiah 52:13—53:12

1. How is God's Servant, the Lord Jesus Christ, depicted in 52:13-15?

2. What effect does the depth of the suffering and exaltation of God's Servant have upon the nations?

3. What parallels are there between the life and ministry of the Servant and the actual life of the Lord Jesus in:
 - a. his manifestation to the world?
 - b. the reception accorded him?
 - c. his sufferings and the meaning of them?
 - d. his behavior when arrested?
 - e. the manner of his death and burial?
4. Who are the offspring spoken of in 53:10, and what benefits are shown in this whole passage to have been procured for them by the Servant's substitutionary death (cf. Hebrews 2:10)?

March 31, 2019—Week 12..... Isaiah 56 and 57

1. What are the spiritual conditions on which the Lord would recognize a man—whether Jew or not—as being one of his own people (56:1-8)?
2. What privileges are offered by God to his people, and on what conditions?
3. How does the sad picture of a community whose leaders were unworthy and whose members were forsaking the Lord for idols impact us today?
4. What do these two chapters, especially 57:15-21, teach us about God?

April 7, 2019—Week 13..... Isaiah 58 and 59

1. What is the value of fasting in the sight of God? What does God look for in his people, and why is such conduct called 'fasting?'
2. What promises of spiritual blessing does God give to those who are right in spirit toward himself and others (58:8-12)?
3. What personal, social and spiritual consequences do the people suffer as a result of the sins outlined in 59:1-15?
4. What is the motive for God's intervention in 59:15-21, and what is its two-fold purpose?

April 14, 2019—Week 14 Isaiah 60

1. What picture is given of the glorified Zion and what place is prepared in Zion for the presence of God?
2. Who is drawn to Zion and how will they be treated (8-12)?
3. What is God promising to do to his sanctuary, and what would the city be called?
4. What features of the beauty and glory of Zion are found in their spiritual counterpart—a life dwelling in the fullness of the Holy Spirit?

April 28, 2019—Week 15Isaiah 61—63:6

1. How would you summarize the teaching of chapters 61 and 62 regarding the Lord's good purposes for Zion?
2. What do we learn about the relationship to God into which his people will be brought? What is the response of his people to his promised salvation?
3. In chapter 61, the coming salvation is proclaimed, and in chapter 62 it is prayed for. What characteristics of prevailing prayer are emphasized here?
4. Read Luke 4:17-21. Luke records that our Lord Jesus said that the opening words of Isaiah 61 were spiritually fulfilled in his ministry. Why did Jesus cut his reading in the synagogue short in the middle of 61:2?

May 5, 2019—Week 16..... Isaiah 63:7—64:12

1. How does the suppliant begin his prayer (63:7-14)? What has Israel learned about God's mercy and love in the past?
2. In times of need, what lesson is there for us when we pray to God?
3. What five pleas are found in 63:15-19?
4. In 64:4-5 the suppliant begins to advance another plea. What is it and why is he unable to continue?

1. How does God describe his dwelling place in verses 1-2?
2. When God looks down upon men's worship, what does he value (1-4)?
3. What is the end of those who, having heard God's voice, will not give heed? How does this contrast with what is promised to Zion and her children?
4. How does the prophet's vision of God's purpose for the nations fall short of the glory of the full revelation of this mystery in the New Testament?



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