

Message Guide

This Message Guide may be a little different from those that you have used before.

The purpose of these Notes is not an in-depth study of the scriptures used, but rather to assist you or your Study Group as you reflect on these messages given by Charles Price.

We present questions in order to stimulate discussion. Sometimes we will give you the answer ... sometimes not. At other times a statement or a theme is presented for your consideration.

As you allow the Holy Spirit to guide the direction of your study and discussions we pray the flexibility of this Message Guide will help you as you delve more deeply into Charles' message, and that you will unearth more lessons from the Lord than may not have been immediately obvious.

Message Guide & Questions

Isaiah – Calling People Home

Part 1 – Meeting The Prophets Of God

Isaiah 1:1; 8:1 - 3

1. As we begin this 8 part series in the Book of Isaiah please read Isaiah 1:1. What is this verse giving us?

Isaiah 8:1 – 3 What are these verses giving us?

2. What 3 things do Prophets specialize in?

3. Prophets covered a 300 year period.
How many Prophets were there in the Old Testament?
Who are classified as 'the Major Prophets'?

4. What is the difference between a 'Major' prophet and a 'Minor' prophet?

5. These Old Testament Prophets were all connected around Israel's exile, and they fall into 3 categories. Do you know what these are?

6. Read Acts 3:24. What does this tell us?

7. **What is a Prophets message?**

Read and consider: Exodus 7:1 – 2, Exodus 4:14 – 16, 2 Peter 1:20 – 21, Isaiah 50:4, Jeremiah 23:22

8. **What are a Prophets Methods?**

Can you list all 7 of them? Some are obvious, some less so.

Final Thoughts

God will sometimes use our lives as a message,
and He brings us to a point where we feel the pain of God.

For example:

1. Children who do not walk with God.
2. People who loved us turn away from us.
3. Covenants broken - for example: marriages

As God feels the pain of these things
so do these sad emotions
give us a deeper knowledge of God.

God will allow pain in our hearts so that we better understand Him,
and better understand other people.

Don't allow your personal circumstances to go to waste
Don't hide them; let them be instruments in His Hands -
Bad experiences, embarrassing and humbling experiences.
Our experiences are unique, and can be a blessing to others.

Things that break our hearts give us a greater glimpse of God
Psalm 42:3 Psalm 56:8

Why preserve tears?
They are an investment.
We learn to know God through the hardest times

Message Guide & Questions

Isaiah – Calling People Home **Part 2 – The Diagnosis Of A Disease** **Isaiah 1:1 - 14**

1. Read and consider Isaiah 1:1 – 4. What is Isaiah doing in this opening chapter?

2. **The Diagnosis**

Looking again at verse 4b, we see that the people had become estranged from God. How did this come about?

3. We must always remember that although we have a 'position' with God, what He seeks most is an 'active relationship' with us.
Read and consider John 17:3, Philippians 3:10 and Ephesians 1:17

4. Charles uses an analogy that is worth repeating here for reinforcement. This applies in marriage and equally in our relationship with God. Can you remember what that analogy is?

5. Consider more fully the implications of these 2 kinds of relationships.

6. Here is an interesting verse to read and consider. Isaiah 1:3
What is this telling us?

7. **The Consequences** [Symptoms]

Read and consider verses 11 – 15

What do you think of the rituals that God gave to Moses?

Name as many as you can.

What was the purpose of them?

8. What happens if you **lose the Reality** but **continue with the Ritual**?

9. List and consider some rituals that have become deified.
The suggested list may surprise you.

10. Finally, **The Remedy**
Read and consider Isaiah 1:18 - 20

Final Thoughts

Our Christian life should not be defined by experience or feelings or activities.
Our Christian life should be defined by an active, developing relationship with God.

When we look at verse 4 again
we see that the relationship of the people of Israel to God
had turned from 'Face to Face' to become 'Back to Back'.

Remember:

When the ritual replaces the reality one of two things happen:

The ritual is desecrated – we treat it with contempt, it does not matter.
The ritual is deified – we make it into a God.

We are in danger of outsourcing our spiritual life.

We have an Accountant to deal with our finances and taxes.
We have a Doctor to deal with our medical issues.
We have a Lawyer to deal with legal issues.
We have a Pastor to deal with our spiritual issues.

But we do not deal directly with God.

So to recap:

Diagnosis- we have neglected God
Symptoms - we engage in empty rituals
Remedy - talk to God about it,
find forgiveness and restoration
of fellowship and purpose

Message Guide & Questions

Isaiah – Calling People Home

Part 3 – Experiencing The Holiness Of God

Isaiah 6:1 - 10

1. Read and consider Isaiah 6:1 – 10

Name some of the things that can happen that might cause us to have a life-changing encounter with God.

2. What can result from a fresh encounter with God?

3. What had to happen in Isaiah's life before he could experience a fresh encounter with God?

4. What was that obstacle?

5. Speaking of King Uzziah, read 2 Chronicles 26:3 - 5
What were his good qualities, and what was the result of these?

6. What was King Uzziah's downfall after 45 years of God-ordained success?
Read 2 Chronicles 26:15 and 16.

7. The pride of King Uzziah was so great that he would not even listen to 80 brave priests who tried to confront him. What was the consequence of that?
Read 2 Chronicles 26:20 – 21

8. What relevance does this have where Isaiah is concerned?

9. Perhaps Isaiah was disillusioned by King Uzziah?
If that was the case, what affect could that have had on Isaiah?

10. Please now read and consider Isaiah 6:5 – 7

11. Do you know what the two kinds of Awareness that Isaiah needed were?

Isaiah needed a new awareness of G _ _

Isaiah needed a new awareness of h _ _ _ _ _

12. Isaiah's renewed awareness of God meant that his world was revolutionized by a

i Different view of G _ _

ii Different view of H _ _ _ _ _

iii Different view of his W _ _ _

iv Different view of the W _ _ _ _

Final Thoughts

There is a warning for us all to not idolize our leaders and ultimately put them in a place between ourselves and God. It is a very easy trap to fall into; looking to someone else for our spiritual life.

Some wives look to their husbands as 'spiritual leader'.

Some husbands look to their wives as 'spiritual leader'.

Some people look to their church or pastor as 'spiritual leader'.

Some look to some other person they admire and recognize who 'knows God'.

**Many of us are not growing in God personally
because we know Him through an intermediary.**

We listen to others whom we trust have spent time with God,
but our experience of Him is not personal and fresh.

- We do not *deal with God* ourselves
- We do not *talk to God* ourselves.
- We do not *listen to God* ourselves

We all need a new, fresh encounter with God,
but we need to realize that will bring us a new encounter with our sinfulness,
and our need to lean ever more on our dependence on God.

God does not expose our failure and sin to humiliate us
nor to condemn us,
but always to liberate us.

There is nothing so marvelous as *knowing you are cleansed*;
especially when you *know you do not deserve it*.

Is something stopping you from dealing with God personally?
Would you confess that barrier and remove it from your life?

To do so would give you **a fresh revelation of Him,**
and also a **fresh understanding of yourself.**

Message Guide & Questions

Isaiah – Calling People Home **Part 4 – Shoots From A Dead Stump** **Isaiah 10:33 - 11:5**

1. Read and consider Isaiah 11:1 - 16
2. Our view of life and significance can fall into two categories which are:
 - a. The H _____ V _____ of life and significance.
 - b. The D _____ V _____ of life and significance.
3. Throughout history God seems to work in very strange ways.
There seems to be a pattern of:
Great P _____
Great E _____
Great D _____
4. With that pattern in mind, consider how it would apply to Abraham
5. With that pattern in mind, consider how it would apply to Isaac
6. With that pattern in mind, consider how it would apply to the Esau & Jacob
7. With that pattern in mind, consider how it would apply to Jacob
8. We live in the narrow confines of T _____
God operates in the expanse of E _____
9. Now read and consider Isaiah 6:13 and 11:1. What do you see here?

10. What is the 'life' that is still in this stump?

Final Thoughts

In our lives it may seem that God is sometimes dormant and inactive,
and we may wonder what is going on?
But He is working to His own timetable
which is much different and bigger than ours.

Are you disappointed with God at the moment
because He has not fulfilled your expectancy of Him?
Does it seem to you that God's Promise has led to Great Expectancy,
and this has become for you a Great Disappointment?
Why does this seem to be the pattern?

Take heart!

Sometimes we meet God best in our disappointments,
not in success.
God draws closest to us in our failures.
We meet God deeply in our sin
where we experience His forgiveness and grace.

Read and consider Job 14:7 – 9.
Here the writer is contrasting a human with a tree.

And finally, read and consider 2 Timothy 1:12 King James Version.

What we have committed to Him, He has undertaken to look after.
What we have NOT committed to Him, He takes no responsibility for.

God will keep what we have committed to Him – against that day.
Not TODAY, but against THAT DAY.

One day we will see it! One day we will say “thank you!”

Message Guide & Questions

Isaiah – Calling People Home

Part 5 – An Arab Spring

Isaiah 19:18 - 25

1. This is a complex subject today that we will squeeze into our brief study time. Please read and consider Isaiah 19:18 - 25

2. What do Egypt, Syria and Israel have in common?

3. What is amazing about verse 23?

4. In Isaiah chapter 13 to 23 the prophet gives a series of prophecies to the nations surrounding Israel. In these prophecies he says that something has to happen before these 3 nations can come together in worship? Do you know what that is?

5. The two things we will look at briefly today are:

i The P _____ of Judgment on the nations.

ii The P _____ of Judgment on the nations.

6. All of these nations are going to fall – including Israel. List the ways in which this will happen.

7. Why is this going to happen? Read and consider Romans 2:14 – 15.

8. History shows us that this universal Moral Consciousness ultimately demands 'right' to be vindicated and 'wrong' to be judged. It may take a long time, but this moral law will 'self-correct' itself. What are some examples in history when this has happened?

9. So when we speak of 'God's Judgment', how is that manifested?
Read and consider Romans 1:24; 1:26 and 1:28b

10. Now read and consider Acts 17:31
11. Read and consider the beautiful words in Hebrews 12:5 - 13

Final Thoughts

Moral Laws are as real as Physical Laws. If we try to break them, they will in turn break us. Or to put in another way – our sins will always eventually find us out. That is true of nations as well as of individuals.

Whether personal, corporate or institutional, sin does pay its wages – which leads to death and destruction.

This is not God sitting in heaven with a big hammer waiting to hit those who go against Him. The Moral law that is inherent in all of mankind will activate. This is sin's power to destroy. Corinthians 15:56 and Romans 1:27

However, we can know the remedial power of his judgment and discipline. It can be painful to face our sin, but when we respond to God we find redemption and restoration.

Those nations around Israel are today in tragic strife with uncertain, wobbly, democracies, including Israel in it's rejection of Christ; but a day is coming when that will dramatically change.

Isaiah was writing about nations surrounding Israel, but these are abiding truths that are about us too.

- The power of sin is the law – the law will expose us as it seeks to correct and restore us.
- Our sin will find us out. When we look to Him, God will meet us in our sin and extend to us His forgiveness and grace.
- Then He restores us and makes us a blessing to others.

How is God speaking to you?

Message Guide & Questions

Isaiah – Calling People Home

Part 6 – The Love Of God In The Judgment Of God

Isaiah 25:1 - 8

1. As we have been going through this study in Isaiah we have come through 12 chapters of prophecies against the nations and cities surrounding Israel. Can you name some of them?

2. Then, what was chapter 24 about?

3. And then, coming out of this dark tunnel of judgment and destruction what do we come to?

4. Read and consider Isaiah 24:1; verse 4 and verses 21 - 22.

5. Read 1 Corinthians 13:13

6. Let's look at 2 areas of Hope that many of us need. Isaiah 25:4

7. As a starting point to understand the Judgment of God on His people we need to understand what is the 'sovereignty' of God?

8. How is that sovereignty manifested in God's actions?
Read and consider Isaiah 16:5

9. So, simply put, what is this Judgment of God in the earlier chapters?

10. Now read and consider Isaiah 25:7 - 9

Final Thoughts

What was planned long ago was not bad things –
God does not plan bad things –
that's the devil's business.

The marvelous things Isaiah speaks of that God planned long ago,
was to **meet with us out of the bad things**. Read Isaiah 25:1

Despite how harsh the rhetoric may sometimes appear,
God is wooing us in love.

The fact that 'God is Love' lies behind His allowing us into trouble.
He treats us in love, and seeks for a love response.

But even God cannot force anyone to love Him -
nor would He want to.
To love God, or not, totally remains our free choice.

But please read 1 Corinthians 13:12

**Do you know His love?
Is His love going deeply into your soul?
Are you living out of intimacy with God.**

11. So, how do we measure good fruit/bad fruit?

12. **2. The Problems with a Vineyard**

Read Isaiah 5:3 - 4

13. And finally, **3. The Purifying of a Vineyard.**

What is God then going to do?: Read Isaiah 5:55

Final Thoughts

God's purpose for us is that we bear fruit.

Read John 15:8

Things derive from our lives that have their origin in God.

God IS Love and He is looking for a Love Relationship
that is not compulsory or forced.

It wouldn't BE love if it was!

You cannot force love, and it still be love.

Love must be given.

Hence, God creates a nation that is subject to failure.

God does not want a vine with all foliage but no fruit.

[he cursed a fig tree that was like that]

A fruitful branch has to be pruned.

It is FRUIT that God wants produced.

Read John 15:1 – 8

Part of His undying love for us is to endure hardship and discipline.

We should not complain, but rather see how we are being purified.

The Gardener is pruning us to channel life to the fruit.

The fruit of the Spirit – Galatians 5:22.

These are not cute qualities,
but often produced by tough, hard, painful, tearful circumstances.

Message Guide & Questions

Isaiah – Calling People Home

Part 8 – The Folly Of Faulty Faith

Isaiah 30:1 – 3 & 15 - 23

1. For this last study in Charles' messages from the Book of Isaiah please read and consider Isaiah 30:1 – 3 and 15 – 21.

2. Read and consider Isaiah 1:11 - 15

3. There were 3 temptations that the people of Israel had fallen into – and we look at these because we too can fall into the same temptations.

1. The Temptation to Stop Looking to God - Chapter 30:1 - 5

4. **2. The Temptation to Stop Leaning on God** - Chapter 30:15 - 18

5. It would be good to take a quick look at what the word 'repent' actually means. Is it something you feel? Is it something you think? Or is it something you do?

6. What does it mean here 'to rest'?

7. **3. The Temptation to Stop Listening to God** - Chapter 30:19 - 21

8. Take a close look at verse 20. It speaks of bread and water, but what kind of bread and water?

9. Please read and consider Romans 5:2 - 5

10. Finally, look again closely at verse 21

Final Thoughts

Here are two important questions for you!

**Where do you run to first when you get into trouble?
Where do you place your dependence?**

It is as if we go looking for God in all the wrong places.
It is **we** who get ourselves into problematic situations,
so **we** try to get ourselves out of them;
But God specifically says to us,
"In repentance and rest is your salvation;
in quietness and trust is your strength."

The big question in these kinds of situations is always
What does God do? And what do I do?

We trust and rest = God works. See 2 Peter 1:3 - 4

If we don't look to God we won't lean on God,
and we don't lean on God because we don't listen to God.
The progression is inevitable.
As Matthew 7:7 says,
"If we don't ask, we will not receive;
if we don't seek, we will not find;
and if we don't knock the door will not open."

Don't believe anyone who says they want to find God, but can't

**Also, we have to stop running away from difficulties,
but rather embrace them.**

God sometimes works out His purpose through adversity and affliction.

So - If we **stop looking to Egypt**. [Godless resources]

If we start **leaning on God**.

If we start **listening to God**.

If we will **allow the bread of adversity
and water of affliction to feed our souls,
mold us and equip us.....**

Then we will know **His strength, His salvation and His rest**.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

This Leader's Guide is prepared to help the Study Group Leader to keep the discussions moving along. Maybe your people will come up with different answers, or perhaps they will need a little prompting from you.

Remember, you want to encourage your people to fully participate. This is not a 'teaching session' by the Group Leader, but rather a discussion group. This may at first seem like a contradiction, but you will need the Lord to give you wisdom to keep the discussions 'on track' while also allowing the Holy Spirit to direct your path.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Isaiah – Calling People Home

Part 1 – Meeting The Prophets Of God

Isaiah 1:1; 8:1 - 3

1. Isaiah 1:1 Gives us the historical setting for the prophecy of Isaiah
Isaiah 8:1 – 3 Is an introduction to Isaiah's family
2. Prophets specialized in:
 1. Telling people what was wrong with the world.
 2. Telling people what God was going to do to correct it.
 3. Offer hope.
3. There are 16 Old Testament Prophets. The 'Major Prophets' are:
Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel.
4. Simply the length of the book.
5. **Before** the exile: - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, & Zephaniah.
During the exile: - Ezekiel & Daniel
After the exile: - Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi
6. The prophetic office went back to before the written prophets. Both Elijah and Elisha are recognized as prophets but neither of them left any writings.
7. After reading those verses it is clear that the Prophets were to be -
The MOUTH of God for the Word of God
8.
 1. **Speaking/Preaching**
 2. **Writing** Read Jeremiah 36:4 – 5
 3. **Music** Read Isaiah 5
 4. **Poetry** These usually do not translate well from their original language into English.
 5. **Allegory** Ezekiel Chapters 16 and 14 are examples of this.
 6. **Drama** Isaiah had an embarrassing drama to enact in Isaiah 20. See also Jeremiah Chapter 19, and Chapters 27 & 28
 7. **Personal Circumstances** See Ezekiel 24:15

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Isaiah – Calling People Home **Part 2 – The Diagnosis Of A Disease** **Isaiah 1:1 - 14**

1. In this opening chapter Isaiah is diagnosing the condition of the people. In today's study we will discuss not only the Diagnosis of a Disease, but also the Consequences and the Remedy.
2. It was a gradual, slippery process which began with:
 - i Neglecting God. - *they have forsaken the Lord.*
And ended with:
 - ii Rejecting God. - *and turned their backs on Him.*
3. Our 'position' with God is:
Under the Old Covenant - Israel is His people.
Under the New covenant - The Church are His people.
4. The analogy is of 2 kinds of relationship:
 - i. Side By Side - Going somewhere together.
 - ii Face To Face - Just between the two of you.
5. **Side By Side:**
 1. Very busy with your job and/or projects.
 2. Looking after the house.
 3. Maintaining things.
 4. Busyness of responsibilities at work or at the church.

Busy working together, but no time to really get to know each other.

Face To Face:

1. An open heart.
2. Weak together – aware of your dependence on God.
3. Vulnerable with each other.
4. Feed into each others hearts

You take sideways glances at each other, but your hearts are empty. Your marriage becomes dry.

What can sadly become true in a marriage can become equally as true in our relationship with God. Guard against that!

6. Why does the ox know his master? Why does the donkey know his owners manager? It is by **familiarity** not by instinct.

This is why we need to build a daily familiarity with God.
7. Some of the ritual God gave to Moses for the people to partake in are:

Sacrifices, burnt offerings, the blood of bulls, lambs and goats, incense, prayer. These are all good things ordained by God.

Every **Ritual** was designed to point to a **Reality**.

These sacrifices were about the holiness of God, and the need of the sinner to be reconciled with God.

8. Instead of the Ritual *pointing* to Reality, the ritual *replaces* the reality. When the ritual replaces the reality one of two things happen:

The ritual is desecrated – we treat it with contempt, it does not matter.
The ritual is deified – we make it into a God.

9. This suggested list may surprise you, but consider them with an open heart.
1. Communion
 2. Baptism
 3. Bible Reading

All of these are good things, but see what God has to say in verse 11. We can make the same mistake:

What we lack in quality, we try to make up in quantity.

What we lack in substance we try to make up in activity.

10. The greatest need is reconciliation and relationship, but God's people were so involved in their participation in sacrifices and offering, they had neglected to 'reason with God'

They had all the 'ritual' but no personal relationship.

NOTHING can be a substitute for your every day personal relationship with God, through Jesus.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Isaiah – Calling People Home

Part 3 – Experiencing The Holiness Of God

Isaiah 6:1 - 10

1.
 - a. a personal crisis.
 - b. a failure.
 - c. spiritual despair.
 - d. a past sin reemerging.
2. As a result of a fresh encounter with God we can experience:
 - a. A deeper knowledge of God.
 - b. We become more fruitful and more effective.
3. An obstacle had to be removed.
4. **Isaiah had begun to 'hero-worship' King Uzziah**, and it was his death that precipitated Isaiah's encounter with God.
5. Uzziah was noted as: Doing right in the eyes of God.
He sought God.
He had been instructed in the fear of God.
As a result: God gave him success.
6. Being powerful itself was not the cause of Uzziah's downfall; it was instead the 'pride' that came out of that power, causing him to become unfaithful to God.
7. God inflicted leprosy upon Uzziah which he had until he died.
8. Uzziah was Isaiah's hero. Isaiah looked at Uzziah as a spiritual leader – one who listened to God.
 1. Maybe Isaiah had looked at God through Uzziah?
 2. Maybe Isaiah's dealing with God were second-hand to Uzziah?
 3. Maybe because Isaiah had seen Uzziah as a godly leader, Isaiah was not dealing with God directly?
9.
 - i Perhaps Isaiah became disappointed by the behaviour of this perceived 'man of God'.
 - ii Perhaps Isaiah's own confidence was shaken by this.
 - iii Perhaps all this blocked Isaiah's own vision of God

All, or any, of this is what can happen when we idolize another person, or we live our Christian life based on them rather than our own personal relationship with God.

Isaiah was never going to flourish until King Uzziah was out of the way.

So here are two important questions:

1. What intercepts **your** vision of God?
2. What gets in the way of **you** seeing God?

10. With King Uzziah dead and gone Isaiah needed a new awareness.

11. Isaiah needed a new awareness of **God**. verses 1 - 4
Isaiah needed a new awareness of **himself**. verse 5

12. Isaiah's renewed awareness of God meant that his world was revolutionized by a
- i Different view of **GOD**
 - ii Different view of **HIMSELF**
 - iii Different view of his **WORK**
 - iv Different view of the **WORLD**

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Isaiah – Calling People Home **Part 4 – Shoots From A Dead Stump** **Isaiah 10:33 - 11:5**

1. Although the passage read deals with the particular truth about Israel and Jesse, for the purpose of this study today we will look at a 'General truth/principle' which applies to us all today.
2. Our view of life and significance can fall into two categories which are:
 - a. The **Human View** of life and significance...
.... which is **problematic and uncertain** [*meadow of dead stumps*]
 - b. The **Divine View** of life and significance...
.... **which is purposeful and certain** [the dead stump is not the end of the story – there is life beyond]
3. There seems to be a pattern of:
Great Promise
Great Expectancy
Great Disappointment
4. At 75 years of age **Abraham** believed. *Great promise and great expectancy.*
But no baby came after 9 months . *Great disappointment*
Waiting. *Great disappointment*
Famine in Canaan. *Great disappointment*
Trouble in Egypt. *Great disappointment*
Tried to help God – producing Ishmael. *Great disappointment*
25 years from promise to fulfillment.
5. At last God's promised son arrives – **Isaac**. *Great promise and great expectancy.*
They had to wait for him to grow up. *Great disappointment*
As he grew up Isaac was not interested in girls. *Great disappointment*
Father had to arrange to look for a wife for him. *Great disappointment*
Found Rebecca – but she was barren for 20 years. *Great disappointment*
6. Surely with the twins **Esau & Jacob** would come the fulfillment of . . . *Great promise and great expectancy.*
But **Esau & Jacob** fought in the womb and most of their life out of it. *Great disappointment*
They didn't talk to each other for many years. *Great disappointment*
Esau traded his birthright for a plate of stew. *Great disappointment*
Jacob cheated his father to get the blessing. *Great disappointment*
7. **Jacob** was cheated by his future father-in-law [*what goes around comes around*]

and had to work 7 more years [14 in all] before he got the wife he originally wanted. God had to wrestle **Jacob** to the ground, and put his hip out of joint until Jacob cried out to God to bless him.

It is at this point that God changed his name from Jacob to Israel – but there were more disappointments to follow.

Are you in a period of disappointment with God at this time?

8. We live in the narrow confines of **TIME**, whereas God operates in the expanse of **ETERNITY**.

9. When there is life in the tree stump, there is hope.

10. Answer: The Spirit of God

“A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.”

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Isaiah – Calling People Home

Part 5 – An Arab Spring

Isaiah 19:18 - 25

1. This is a remarkable prophecy because it not only speaks about God's blessing on Israel, but it also speaks of God's blessings on Egypt and Syria – two nations who are probably Israel's biggest enemies.
2. All three nations reject Jesus Christ - **Syria & Egypt** being predominantly Muslims have limited freedom – especially for women.
Israel makes it illegal for Christians to proselytize Jews
3. It speaks of a day when Syria [Assyria], Egypt and Israel will **worship together** and they will **bless the earth!**
In today's political climate that would seem impossible!
4. Before Syria and Egypt can come to worship together they must first **come under Judgment.**
5. i The **Principle** of Judgment on the nations.
ii The **Purpose** of Judgment on the nations.
6. Social collapse
Economic collapse
Political collapse
Spiritual collapse

It will be painful, with great terror and destruction.
7. God has created a Moral Law that is revealed in scripture [in the commandments] and in the human heart [in our conscience]. So inherent in everyone is a Moral Consciousness that is not the result of conditioning, but of creation.
8. **Soviet Communist philosophy.** Took hold in 1917. It denied God and was morally bankrupt, but it imploded in the 1980's.

Nazi ideology of racial supremacy and anti-Semitism. Despite the claims of Hitler that there would be a thousand year Reich, Hitler's dream lasted just 15 years.

Pol Pot & Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia – with it's evil social engineering and mass genocide – it too only lasted 15 years or so.

Apartheid in South Africa officially lasted less than 50 years.

Racism does not stand in the light of righteousness.

North Korea cannot survive in its current stance, and will surely collapse sooner rather than later.

9. This is very important to understand as it applies to individuals as well as nations.
When we turn away from God He let's us go to the logical end of our choices.
“God gave them over to the sinful desires of their hearts And they received in themselves the due penalty of their sins.” (Rom 1:24 & 27)

10. This brings us to 'The Purpose of God's Judgment on the Nations'
11. God's purpose in Judgment is not retribution and destruction; it is redemption and restoration.

Hardened hearts stay under judgment and are eventually destroyed. [think of Pharaoh]; but softened, broken hearts find restoration.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Isaiah – Calling People Home

Part 6 – The Love Of God In The Judgment Of God Isaiah 25:1 - 8

1. Babylon, Moab, Damascus, Cush [Ethiopia], Egypt, Tyre.
2. Chapter 24 is about the devastation of the whole earth.
3. Three chapters of HOPE!
Some Bibles title these chapters: Chapter 25 Praise to the Lord!
 Chapter 26 A Song of Praise!
 Chapter 27 Deliverance of Israel!
4. Hope and Despair are opposites, and we could have been left in despair at the end of Chapter 24. But now we have HOPE.
5. We cannot endure difficulty without hope.
6. **1. Hope in Divine Security.**
Here, God is depicted as a 'refuge' and a 'shelter'.
7. The 'sovereignty of God' is the fixed point to which everything else relates. As 'Sovereign' He wants His will to be done; and if it is not, we are in trouble.
8. It is 'in love' that God establishes His Throne, from where justice and righteousness flows. His Sovereignty is conditioned by His Love.
9. It is that a loving God shows us the emptiness of everything without God; making us aware of our poverty to produce 'humility' in us
We then move from a position of poverty in ourselves to find everything in God – then we enjoy and bask in His love.
10. This brings us to: **2. Hope in Divine Safety**
We had been living under a shroud – a blanket of death, morally and spiritually.
But now: read and consider 1 Corinthians 15:54
This is the ultimate triumph of the gospel.
Raised to live forever in His presence.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Isaiah – Calling People Home

Part 7 – A Song About A Fruitful Vineyard

Isaiah 27:2 – 3; 5:1 - 7

1. Isaiah 5:1 – 7 This vineyard was unsuccessful, producing no fruit, or bad fruit.
Isaiah 27:2 – 3 This vineyard is successful, producing good fruit.
2. The vineyard, and its vine, is a picture of the nation of Israel.
3. The vineyard owner is God.
4. As well as being the owner, God is also the Husbandman, Vinedresser and Gardener.
5. The Vineyard is Israel. Read also Mark 12
6. In the vineyard is the 'true vine', which is Christ Jesus.
7. The branches of that vine are those who are in Christ. We have been 'grafted in'.
8. So to recap:

The owner	- God
The Vineyard	- Israel
The true vine in the vineyard	- Christ
The Branches	- The believers

So we are implicated in this imagery.

9. The purpose of a vineyard is to produce good fruit/good grapes; but something was not right. Read verse 4.
10. Israel had a broken relationship with God. They did not regard Him. They forsook Him, spurned Him, and turned their backs on Him. This will always result in bad fruit.
11. Our fruit – good or bad – will be evidenced by our relationship with God. If our relationship with God has broken down, so our fruit will be bad; but if our relationship with God is close and strong, so our fruit will be good. John 15:5
12. The crop of that first vineyard should have produced good fruit, but it didn't despite everything being done to make it so. However, when we get to Isaiah 27:3 – 4 with the second vineyard, God says He has been 'fighting for our faithfulness'.
13. Pruning is painful, BUT, pruning forces the vine to put more of its energy into the fruit rather than the foliage. Read also Hosea 10:1

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Isaiah – Calling People Home

Part 8 – The Folly Of Faulty Faith

Isaiah 30:1 – 3 & 15 - 23

1. Be reminded that the definitive verse for the first 39 chapters is Isaiah 1:4
2. The people continued to talk about God but they had reduced Him to a symbol, similar, perhaps, to the office of Governor General of Canada: he reigns but does not rule.
3. The people of Israel were guilty of running away from God for their protection. Read and consider closely Isaiah 30:1 – 2 and Isaiah 31:1
Are we sometimes guilty of carrying out 'plans that are not God's'?, or only seeking God's help after all else has failed?
4. It is a progression. When you stop looking to God you will stop leaning on God. Look again closely to verses 15 & 16.
We try to solve our problems by greater activity, by 'doing things'; but what does God say?
Our salvation - is found in repentance and rest.
Our strength - is found in quietness and trust.
5. Most people would say 'it is something you do', but in Proverbs it says "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he." Repentance is something we 'think' because the 'action' to repent comes from a 'change of mind'
6. "Rest' here does not mean inactivity, but rather 'resting in the sufficiency of God'. We wait and we trust. In other words, we give God time.
7. We call it 'answered prayer' when God does what we ask of Him, but what if we don't see the answer that we want . . . is that not also God answering?
8. Bread and water usually nourish us, so how do we understand **bread of adversity** and **water of affliction**. We usually want to avoid adversity and affliction. It is a very superficial understanding of life that assumes God's first interest is to release us from adversity and affliction. **There are times when He feeds us with it!**
9. We have to stop running away from difficulties, but rather embrace them
10. His voice will keep you on track. It comes from behind because we have gone off track this is how He pulls us back.