

The Book of the Conqueror

The prophecy of Isaiah is a vast book and covers many ideas and theological themes. It is useful to break it up into more manageable portions. The simplest and most useful breakdown is to identify three main sections, namely:

- The Book of the King Isaiah 1 to 37
- The Book of the Servant Isaiah 38 to 55
- The Book of the Conqueror Isaiah 56 to 66

(Motyer, 2016, p.5-6)

The Book of the Conqueror is a glorious prophecy offering great hope to the people of God holding out in a wicked world. In the Book of the Conqueror, the following themes are covered

1. The already but not yet.

Accomplished redemption is described in Isaiah 38-55 in the work of the Suffering Servant. Salvation is accomplished, but not yet completed. It describes the time between the finished work of the Servant and the end of the world.

2. Sabbath and rest.

The LORD's ideal for his people's rest is the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a foretaste of YAHWEH's eternal blessing and rest. The requirements to enter into the Sabbath rest of YAWEH are spelt out.

3. Blind watchmen and the watchmen of the Conqueror.

The watchmen of the nation had no compassion for the people. They served only themselves. The righteous were yearning for the day that the LORD would deliver them. The LORD would do this through his agent, the Anointed Conqueror, who appoints watchmen to call on YAHWEH without ceasing until Zion is established.

4. The songs of the Anointed Conqueror.

Just like the four songs of the Suffering Servant, there are four songs or poems describing the person and work of the Anointed Conqueror. Who was he? What was his mission? What did he accomplish, and what is still outstanding?

5. The earthly Jerusalem and Zion, the city of God.

There is an earthly city called Jerusalem, which fails to live up to YAHWEH's ideal. Then there is Zion, YAHWEH's eternal city, which is described throughout the prophecy of Isaiah. There are certain entry and citizenship requirements to become part of Zion.

6. The mission of Zion's children.

Their mission is to spread the good news of Zion and its Redeemer, the Anointed Conqueror, among the nations. To call on them to repent of their sins and trust in the Redeemer.

7. Two separate destinies.

There are two distinct and separate destinies. A destiny for the wicked and another for those who fear the LORD. The anointed Conqueror will save his people and mete out punishment against the wicked.

8. A New Heavens and a New Earth.

A day is coming when a new creation will be formed. A new city will be established and a new nation born in a day. Those who fear the LORD will receive permanent citizenship of the New Jerusalem and will become inhabitants of a New Earth.

9. The LORD, the Holy Spirit, and the Anointed Conqueror.

Many Christians believe that the idea of the Father, his divine Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit is only a New Testament idea. However, it is very clear from the prophecy of Isaiah, as well as the Books of Moses, the Writings, and the Prophets that this theological understanding was already clearly present in the Old Testament.

This study unpacks the Book of the Conqueror (Isaiah 56-66), taking these themes into account.

Waiting for a New World**Introduction**

Looking back at accomplished redemption while waiting and yearning for a New World is the experience of every believer (Isaiah 56:1). We are already redeemed through the work of the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 52:13-53:12), but living in the time of the not yet.

Salvation from sin and judgement has already happened. However, salvation is not yet complete, as we are still living in a broken world and are awaiting salvation from this world. This is the time between the Servant's work and the Conqueror's work. The time between the favour and the vengeance of the LORD.

The believer has entered into the LORD's rest, but the Sabbath is ultimately fulfilled in the eternal rest of God. Keeping the Sabbath is of the utmost importance, as it offers a foretaste of the world to come. God's rest is experienced in the 7th Day (Exodus 20:8-11), the Promised Land (Psalm 95:8-11), the Gospel (Hebrews 4:7-11), and ultimately in the New Creation (Revelation 21:1-5).

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 56:1-8

1. There is a final salvation to come. The old world will one day pass away, and there will be a new creation. How far off is this new world? Why must YAHWEH's people maintain justice and do what is right? (56:1)
2. Why is the LORD's Sabbath to be honoured? (56:2)

3. What was the alien's share in the covenant community in the past? (56:3a)
4. What was the eunuch's share in the covenant community in the past? (Leviticus 21:17-20; Deuteronomy 23:1)
5. What does "I am only a dry tree" mean? How will the LORD solve the faithful eunuch's pain of childlessness and exclusion? (56:3b)
6. What will the future hold for the faithful eunuch? (56:4-5)
7. What will the future hold for the faithful alien? (56:6)
8. In the future, what will the LORD's house be for all nations, and what will he give to them? (56:7)
9. In the future, who else will the LORD gather to be his people apart from Israel? (56:8)

Reflection & Application _____

1. Three times in these verses, we hear of the Sabbath. (56:2, 4, 6) What is the Sabbath representative of? How does one keep the Sabbath? (Exodus 20:8-11; Hebrews 3:11, 18; 4:1, 3-6, 8-11)

2. Why are the eunuchs and the foreigners mentioned? (56:3)
3. Can you think of a faithful eunuch(s) in the OT? (Isaiah 39:7 cf. 2 Kings 20:18; Daniel 1:6-7 (ESV, NKJV) cf. Acts 8:27)
4. Why did Jesus say, “My house will be a house of prayer for all nations” before he drove the money changers and animal sellers out? (56:7 cf. Mark 11:17, Matthew 21:13, Luke 19:46)
5. How did the arrival of Jesus solve the crises of bad leadership and the exclusion of outsiders? (John 10:11, 14, 16)
 1.
 2.
 3.
6. What practical advice is there in this section to teach us how to await salvation? (56:1-8)
 1.
 2.
 3.
 4.
7. What else, apart from being part of the congregation, was also beyond the reach of the alien and the eunuch?

Wicked Leaders, Divided Society**Introduction**

The covenant community of Israel is plagued by blind watchmen, wicked people, and an ungodly society. The watchmen of Israel are the prophets, priests, and kings. They are supposed to shepherd the people. However, they are not concerned about the people, but only about themselves. These worthless shepherds are described in passages such as Jeremiah 23:1-2, 9-40; Ezekiel 34:1-6, and Zechariah 11:4. This has a devastating effect upon society.

This is still true today. Many politicians, businessmen, and church leaders abuse those they are supposed to serve and instead look out only for themselves.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 56:9-57:13a

1. Who are the watchmen in Israel? What is the problem with them? (56:10)
2. What did the watchmen of Israel do? (56:11-12)
 1.
 2.
 3.
 4.

3. When the shepherds are corrupt, what happens to the righteous and the devout in the land? (57:1)
 1.
 2.
 3.
4. When only will the righteous ultimately find rest? (57:2)
5. Who metaphorically gives birth to these blind rebels? (57:3)
6. What are these blind watchmen like? (57:4b-5)
7. Whom do these blind watchmen worship? (57:6-7)
8. What is their actual religion known as? (57:8)
9. Who are their gods? (57:9)
10. Did they find any rest in their religion and their gods? (57:10)
11. Why did they forsake the LORD? (57:11)

12. What will the LORD do to them? (57:12-13a)

Reflection & Application _____

1. What happens when the watchmen of a nation are blind? (57:1-2)

2. What is their religion? Make a list of their practices to describe their religion. (57:3, 6-9)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

3. What will the LORD do? (57:12-13)

YAHWEH and his People**Introduction**

There are a waiting people who are expecting a new world. They are YAHWEH's people. While paganism is flourishing as the religion of the shepherds of Israel, the righteous in the land suffer. They hunger and thirst for righteousness, and they mourn, not only for their sin, but also for the sin of the nation at large.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 57:13b-21

1. What will the righteous inherit? What is the *holy mountain*? (57:13b)
2. Which road is the LORD speaking of? (57:14 cf. Isaiah 35:1-10)
3. How is YAHWEH described? (57:15a)
4. With whom does YAHWEH dwell? What will he do for them? (57:15b cf. Matthew 5:5)
5. What happens when the contrite and lowly sin? (57:16)
6. Why was YAHWEH filled with anger? And what will he do? (57:17)

7. What will YAHWEH do for the repentant? (57:18-19)

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

8. In contrast, what will be the outcome for the wicked? (57:20-21)

Reflection & Application _____

1. What does Jesus mean when he claims to be *the way*? (John 14:6)

2. Compare the idea of *the land* in this section with Matthew 5:5.

True Fasting and the Sabbath**Introduction**

The lowly and contrite are waiting for a New World. Isaiah sums up the situation in the land as follows:

Isaiah 56:1-8	The waiting people of God
Isaiah 56:9-57:21	The sad state of YAHWEH's waiting people
Isaiah 58:1-14	The Sabbath ideal
Isaiah 59:1-15a	The sad reality, a people conscious of their failings
Isaiah 59:15b-63:6	The LORD's plan

In Isaiah 58, the Sabbath ideal is described. The Sabbath ideal follows true repentance and lowliness, which will lead to blessing and rest. It brings about true love and concern for others, especially the vulnerable in society, such as the poor, the hungry, those without proper clothes, the day labourer, the prisoner, and the oppressed.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 58:1-14

1. What kind of message does Isaiah receive to convey to the wicked nation? (58:1 cf. Isaiah 6:5, 9-10)
2. What do the people of Israel do to receive such an indictment? (58:2)
3. What is wrong with their fasting? What is their heart attitude toward the LORD? (58:3)

4. What is abundantly clear from their behaviour? Do they fool YAHWEH? (58:3b-5)

5. Why do they strike each other? (58:4)

6. What kind of fasting does YAHWEH demand? Name seven actions. (58:6-7)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

7. Which six promises does the LORD guarantee when this behaviour comes from the heart? (58:8-9)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

8. What is real and proper fasting? (58:9b-10)

9. Which nine amazing promises of spiritual renewal does the LORD guarantee for the land if there is real fasting? (58:10b-12)

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.

10. What does the Sabbath signify to them? A sign of blessing or a burden? (58:13)

11. What happens when you see the Sabbath as an honour and a delight to the LORD? What will happen? (58:13b-14a)

12. What final guarantee is there? Can we trust in the promises of God? (58:14b)

Reflection & Application _____

1. How important is showing love to our neighbour at their point of need? What does 58:6-7 sound like? (cf. Matthew 25:31-40)

2. How can we, as believers, practically go about healing our land?

3. What will be the inevitable result as promised by the LORD?

A Desperate Situation**Introduction**

The people of Israel face a desperate situation with the imminent Babylonian invasion and subsequent exile. Still, the LORD is able to save them out of their trouble. Just as he saved them from the Assyrians in the past (Isaiah 36-37), he is able to save them from the coming Babylonian threat as well.

However, there is a problem. Their sins and iniquities separate them from God. There is no one righteous or just. They are quick to rush into evil and invent new ways of doing evil.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 59:1-8

1. Why does Isaiah say, "Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear?" (59:1 cf. Isaiah 36-37)

2. What prevents the LORD from hearing their prayers? Why does the LORD not save? (59:2-3 cf. Romans 1:28-32)

Name six things:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

3. What is the state of the nation at large? Does it literally mean that there is no one seeking justice or acting with integrity? (59:4)

1.

2.

3.

4.

4. What are the people of Judah like? Give a description. What is the result of their actions? (59:5-6)

5. What marks their action and thinking? (59:6b-8)

6. What are the chances that any of them can be saved?

Reflection & Application _____

1. What does our society look like? Are there any similarities to what is described by 59:3-4 with Romans 1:28-32?

2. Compare 6b-8 with Romans 3:10-18.

Isaiah 59:6-8

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Romans 3:10-18

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3. What is the natural state of man? (Romans 3:20)
4. What do we need to be saved? (Romans 3:21-24)

Lament for the Land**Introduction**

Not everyone is wicked. There is a small remnant in the land of those who still fear the LORD, just like the seven thousand during the days of Elijah, who did not bow the knee to Baal (1 Kings 19:18). However, they are overwhelmed by the wicked society in which they find themselves. They do not agree with the ways of their world, and they live in deep shadow. Their experience of life in the land is that they feel like stumbling in twilight, walking about as the dead. They moan like doves and growl like bears, yet deliverance seems to be far away.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 59:9-15a

1. What is the summary of the desperate situation the righteous find themselves in? (59:9)
2. What is the experience of the righteous in the land? (59:10)
3. What is their pain and why? (59:11)
4. Do the righteous dissociate themselves from the sins of their society? (59:12a)
5. How do they feel about the sins of their generation? (59:12b-13)

6. What is the result of such a wicked and godless society? (59:14)

1.

2.

3.

4.

7. What happens to those who want to do right? (59:15a)

Reflection & Application _____

1. How does this description compare with our experience today?

2. Do you identify with the sins and wickedness of your society and plead for God's deliverance? Or do you dissociate yourself from every wickedness going on and withdraw into your safe enclave?

3. What needs to happen in our land?

4. Is there any hope? Who will deliver us?

5. What is your experience of those who want to do right?

YAHWEH Prepared to Save**Introduction**

The situation is desperate in Judah. The leaders of the nation, the shepherds, and the watchmen are corrupt. They are serving only themselves. They have no concern for the people. The people at large are as corrupt as their leaders, taking their cue from them. The last section ends with a lament by the righteous. Their lament is, "Will the LORD hear? Will the LORD save?" However, the LORD notices the state of the nation and decides to do something about it.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 59:15b-21

1. What does the LORD see and how does the LORD feel about the state of the covenant nation? (59:15b)
2. So, what is the LORD determined to do? (59:16b-17)
3. What kind of dress is described by the breastplate, helmet and garments of vengeance? (59:17)
4. Will the wicked get away with their rebellion? What will the LORD do? (59:18)
5. What will be the outcome for evildoers? (59:18b)

6. What will be the result of the LORD's action for the believers? (59:19)

Reflection & Application _____

1. Do we need to fear that the LORD is not hearing or seeing?
2. Will the LORD act against the wickedness of the individual and the society at large?
3. Compare 59:17 with Ephesians 6:13-16, the full armour of God.
4. Is this good news or bad news?
5. What will be the ultimate result across every evil society?

The Anointed Conqueror – Song 1**Introduction**

What is YAHWEH's solution to the problem of evil? Is it political or social reform? No, the LORD's people need a Redeemer. Therefore, the LORD's solution is a person.

This person is a figure called the Anointed Conqueror. In Isaiah 56 to 66, there are four poems or songs describing this Conqueror, just like the four songs of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 38 to 55.

They are the following:

1. **Isaiah 59:20-21**
2. Isaiah 61:1-3
3. Isaiah 61:10-62:7
4. Isaiah 63:1-6

Isaiah 59:20-21 is the first song of the Anointed Conqueror.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 59:20-21

1. What is the LORD's solution to the mourning of the righteous, the meek, and the lowly? (59:20a)

Note: What is God's answer to evil? God's answer to evil is a Person! According to the LORD's word to Habakkuk: "Though **he** lingers, wait for it; **he** will certainly come, and **he** will not delay."
Habakkuk 2:3

2. In what manner will the LORD come? (59:20)

3. For whom will the Redeemer come? (59:20b)
4. To which city will he come? What is the significance of this name? (59:20)
5. What is the relationship between the LORD and his Deliverer? (59:21)
 1.
 2.
 3.
 4.
 5.
 6.
6. Where is the LORD's covenant with his people to be found? (59:21)
7. What will be the result in posterity for the Redeemer's children? And their children's children? (59:21)

Reflection & Application _____

1. Who is this Redeemer the LORD will send? (59:20)
2. How many persons are mentioned in 59:20-21?
 1.
 2.
 3.
3. With which two things will the Redeemer come? (59:21)
4. What will the LORD do for those who heed the Redeemer's words?
5. Who are the Redeemer's children? (59:2 cf. Genesis 15:6; Galatians 3:27-29)

Zion, YAHWEH's Universal City - I**Introduction**

The Conqueror, or Redeemer, comes to deliver the people of Zion. They are those who are humble and contrite and seek righteousness and justice. They love and honour the LORD, and they will inhabit Zion.

What is Zion like? Is it an earthly city? What is Isaiah's teaching on this city? From Isaiah we learn that Zion is the city of righteousness (1:26), founded on the mountain of the LORD (2:3). The LORD dwells and reigns from Mount Zion (33:5; 24:23). The city is peaceful and eternal (33:20) and there is no sickness and no sin there (33:24). The way of holiness leads into this city (35:8). It is a city of joy (35:10; 51:11) and the LORD will one day return to this city (52:7-8).

All the songs of the Anointed Conqueror are followed by a description of Zion, except for the last, which is followed by a prayer.

1. Isaiah 59:20-21	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 60:1-22
2. Isaiah 61:1-3	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 61:4-9
3. Isaiah 61:10-62:7	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 62:8-12
4. Isaiah 63:1-6	A Prayer for Zion	Isaiah 63:7-14
		Isaiah 63:15-64:12

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 60:1-10

1. Who exactly is the Redeemer, and what will he do for Zion? (60:1-2)
2. What must the city of Zion and its inhabitants, the people of God, do when the Redeemer comes? (60:1)

3. What is the difference between the citizens of Zion and the people of the world? (60:2)
4. Where will the nations go to escape from the darkness that is over them? (60:3)
5. Who all will become citizens of Zion? (60:4 cf. 59:19)
6. Which blessings will be the result for the people of Zion? (60:5-7)
 1.
 2.
 3.
 4.
 5.
6. What will the nations bring to Zion, and what is the significance of this? (60:8-9)
7. What will happen to the city? (60:10)

Reflection & Application _____

1. Are you a citizen of Zion? (Hebrews 12:22-24)

2. How does one become a citizen of Zion? (Psalm 87)

3. How do you see the future of Zion in your own words?

4. Do you believe this wholeheartedly?

5. Compare Isaiah 60:3-10 with Revelation 21:23-27.

Zion, YAHWEH's Universal City - II**Introduction**

We read of a triumphal procession in Isaiah 60:11:

Your gates will always stand open, they will never be shut, day or night, so that men may bring you the wealth of the nations--their kings led in triumphal procession.

A triumphal procession means the humiliation of the nations, as they are led before the victorious citizens of Zion and her Redeemer as defeated enemies. It also means that the best of what the nations have will be given over to Zion.

1. Isaiah 59:20-21	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 60:1-22
2. Isaiah 61:1-3	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 61:4-9
3. Isaiah 61:10-62:7	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 62:8-12
4. Isaiah 63:1-6	A Prayer for Zion	Isaiah 63:7-14
		Isaiah 63:15-64:12

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 60:11-22

1. What is the meaning of "so that men may bring you the wealth of the nations--their kings led in triumphal procession"? (60:11)
2. Will the enemies of Zion prevail? (60:12)
3. Which blessings will be bestowed on Zion? (60:13-14a)

4. What will the city be called? (60:14b cf. Psalm 87; Psalm 125; Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 11:10, Hebrews 12:22-24; Hebrews 13:14)
5. Which transformation will Zion experience? (60:15-16a)
6. What will the people of YAHWEH know? (60:16b-17)
7. What will no longer be found in the city? (60:18 cf. Revelation 21:4-5)
8. Who will give the city its light? (60:19-20 cf. Revelation 21:23; 22:5)
9. Who will possess the land? (60:21 cf. Matthew 5:5)
10. Who guarantees the outcome? Who will do it? (60:22)

Reflection & Application _____

1. How will Zion change from their time to when the Conqueror comes?
(Revelation 10:10-11:3; 21:22-27)
2. In the current state of affairs, what is happening to the believers?
Who is led in a triumphal procession in the current age?

1 Corinthians 4:9-13

2 Corinthians 2:14-16

3. How does the triumphal procession in 60:1 differ from 1 Corinthians 4:9 and 2 Corinthians 2:14-16?
4. How will they triumph over their enemies to experience (60:11)?

The Anointed Conqueror – Song 2

Introduction

The Anointed Conqueror is introduced in 59:20-21. He comes with the Spirit and the Word of YAHWEH. In the second song, the Anointed Conqueror himself speaks in the 1st person and announces *'the Year of the LORD's favour.'* He does not end there, but he also announces *'a Day of Vengeance'* and of a future comfort for those who mourn.

1. Isaiah 59:20-21	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 60:1-22
2. Isaiah 61:1-3	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 61:4-9
3. Isaiah 61:10-62:7	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 62:8-12
4. Isaiah 63:1-6	A Prayer for Zion	Isaiah 63:7-14
		Isaiah 63:15-64:12

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 61:1-3

- Whose Spirit is on the Anointed Conqueror? (61:1)

Note: *The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD, ruach Adonai YAHWEH.*
(רוּחַ אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה)

- How many persons are mentioned in 61:1?

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3. What is the first part of the message of the Conqueror's proclamation? (61:1-2a)
 1.
 2.
 3.
 4.
 5.
4. Who fulfilled the words of this prophecy in history? What did he add at the end when he uttered these very words? (Luke 4:17-21)
5. Why did Jesus stop at 60:2a? What did he come to do? (Luke 4:17)
Why did he leave out 61:2b?
6. What is the meaning of the second part of the Conqueror's announcement? (61:2b-3)
 1.
 2.
 3.
 4.
 5.
 6.
7. When will *the Day of Vengeance* be? (61:2b)
8. When only will the citizens of Zion be fully comforted? (61:2c-3)

9. Who are the oaks of righteousness? What does it mean? (61:3c)

Reflection & Application _____

1. Which blessings presently belong to the believer? (61:1-2a cf. Matthew 5:3; 10-11)

2. For which blessings does the fulfilment still lie in the future? (61:2b-3 cf. Matthew 5:4-9)

Zion and the Waiting People**Introduction**

This second description of the city called Zion once again follows straight after the work of the Conqueror, just as in the first song (60:1-22).

1. Isaiah 59:20-21	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 60:1-22
2. Isaiah 61:1-3	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 61:4-9
3. Isaiah 61:10-62:7	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 62:8-12
4. Isaiah 63:1-6	A Prayer for Zion	Isaiah 63:7-14
		Isaiah 63:15-64:12

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 61:4-9

1. Which city's ruins will be rebuilt? (61:4)
2. Who will rebuild the ancient ruins of Zion? (61:1-3)
3. The words *aliens* and *foreigners* are descriptions of something supernatural about this city, not something literal. What does it mean? (61:5)
4. What will the citizens of Zion be called? How will they live? (61:6 cf. 1 Peter 2:9)

5. What will the citizens of Zion receive? What will they experience? (60:7)
6. What does the LORD love and what does he hate? How will he reward the citizens of Zion? (61:8)
7. What will they be known as? (61:9)

Reflection & Application _____

1. Is Zion an earthly or a heavenly city?
2. Who are the ones who will rebuild Zion?
3. How will this be fulfilled?

The Anointed Conqueror – Song 3**Introduction**

In the first song, the Anointed Conqueror is introduced (Isaiah 59:20-21). In the second song, the Conqueror speaks about his two-part mission (Isaiah 61:1-3): the *year of the LORD's favour* and the *day of Vengeance* and *comfort for his people*. Here follows the 3rd Song of the Anointed Conqueror. In this third song, the Conqueror speaks about his work of salvation (Isaiah 61:10-62:7).

1. Isaiah 59:20-21	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 60:1-22
2. Isaiah 61:1-3	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 61:4-9
3. Isaiah 61:10-62:7	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 62:8-12
4. Isaiah 63:1-6	A Prayer for Zion	Isaiah 63:7-14
		Isaiah 63:15-64:12

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 61:10-62:7

1. Who is speaking in the first person? (61:10; 62:1)
2. What does it mean that the Conqueror delights greatly in the LORD? (61:10a)
3. What is the reason for the Conqueror's delight and joy? (61:10b)
4. What will the LORD do through the Conqueror? (61:11)

5. What will the Conqueror do until Zion is established? What attitude does the Conqueror display toward Zion? (62:1)
6. What will the nations notice about Zion? Who will be given a new name? (62:2)
7. Who is loved by the LORD and is his pride? What will they and their land no longer be called? (62:3-4)
8. What do the words *Hephzibah* and *Beulah* mean, and what do they convey about the LORD's relationship to Zion? (62:3-4)
9. Why will the LORD God rejoice over Zion? What will be his relationship with Zion? (62:5 cf. Revelation 21:1-3)
10. Who did the Conqueror place on the walls of the New Jerusalem or Zion? What is their task? What must they never stop doing? (62:6)
11. Who must they give no rest? (62:6b-7a)
12. Until when must they continue with their task? (62:7b cf. 62:1)
13. How does the LORD (62:6b) differ from 'I' in 62:1?

Reflection & Application _____

1. What is the meaning of 62:2? (cf. Revelation 3:12-13)

2. Who is the Bride of the Lamb? (John 3, Revelation 21)

3. How do these watchmen differ from the wicked watchmen of Israel? Do you see the contrast? (62:6b; 56:10-12)

4. Who is speaking in the first person in 61:1-3 and 61:10-62:6? Why is this significant? (cf. Luke 4:21)

Zion and YAHWEH's Oath**Introduction**

As far as Zion is concerned, the LORD declares a great oath, issues a great call, and makes a great promise.

- The LORD's oath (62:8-9).
- The LORD's call (62:10).
- The LORD's promises (62:11-12).

1. Isaiah 59:20-21	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 60:1-22
2. Isaiah 61:1-3	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 61:4-9
3. Isaiah 61:10-62:7	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 62:8-12
4. Isaiah 63:1-6	A Prayer for Zion	Isaiah 63:7-14
		Isaiah 63:15-64:12

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 62:8-12

1. What can Zion and its citizens be sure of? (62:8)
2. Who is the LORD's right hand and his mighty arm? (62:8 cf. Psalm 80:17; Isaiah 51:9; 52:10; 53:1; 63:12)
3. What do *harvest*, *grapes*, and *drink* speak of in this context? (62:9 cf. Revelation 19:7, 9)

4. Who alone will be able to pass through the gates of Zion? (62:10; cf. 35:8-10; Revelation 22:14)
5. Who are '*the people*' and who are '*the nations*'? (62:10)
6. What is this highway? (Isaiah 35:8-10; 40:3; 62:10)
7. Who all may come? (62:11)
8. What is the Promise? (62:11 cf. Revelation 22:12)
9. What must Zion know? (62:11)
10. What will happen to 'the daughter of Zion'? (62:11)
11. What will be Zion's future name? (62:12)

Reflection & Application

1. What can you say about the people of Zion? (63:11 cf. Psalm 87)
2. What can you say about the city? (63:11)
3. Can the one exist without the other? (Revelation 21:1-9)

The Anointed Conqueror – Song 4**Introduction**

In the second song (Isaiah 61:1-3), we read of the Conqueror's double mission, first to bless and later to bring vengeance and comfort.

Jesus's initial mission was *the year of the LORD's favour*. Jesus read from the scroll of Isaiah (61:1-2a) in the synagogue in Capernaum:

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour...

Jesus then refers to this first part of the work of the Conqueror, and he adds, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21).

Jesus purposefully leaves out the part that speaks of *the day of vengeance of our God* in 61:2b and the promises in 61:3, as all of this still lies in the future. In this fourth song of the Conqueror, more details of what will happen on *the day of vengeance* are given.

1. Isaiah 59:20-21	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 60:1-22
2. Isaiah 61:1-3	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 61:4-9
3. Isaiah 61:10-62:7	A Description of Zion	Isaiah 62:8-12
4. Isaiah 63:1-6	A Prayer for Zion	Isaiah 63:7-14
		Isaiah 63:15-64:12

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 63:1-6

1. Who is asking the question in 63:1?

2. What does Isaiah see? (63:1a, b)
3. Which answer does Isaiah receive? (63:1c)
4. What does Isaiah want to know? (63:2)
5. Which answer does Isaiah receive? (63:3)
6. In the context of Isaiah 56-66, who is this figure?
7. Which Day of Vengeance was this? (61:4; 61:2b)
8. Who would be there to help the Anointed Conqueror? (63:5)
9. What did the Conqueror do? (63:6)

Reflection & Application _____

1. Why is the whole of 63:3-6 written in the past tense, even though these events still lie in the future?
2. Which day does Joel 3:13 and Revelation 14:17-20 speak of?
3. How do Revelation 19:11-16 and 17-21 fulfil Isaiah 63:1-6?
4. What other kind of grape harvest is there apart from the one signifying celebration and joy? (Deuteronomy 32:32-33; Joel 3:13; Revelation 14:18-20)

The Watchman's Prayer - Recollection**Introduction**

Three persons are again mentioned in this section, namely, the Father, the Holy Spirit, and the Angel of YAHWEH's Presence. Notice that this was the case in Isaiah 48:16; 59:20-21; and 61:1 as well. This is, of course, a problem for those who deny the fact that three persons are involved in the salvation of God's people.

As commissioned by YAHWEH, a prayer is offered continuously by the watchmen on the walls of Zion. The watchmen may never rest, and they may also give the LORD no rest until Zion is established as the praise of the earth (Isaiah 62:6-7). Likewise, the Conqueror will not rest until Zion's righteousness shines out like the dawn and her salvation like a blazing torch (Isaiah 62:1).

In this passage, it is an individual watchman who prays, perhaps Isaiah. Alec Motyer calls this prayer *the Remembrancer's Prayer*. What makes up the first part of the prayer? The first part consists of telling God about God! This is consistent with the Lord's Prayer taught by Jesus to his disciples (Matthew 6:9-11).

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 63:7-14

1. What does the watchman remember about YAHWEH and praise him for? (63:7)

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

2. Who is the person called YAHWEH in this prayer? (63:7 cf. 63:16; 64:8)
3. What does YAHWEH have to say about his people? What did YAHWEH do for Zion in the past, as the watchman recalls? (63:8)
4. How does the suffering of his people affect the LORD? (63:9)
5. What did the LORD do for his people in the past? Which period in Israel's history is the watchman referring to? (63:9)
6. What happened when the people rebelled? What did the covenant people of God do? (63:10)
7. How did the LORD respond when the covenant people rebelled against him? (63:10)
8. Which events are Isaiah describing and recollecting? (63:11-14)
9. Who accompanied Moses in the days of Old? (63:11-14)
10. Who gave the LORD's people rest? (63:14)

11. Why was the reason for the LORD doing this? (63:14b)

Reflection & Application _____

1. What should be the focus of the first part of the believer's prayer? (63:7-14)
2. How does this compare with the first part of the LORD's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-10?
3. Which three persons are mentioned in 63:7-16?
 1. 63:16; 64:8
 2. 63:10,11,14
 3. 63:9,12
4. Who is the Angel of the LORD's Presence? (63:9 cf. Exodus 14:19; 23:20-23)
5. How does the Anointed Conqueror differ from the Angel of God's presence?

The Watchman's Prayer - Request**Introduction**

Prayer has to be offered continuously (62:6-7) by the watchmen on the walls of Zion. The watchmen may never rest, and they may give the LORD no rest until Jerusalem is established and becomes the praise of the whole earth. As mentioned before, in this section, the prayer of an individual watchman, the *Remembrancer's Prayer*, is recorded.

What is the first part of this prayer? It consists of telling God about God, and recalling the LORD's glorious acts of salvation. This is consistent with the Lord's Prayer taught by Jesus to his disciples (Matthew 6:9-11).

What is the second part of *the Remembrancer's prayer* all about? The focus is on the needs of the believers. Compare this with the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:11-13).

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 63:15-64:12

1. What kind of prayer is this, and who is it aimed at? (63:15-16)
2. What does it mean that 'Abraham does not know us or Israel acknowledge us'? (63:16 cf. Galatians 4:25-26)
3. What do the people do? (63:17 cf. Matthew 6:13a)

4. What does the watchman pray? (63:18-19)
5. What does the watchman cry? 64:1-2 Can the watchman ever cease to pray? (cf. 62:6-7)
6. Which event does the watchman remember when the LORD came down? (64:3)
7. What does God do for those who wait on him and remember his ways? (64:4-5a)
8. What happens when God's people sin? (64:5b-6 cf. Psalm 30:2-5; 8-10; Psalm 32:3-5)
9. What do the righteous realise about the people in the land? (64:7)
10. Yet, what do they ultimately realise about God? (64:8-9)
11. What is the problem with the earthly Jerusalem? (64:10-11 cf. Galatians 4:25-26)
12. Will the LORD save when his people repent and call out for mercy? (64:11)

Reflection & Application _____

1. Compare Isaiah 63:15-64:12 with Romans 3:9-20.

2. What should be the focus of the second part of the believer's prayer? (63:15-64:12)
Compare this with the LORD's Prayer in Matthew 6:11-13.

3. Does God make people sin? (63:17 cf. Matthew 6:13; James 1:13-15).

YAHWEH's Response to the Watchman**Introduction**

Paganism was rife in Judah before the exile. These pagan practices found their way into the religious life of the covenant people. Paganism is closer to our hearts than we actually may realise.

Even Christianity can be and is paganised in many ways and places. Using certain holy practices, such as communion and baptism, in an esoteric or magical, mystical way is also a form of paganism. Any prayer that is just a repetition of words, empty meditation, or making demands on God is the same. Any holy practice used without faith or in an unbiblical way makes it meaningless.

Then there are certain so-called 'church practices' that are clearly against the Word of God, such as *grave soaking*, *slaying in the spirit*, *conversations and interaction with angelic beings*, and claimed *visits to heaven*. This practice of religion was and still is an abomination to God.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 65:1-12

1. Who are those who did not seek the LORD? (65:1 cf. Hosea 2:23)
2. What is happening to the covenant people of God? (65:2-3a cf. Matthew 23:37)

3. What are the elements of paganism? What is so ironic about this? (65:3-5)
 1.
 2.
 3.
 4.
 5.
 6.
4. How does the LORD feel about this? Why is this so repugnant to the LORD? (65:6b)
5. What will the LORD's wrath bring about? (65:6-7)
6. Among the covenant community, are there still some people who fear the LORD? Servants of the LORD? (65:8)
7. Who are the descendants of Jacob and Judah? (65:9 cf. Genesis 15:1-6, 18; Galatians 3:26-29)

Note: **Sharon** symbolises deterioration (33:4) as well as messianic renewal (35:2). One day, Sharon will be what it was meant to be, and the nations will be the ones begging. **Achor** symbolises a bright beginning that was marred (Joshua 7:24-25).

(Motyer, 2011, p.308)

8. Who or what is *Fortune* and *Destiny*? (65:11)

9. Ironically, what will be the destiny of these wicked people? (65:12)
10. Why will the LORD destine them for slaughter? (65:12b)

Reflection & Application _____

1. What is paganism essentially all about? (Romans 1:18-23)
2. Why are both their own sins, as well as the sins of their fathers, reckoned to their account for punishment? (65:7) Does it not contradict the principle in Ezekiel 18:20?

A New Creation, Zion Established**Introduction**

A day is coming when all of creation as we know it will end (Isaiah 13:10; 34:4). This day will mark the end of the present heavens and the earth, and all of human history. There will be a great divide, and all of mankind will be divided and destined for two ultimate eternal destinies (Daniel 12:1-3).

A number of the prophets speak of this day, namely Ezekiel, Daniel, Joel, Amos, Zephaniah, Zechariah, Malachi, and, of course, Isaiah. At this time, YAHWEH will bring about a new creation, as the old things will pass away. He will realise the ideal of Zion and a new and holy people who will dwell in this eternal city.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 65:13-25

1. What will be the division YAHWEH uses when he refers to '*my servants*' and '*you*'? (65:13-14)

'Servants'

'You'

.....
.....
.....
.....

.....
.....
.....
.....

2. What will be the outcome for the wicked? (65:15)

3. Who will be the only ones to dwell in the land? (65:16)
4. What is this land that the Sovereign LORD is referring to? (65:17-18 cf. Revelation 21:1-3)
5. What does the New Jerusalem consist of? What will there no longer be? (65:19 cf. Revelation 21:4)
6. Which ideas does the description of long life, houses and vineyards, and joy signify? (65:20-21)
7. What will be the perpetual state that the inhabitants of this new Jerusalem will enjoy?
8. Where will the LORD himself be? Will the LORD hear? (65:24)
9. What is the meaning of *“the wolf and the lamb will lie together”* and *“the lion eat straw like an ox”*? (65:25 cf. 11:6-9)

Reflection & Application _____

1. What do the *new heavens and the new earth* sound like? (Revelation 21:1-2)

2. What will no longer be in effect? (Revelation 21:4)

3. Is the New Jerusalem a people or a place or both? (Revelation 21:10)

4. Who will be the citizens of this city? (Revelation 21:27)

The Arrival of the End**Introduction**

The LORD will one day return. It is called *the Day of the LORD* or *that day*. Then the end will come. The old age will give way to a new age. More than one hundred and sixty years after Isaiah, the prophet Daniel speaks of this time as '*the arrival of the end*' (Daniel 12:4, 9).

Many other prophets prophesy the Day of the LORD in passages, such as Isaiah 22:5; Jeremiah 46:10; Ezekiel 30:3; Zephaniah 1:13-15; Joel 3:13-15 and Zechariah 12:8.

It will be a day of great joy for the people of YAHWEH, the righteous waiting people. However, it will be a day of great anguish and disaster for the wicked, the rebels, and the haters of God.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 66:1-17

1. What is YAHWEH yearning for? (66:1)
2. Even though YAHWEH created all things and is indescribable in his majesty, glory, and power, who does he esteem? (66:2 cf. 57:15)
3. How does YAHWEH feel about the wicked and their good works and sacrifices? (66:3)
4. What is the wicked like? (66:3b)

5. What did the wicked do when the LORD called? (66:4)
6. What is the good news for those who fear the LORD and the bad news for those who reject the LORD? (66:5-6 cf. Revelation 18)
7. What is the meaning of '*before she goes into labour, she gives birth*'? (66:7)
8. What is the birth of Zion, a nation brought forth in a day? (66:8 cf. Revelation 21:1-3; Daniel 12:1-2)
9. How do we know that this will surely happen? (66:9)

Reflection & Application _____

On the birth of Zion:

1. When in time were Zion's people saved?
2. What is the state of the believer now? (Psalm 87; Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 12:22-24)
3. When will Zion be actualised? (Revelation 21-22)

The New Jerusalem**Introduction**

The Jerusalem that will exist at the end of time will be totally different from the Jerusalem now (Galatians 4:25-26). In the book of Revelation, the apostle John is told to measure the sanctuary and the altar but to leave out the outer court and the city, as it is overrun by the Gentiles (unbelievers). It will remain so for three and a half years, which is the Gospel Age. However, in the New Jerusalem, only those who have had their robes washed in the blood of the Lamb may enter the city.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Isaiah 66:10-24

1. Who will be the citizens of the New Jerusalem? (66:10)
2. What will be the blessing of its citizens? (66:11-12)
3. How will the LORD end the inhabitants of Jerusalem's mourning? (66:13-14)
4. What will happen to the LORD's enemies? (66:14b-15)
5. What will the LORD do to them? (66:16)

6. What is the difference between those inside the city and those outside? (66:17 cf. Revelation 22)

7. Who will the LORD gather into the city? (66:18)

Note: In Revelation 11:1-3, John is given the task to *measure* only the temple and the altar of the Holy City. He has to exclude the outer court and the city, for it would be trampled by the Gentiles. In context that means the unbelievers. This trampling will continue for three and a half years, which signifies the Gospel Age. However, in Revelation 21:15-21, the whole city is *measured*, because only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will be there (Revelation 21:27). Nothing impure will ever enter it again.

8. Who are the survivors and what will they do? (66:19)

9. What will happen to their brothers? (66:20-21)

10. Will the new heavens and the new earth ever end? (66:22-23)
What is the outcome for the righteous?

11. What will happen to the wicked and how will the people of the LORD respond? (66:24 cf. Matthew 24-25)

Reflection & Application _____

1. Which two outcomes are there only?
2. What is this city? (Hebrews 11:10; Hebrews 12:22-24; Hebrews 13:14; Galatians 4:26)
3. Who lives there? (Psalm 87; Revelation 20:15; 21:27)
4. Compare 66:24b with Daniel 12:1-2 and Revelation 20:12-15.

The Book of the Conqueror

As we come to the end of this glorious prophecy of the Conqueror, we recognise more fully the deep meaning of the following:

1. The already but not yet.

The accomplished redemption of the LORD's people is described in the work of the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 40-55). Salvation is accomplished, but not yet completed. Our spirits have been made new; however, our physical bodies are still living in frustration and under the curse of sin and death. We are living in the time between the finished work of the Servant and the coming of the Conqueror.

2. Sabbath and rest.

The LORD's ideal for his people's rest is the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a foretaste of YAHWEH's eternal blessing and rest. Those who will experience the Sabbath rest of God are those who exhibit true fasting, love for the LORD, and love for their neighbour. This is recognised by their joy and delight in the Sabbath (58:13-14).

3. Blind watchmen and the watchmen of the Conqueror.

The watchmen of Israel and Judah have no compassion for the people, but serve only themselves. They have no knowledge and are fast asleep. The righteous suffer and yearn for the LORD to deliver them. The LORD will do this through his agent, the Anointed Conqueror. The Conqueror installs watchmen on the walls of Zion, the eternal city. They must cry out without ceasing to YAHWEH, giving themselves as well as YAHWEH no rest until the New Jerusalem is established as the praise of all the earth (62:6-7).

4. The songs of the Anointed Conqueror.

Just as there are four songs of the Suffering Servant, there are also four songs describing the person and work of the Anointed Conqueror. What did he accomplish, and what is still outstanding? They describe his Person, his two-part mission, and his zeal and love for Zion and her children.

5. The earthly Jerusalem and Zion, the city of God.

There is an earthly city called Jerusalem, which fails to live up to YAHWEH's ideal.

However, there is a place called Zion. This is the city where God dwells, the city of holiness. The citizens of Zion are the meek and the lowly. The contrite and the repentant. Although they have present citizenship in Zion, they are yearning for the day that Zion will be actualised (65:18-19). This New Jerusalem will be established and a new nation born in a day. The new heavens and new earth will be formed, and Zion will be established. The citizenship of Zion will become an eternal reality (66:7-13).

6. The mission of Zion's children.

We are living in the time of the Gospel Age. The time between the coming of the Suffering Servant and the Anointed Conqueror. During this time, Zion's children must command all nations everywhere to repent and to believe the good news of Zion and its Redeemer so that they too can become citizens of Zion (61:1-2a). When he returns, he will come as the Anointed Conqueror to comfort his people and take vengeance on his enemies (61:2b-3).

7. Two separate destinies.

There are two distinct and separate destinies. The redeemed people of the Anointed Conqueror and the children of wickedness and rebellion will end at different destinies (65:9-15). There is a destiny for the wicked (66:6) and another for those who fear the LORD (66:7-8). The anointed Conqueror will save his people (66:12-13) and mete out punishment against the wicked (66:15-16).

8. A New Heavens and a New Earth.

Believers live in a time of great frustration because of a broken world and persecution, since we belong to a different Kingdom. A day is coming when a new creation will be formed (65:17-25). There will be no more death, frustration, or curse. This broken world will be done away with, and everything made new. This new and perfect world will remain forever.

9. The LORD, the Holy Spirit, and the Anointed Conqueror.

Many Christians do not realise that the understanding of the Father, his Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit is not only a New Testament idea, but is also present in the Old Testament. Some of the passages are: The Father (63:7; 63:16, 64:8), the Holy Spirit (59:21; 61:1; 63:10,11,14), and the Redeemer / the Anointed Conqueror / the Angel of YAHWEH's Presence / the LORD's Arm of Power (59:20; 63:1-3; 63:9; 63:12).

May we keep yearning for the day of YAHWEH's eternal rest in Zion when the Anointed Conqueror returns and Zion is established.

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