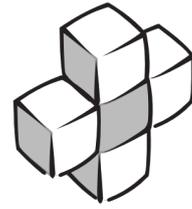


SMACC
Making Disciples of Jesus Christ



Bible Study Series:

Isaiah



Our Mission:

*To glorify God together in response to his grace
by making disciples of Jesus Christ*

About These Studies

These studies were written for use among university students. You are most welcome to use and adapt these studies for your own context. Where you do so please provide the following acknowledgment.

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Study 1: “Genuine Religion” (Isaiah 1)

Getting Started

1. What does genuine (authentic) religion look like?

Tonight, we will begin looking at the book of **Isaiah**. It was written over 2700 years ago and is one of the most important books of the bible. It is here that the big picture of God’s purposes for his people and for his world is most clearly set forth.

It is the second most quoted book in the Old Testament. Its two big themes are **judgement and hope**. By far the greatest importance of this book lies in the witness it bears to Jesus Christ.

At the very outset of his public ministry, this book was placed in Jesus’ hands and he read from it. Jesus claimed to be the fulfilment of this book. If we want to understand fully who Jesus is and what he came to do, **we must read this book**.

Digging In

Read Isaiah 1:1

2. Who is Isaiah written by? What is it about? (v1)

Read Isaiah 1:2-9

3. How has Judah treated God? (v2-4)

4. a. What is God doing about this? (v5-6)

- b. What does this terrible judgement look like? (v7-9)

Read Isaiah 1:10-20

5. How are the people of Judah trying to gain God’s good opinion? (v10-15a)

6. Why does God detest (strongly hate) their religious activities? (v15-17)

7. a. In what ways do people today act the same way as Judah?

b. How does God feel about these empty religious practices? (v12-14)

8. What does God desire instead of empty religious practices?
(v16b-17, c.f. *Jeremiah 7:21-23, Hosea 6:6, Micah 6:6-8*)

9. In what ways could we tell if OUR religion was genuine or fake? (c.f. James 1:27)

10. God gives the people an amazing offer. Fill out the following table:

God's Amazing Offer (v18)	
If They Accept It (v19)	
If They Refuse It (v20)	

Read Revelation 7:13-17

11. How does God bring about this cleansing of sin?

12. What is God's ultimate goal for his people?

Thinking it Through

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23)

13. Have you accepted God’s offer of complete forgiveness or are you continue to reject it?

Read Isaiah 1:21-31

14. a. How has Judah’s rebellion against God affected the city of Jerusalem? (v21-23)

b. How are many cities in our world today just like Jerusalem?

15. God cares about justice. How will God restore justice in his city? (v24-31)

Application

16. As citizens of God’s heavenly city, what will genuine religion look like for Christians?
(*c.f. James 1:27, Hebrews 12:22-13:5*)

Study 2: “The Proud Humbled & God Alone Exalted” (Isaiah 2)

Recap

1. On half a sheet of cardboard, draw a picture of:
 - a. What the people of Judah and Jerusalem are like
 - b. How God responded to them

Getting Started

2. What do you consider to be your greatest achievement?

Last week we began our journey through the book of **Isaiah**. We saw that God is angry when people rebel against him. We learnt that **genuine religion** involves not just following traditions or rules, but a love for God that causes action, especially in seeking to show mercy, justice and obedience.

We also saw **God’s amazing offer** of complete forgiveness for our sins, and life forever with him.

Tonight, we will see God’s plans for the future where he alone will be exalted as king over all. We will also see what God thinks about pride and human achievement.

Digging In

Read Isaiah 2:1-5

3. a. What will Jerusalem be like in the ‘latter days’? (v2-4)

b. Who is involved in this? (v2-4)

c. Why are the nations going up to the house of God? (v3)

4. a. On the other half of the cardboard, draw a picture of what the future Jerusalem will be like.

b. What is the difference between this Jerusalem and the Jerusalem described in chapter 1?

5. What is meant by the title ‘Jacob’ in verse 5?

6. What should Judah do given God’s plans for Jerusalem? (v5)

7. When do you think these “latter days” are talking about? Why? (Hebrews 12:18-24)

Read Isaiah 2:6-22

8. Fill out the following table

	What are the people trusting and exalting instead of God?
v6b	
v6c	
v7a	
v7b	
v8	

9. a. What is the core of Jacob's problem?(v9-11, 17)

b. What is going to be done about it? (v11-18, 1:29-31)

c. What will be the outcome? (v11, 17)

**"The eyes of the arrogant man will be humbled and the pride of men brought low;
the LORD alone will be exalted in that day." (Isaiah 2:11)**

Thinking it Through

10. a. How do people in our world show the same pride and arrogance, exalting themselves and their achievements instead of God?

b. Why do you think people do this?

c. Think about your greatest achievements. What else are we tempted to take pride in?

The Day of the Lord

11. a. What will this day of the Lord be like for those who are proud and arrogant? Why? (v10, 19, 21)
- b. What will they do with the things they used to trust and worship? Why? (v19-21)
12. When will this 'Day of the Lord' will be? (Revelation 6:9-17)
13. What is the only logical response to all this? Why? (v22)

Application

14. a. Think back to verses 1-5. Instead of being proud and exalting ourselves, how should we live?
- b. Have you humbled yourself before God, exalting him as the King over all?
15. Why does God detest (strongly hate) their religious activities? (v15-17)

**"For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."
(Luke 14:11)**

Study 3: “The Holy God and his Sinful Servant” (Isaiah 6)

Getting Started

1. How do you think you would respond if you came face-to-face with God?

Recap

In Isaiah chapter 1, we witnessed the terrible state of Israel. They had rejected the Lord, their religion was false and hypocritical and God’s judgement had subsequently come upon them. The offer of forgiveness nonetheless remained for those who would repent.

But in the last days Jerusalem would be different. God alone would be exalted as king over all. On that day he would judge, bringing down all the proud, who exalted in their own achievements instead of exalting God. Finally, God’s purposes for his world would be fulfilled as Zion became the source of blessing for both Israel and the nations it was always meant to be.

Today, we will study the call of Isaiah and what happened when he, a sinful man, came into the presence of the Holy God.

Digging In

Read Isaiah 6:1-7

2. Who does Isaiah see? How is he described? (v1-2)

3. List the words or phrases used to describe God and his activity (e.g. Who is he? Where is he? What is he doing? etc.) What does each of these words or phrases tell us about God’s character?

Description	Meaning

4. Why is Isaiah so fearful in Isaiah 6:5?

Half Read Leviticus 16:1-14

5. What do we learn about who could approach God, and when and how he could do so?

Half Read 2 Chronicles 26:16-21

6. What is the danger in trying to come before God on our own terms?

7. What is done about Isaiah's problem? (v6-7, cf. Ex 30:1-6, Isaiah 1:18)

Read Isaiah 6:8-13

8. What was the message that Isaiah was to preach? (v9-10)

9. How long is Isaiah instructed to preach to the Israelites? Why? (v11-13)

10. How does this message of judgement relate to God's holiness?

11. Are there any signs of hope for Israel?

Read John 12:36-43

12. Who did Isaiah really see in the temple?

13. How was Jesus' ministry similar to Isaiah's? (cf. Mark 4:10-12)

Thinking it Through

Read Hebrews 9:1-14

14. How do we have access to God now?

15. Why can we have confidence in approaching God? (cf. Roman 3:25)

16. Why is it so foolish to approach God without Jesus?

Application

17. What would you say to a non-Christian who wanted God to appear before them?

Study 4: “The Spirit Filled King” (Isaiah 11-12)

Getting Started

1. What do you think the perfect king would be like?

Recap

2. Think back over the story of Isaiah so far.
 - a. How is it a story of God’s judgement?

 - b. How is it a story of hope for the future?

Tonight we will continue our journey through the book of **Isaiah**. Last week we met the **Holy God**. We saw that he was high and exalted. Unclean people could not stand before him, but would be judged. We learnt that through Jesus we can have our **sin atoned for** so we can stand before him.

This week we will meet **God’s Spirit-Filled King**. We will see that he is the one who is going to restore Jerusalem and gather people from all nations to God’s Holy mountain. We will see that **the Old Testament finds its fulfilment in Jesus**.

Digging In

Read Isaiah 6:8-13

3.
 - a. What kind of message did Isaiah give to the people of Judah? (v8-13)

 - b. What glimpse of hope is there? (v13)

Read Isaiah 11:1-9

4.
 - a. What is going to come out of this stump of Jesse? (v1)

 - b. Who was Jesse and who came from Jesse? (See 1 Samuel 16:1-13)

 - c. What then does it mean that a shoot will come from the stump of Jesse? (v1)

5. Fill out this table

What kind of Spirit will be upon this King?	What will this King like?
v2b	v3b-4a
v2c	v4b
v2d	v3a
	v5

6. a. What will happen to the creation when this King is ruling?(v6-9)

b. Can you ever imagine the situation depicted in verses 6-9?
If not, why not? If so, when?

7. a. Where else did we learn about God's holy mountain (v9)?
How is it similar to the mountain described here?

b. What does this tell you about who the King being described here might be?

Read Isaiah 11:10-16

8. a. Who is this King going to gather to follow him? (v10)

b. How will he be treated? (v10)

c. How does this remind you of the King of the Mountain in Chapter 2?

9. What will this King create for himself? (v12-16)

10. When do you think that all these prophecies will be fulfilled?

Read Matthew 3:13-17

11. Who is the King who has God's Spirit resting on him?

Read Romans 15:8-12

12. a. How is this prophecy in Isaiah fulfilled?

b. How does show us how we should read the Old Testament? (cf. Luke 24:27, 44-47)

Application

Read Isaiah 12

13. How should we respond to this King when he comes?

Study 5: “Confidence in the Living God” (Isaiah 36-37)

Getting Started

1. Have you been teased by someone for your trust in God? How did you respond in this situation?

Context/Recap

Tonight we will continue our journey through the book of **Isaiah**. Last week we met **God’s Spirit-Filled King**. We saw that he was the one who was going to restore Jerusalem and gather people from all nations to God’s Holy mountain. We saw that **the Old Testament finds its fulfilment in Jesus**. Jesus is this perfect Spirit-Filled King who will bring people from all nations under God’s rule and restore the creation.

Tonight, we will look at some of the history of Judah. We will see that **God keeps his word** and sends the Assyrians to conquer Judah as punishment for their rebellion against him. In the midst of this judgement we will see that Hezekiah, **the King of Judah is unwavering in his trust of God** even in this terrible situation and God show that he alone is King over all. We will think about **how we should act when people attack our confidence in God**.

Digging In

Read Isaiah 8:5-8

2. How is God going to punish Judah for their rebellion against him?

Read Isaiah 10:12-19

3. What is going to happen to Assyria after they have brought judgment on Judah? Why?

Read Isaiah 30:1-5

4. Who does Judah trust to save them from the Assyrian invasion? Will it help them?

Read Isaiah 36:1-3

5. What has happened to Judah? (v1) Why is this happening?

Read Isaiah 36:4-22

6. How does Sennacherib try to undermine King Hezekiah's confidence in Egypt? (v4-10)

7. How does Sennacherib try to undermine the people's confidence in God? (v13-20)

8. What is he trying to persuade the people of God to do? (v16-17)

9. What is Sennacherib's view of God? (v18-20)

Read Isaiah 37:1-7

10. How do Hezekiah and Isaiah respond? How do we see them placing their confidence in God? (v1-7)

11. What does God say is going to happen to the Assyrians? Why? (v6-7)

Read Isaiah 37:8-20

12. What does Hezekiah do when the Assyrians continue to undermine his confidence in God? (v14-15)

13. How does Hezekiah describe God? How is this different to Sennacherib's view of God? (v14-20)

14. Why does Hezekiah ask God to deliver his people from the Assyrian attack? (v20)

Read Isaiah 37:21-38

15. What does God say is going to happen to Sennacherib and his people? Why will this happen? (v19)

16. What does this show you about how God feels about his name, character and reputation?

17. How do we see God's words come true? What does this show us about God? (v36-38)

18. Was Hezekiah right to put his trust in God despite the situation? Why?

Thinking it Through

19. How do people try to undermine our confidence in Jesus and his death to save us?

20. How will God respond to people challenging himself and his word and people's confidence in his Son Jesus?

21. How should we react when people try to undermine our trust in Jesus? Why?

Study 6: “Comfort, Comfort My People” (Isaiah 39-40)

Getting Started

1. Have you ever felt abandoned by God or that you couldn't understand his ways? What did you do in that situation?

Context/Recap

Tonight we will continue our journey through the book of **Isaiah**. We have seen throughout the book that Judah has rejected God as their king and followed evil ways. We have seen that **God had destined judgement** on them but that a remnant would remain and there would be **hope for the future**. Chapters 1-39 have focussed on this coming judgement. Chapters 40-66 focus on the hope.

Tonight we will see as we look at Isaiah 40 that the judgement has finished, and the time for hope has begun. We will see that **God has come to bring comfort to his people**, a people who are broken and distressed. At this point, Judah thinks that God has not seen their plight. But here, we see God in all his majesty – **the incomparably great God** who is all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-good. He has seen their plight and has come to rescue them. **The people need to put their hope in him.**

Digging In

Read Isaiah 39

2. What is going to happen to Judah?

Read 2 Kings 24:18-25:21

3. a. How terrible was God's judgement on Judah?

- b. How do you think the people in exile are feeling?

Read Isaiah 40:1-11

4. a. What kind of message does God have for his people? (v1-5, 9-11)

- b. What response do you think the Israelites would have had? Why?

5. Why should they trust God to keep his word? (v6-8)

6. What was Israel to do with this good news (gospel) of salvation? (v9-11)

Read Isaiah 40:12-31

7. a. How do the people in Israel feel God has treated them? (v27)

b. Do you think they are right to feel this way? Why?

8. Fill out the following table.

	What is God like?
v12	
v13-14	
v15-17	
v21-24	
v25-26	

9. Compare to God, how would you describe:

a. The creation (v12, 26)

b. Our understanding (v13-14)

c. The nations and their kings (v15-17, 21-24)

d. Idols? (v18-20)

10. a. Was Judah right to doubt God's faithfulness? (v28)

b. How instead should Judah respond to God? (v31)

Thinking it Through

11. In what way are we just like Israel in need of comfort from God?(cf. v1-2)

Application

Read Luke 2:25-32 and Luke 3:1-6.

12. What is the ultimate message of comfort God has for us? (Hint: think about how Isaiah 40 is fulfilled)

13. How does this passage help us when we feel abandoned by God or couldn't understand his ways?

14. In particular what should we do when we're reminded of our sin and God's rightful judgement upon us?

15. Like Judah, what are we to do with this message of comfort & salvation?

Study 7: “The Servant of the LORD” (Isaiah 42-53)

Getting Started

1. How would you answer someone that said to you, “it’s wrong for God to just ignore Israel’s sins and offer them comfort and forgiveness”?

Digging In

2. a. In these chapters of Isaiah, we meet someone who is called the “Servant”.

Read the following passages about this Servant and fill in the table on the next page.

Passage	What is the title or identity of the Servant?	What does the work of the Servant achieve?	How does the Servant achieve this?
42:1-4			
49:1-6			
50:4-9			
52:13-15			

- b. From the table above, who do you think the “Servant of Lord” is referring to?

Read Isaiah 53:1-3

3. a. How is the servant described? (v2)

- b. How is this servant being treated?

Read Isaiah 53:4-9

4. Why does the servant accept this suffering? (v4-5)

5. a. What is the purpose of the servant’s suffering? (v8)

- b. Do you think the servant deserves this suffering? Why?

Read Isaiah 53:10-12

6. What are the results of his suffering? (v10–12)

Read Acts 8:26-35

7. What does the angel of God ask Philip to do? (v26)

8. a. Who does Phillip meet? (v27)

b. What is the Ethiopian official doing in his chariot? (v28)

9. a. Does Ethiopian understand the passage? (v30-31)

b. How does Phillip explain the passage to Ethiopian? (v35)

Read 1 Peter 2:18-24

10. a. How is Jesus described in this passage? How is it similar to Isaiah 53?

b. How does Jesus fulfil this part of Isaiah?

Thinking it Through

11. Why did God want Jesus to suffer and die?

12. a. How should we feel about what Jesus has done?

b. Would you consider Jesus to be your substitute?

Study 8: “Finding Complete Satisfaction” (Isaiah 55)

Getting Started

1. What things in life do you try to find satisfaction in?

Tonight we will continue our journey through the book of **Isaiah**. Throughout the book we have seen how Judah has been rebelling against God and doing evil. We have seen God promised judgement on them, but that he would save a remnant who would be his people forever. Last week, we saw this would be through the work of a Servant, Jesus who bears people’s sins so they could be forgiven.

What do you try to find satisfaction in? Tonight we will find out the only place where we can ever find complete satisfaction. We will see that God offers it to us as a free gift that we simply have to accept. Do you want complete satisfaction?

Digging In

Read Isaiah 55:1-5

2. a. What is God promising to give us for free? (v1-2)

b. How does this food compare to what they are labouring for now? (v2-3)
3. How can people have this free gift that God is offering? (v1-3)
4. How is this blessing guaranteed? Who can have it? (v3-5)

Read Isaiah 55:6-7

5. What do these verses teach us about the nature of sin? (v6-7)
6. What are the people called upon to do? (v6-7)

7. Fill in the following table which shows some of the key aspects of repentance.

	Repentance
Turning from	
Turning to	
For what purpose	

8. Why can God freely forgive us even though we deserve to be punished?

(Hint: Think back to the Servant – Isaiah 53:5-6)

9. Have you repented and accepted God’s offer of free and complete forgiveness?

Read Isaiah 55:8-13

10. How do our thoughts and ways compare to God’s thoughts and ways? (v8-9, c.f. 40:12-31)

11. How might thinking about God’s thoughts and ways help us realise that we need to repent?

12. a. What will God’s word accomplish? How certain is it? (v10-11, c.f. 40:8)

b. Can you think of examples in Isaiah where God has been faithful to his word?

c. What will this mean for his gracious offers in this chapter? (complete satisfaction, mercy and free forgiveness)

13. What is God's purpose for his creation? Why will he do it? (v12-13)

Thinking it Through

14. Fill out the following table to find out how these things spoken of in Isaiah are ultimately fulfilled?

Promise	Verse	How is it fulfilled?
Bread and water that perfectly satisfies	<i>John 4:13-14</i> <i>John 6:35</i> <i>Revelation 21:6, 22:17</i>	
God's everlasting covenant and faithful love to David	<i>Acts 13:34</i>	
The call to repentance and offer of forgiveness	<i>Mark 1:15, 2:5</i> <i>Acts 5:31</i> <i>Acts 10:43, 13:38</i>	
God's word achieving its purposes	<i>John 1:1</i> <i>2 Corinthians 1:20</i>	
The restoration of the Creation	<i>Revelation 21:1-5</i>	

Application

15. Where should we seek our satisfaction in life? What will this look like?

Read Isaiah 65:13-16

7. a. What are the two groups of people that God is referring to? (v.13)

b. What is the difference between these two groups of people? (v.13-15)

c. Why do you think God wants to make a comparison between these two groups of people?

Read Isaiah 65:17-25

8. a. Describe the new heaven and earth that are created by God?

b. How will this New Creation be different to our present world?

c. Who will be able to be a part of this new creation?

Read Isaiah 66:1-2

9. a. How does God regard the heavens and earth? What does this show about him? (v.1)

- b. How should we respond to God in order not to displease Him?

Read 2 Peter 3:10-13

10. Has God kept his promise of a new heavens and new earth yet? What is he waiting for?

11. What will be brought about when the day of God finally comes?

Read Revelation 21:1-8

12. a. What does the new Jerusalem like?

- b. Who will be a part of it?

Thinking it Through

13. How do you feel about the new heaven created by God?

14. What do we need to do if we want to be a part of it? What will happen if we don't?

15. Do you want to live in this new heaven and be rejoicing with Him forever?