

# OpenTheo

## Rapid Survey of Isaiah 24 - 66



### Isaiah: A Topical Look At Isaiah - Steve Gregg

In this discussion, Steve Gregg surveys passages from Isaiah 24 to 66. He notes that while some interpret biblical prophecies of the earth's destruction as an end-of-the-world scenario, the use of the word 'earth' may sometimes be better translated as 'land'. Gregg suggests that passages in Isaiah may have double fulfillment and identifies several references to Jesus. He also discusses the transition from the old covenant to the new covenant and points out the universality of God's call to all nations.

### Transcript

What we'll be doing in this session is finishing up what I started to do in the last session. I mentioned that this is a treatment of Isaiah that's not exactly like any I've ever done before, although I've taught Isaiah every year that the school has been going, and this is the 13th year, so I've taught Isaiah a lot of times, and I've taught it elsewhere than in this school also, so I don't know how many times I've taught it now. But normally, I'd say the majority of the years, we have taught Isaiah like every other book of the Bible, verse by verse.

There have been a few years, probably maybe two or three years in the past of the school, that I experimented with a topical teaching of the book. To my mind, a profitable way to study it. The students didn't always find it profitable because we were jumping all over the place to access all the references to a particular topic, which from my knowledge of Isaiah, I know it's good for people to get these topics under their belt, to understand what Isaiah means every time he talks about the desert blossoming and becoming like a garden with rivers of water.

I mean, that means something, and it's mentioned many, many times, but if a person doesn't fully understand what it means, the book of Isaiah and things like that, if they don't know what it means, the book of Isaiah is not going to be anywhere near as profitable to them in study. Now, of course, in teaching through the book, verse by verse, we run into those passages all the time, which means the temptation is always great whenever I do to remind the students, now when he says that, he means this, and we know that because we see it in this context and this context, and it's quoted over

here in the New Testament and so forth, and to go through all the defense of the way that I understand his meaning, and to do that every time we hit it, obviously is not a good economy of time. So, in other words, because of our shortage of time, we will be taking it topically this time as well, and we'll be doing the same thing with Ezekiel, you'll find, and I think that you'll find that that's necessary.

But the biggest complaint about doing it topically is, you know, it does not really give people a sense of the flow of the story. Actually, there were some years we did this with the life of Christ also, believe it or not. I took everything in all the Gospels and categorized them into different topics.

You know, Jesus' ministry of casting out demons, took all the cases and analyzed the whole ministry of demon exorcisms in the life of Jesus in a lecture, and then Jesus' ministry of all the times he cured blind people, and took all that and saw the similarities and differences in the cases, and what was at stake, and what points he made in teaching on it, and so forth. I've taught the life of Christ that way too, but the students would complain that, well, you know, we're learning a lot, but we're not feeling like we're getting acquainted with Matthew, and Mark, and Luke, and John. You know, we're getting acquainted with Jesus, and that's good, but we feel like we don't know how the Gospels are laid out, you know, because we're all over the place.

And I can see that a person could easily have that complaint about this kind of treatment of Isaiah, which is why we're doing something I didn't do in the previous times when I taught it topically, and that's surveying the book rather rapidly. We went through 23 chapters yesterday. As you remember, I did stop to comment on certain points, but we just didn't comment verse by verse, didn't make any effort to, but rather to give you a sense of how the book is laid out, how it flows, what comes after what, and this is, in a sense, a more under-the-microscope kind of look than we gave in our introduction where I told you what the main divisions of the book were.

Now we're looking at the actual chapters themselves within those divisions, and then we'll get to the microscopic analysis of individual passages when we get into the topical treatment. Now, the first 39 chapters of Isaiah, which, as you well know by now, is the first major division of the book, which, for the sake of giving it a label, we have called the Book of Judgment, as opposed to the second segment, which is the Book of Comfort. These first 39 chapters divide into seven sections.

You know that by now, too. We covered the first three of them, but even so, that's the majority of the first 39 chapters. The first six chapters were prophecies against Judah.

Those chapters also included the call of the prophet in chapter 6, in the year King Uzziah died, his vision of God in the temple. The next six chapters, that's 7 through 12, were principally focusing on prophecies against Israel, the prediction that the Assyrians would destroy Israel, that in the course of that, there was also reference to the fact that God

would judge Assyria after he'd used Assyria to judge Israel. That section began with an actual story.

There's not that many stories in the Book of Isaiah or in the books of the prophets in general, but there are some historical narratives, short ones, in the book. And there was one in chapter 7, where Isaiah and his son, Shurjah, went and confronted Ahaz, who was worried about the confederacy of the northern kingdom and of Syria against him. And on that occasion, Isaiah said, God is not going to let their plot against you succeed, and God will give you a sign to prove that.

And since Ahaz was loath to ask for a sign, Isaiah said, well, the Lord will then give you a sign, and the virgin shall conceive and bring forth the son, and before that child is old enough to say, Mama and Papa, or to know to choose the good or to refuse the evil, these two kings that you so dread will be long gone and dead. And so that's what the prophecy was at the beginning. And of course, that prophecy was a prophecy that the northern kingdom of Israel, as well as Syria, were going to be judged.

And so that launches that section into a more extended prophecy of the doom of the northern kingdom of Israel. And interspersed throughout this whole section, especially the first 12 chapters, we've already run into more than one passage describing the ultimate fulfillment of God's purposes in the Messiah, in the Messianic kingdom, in the kingdom age. The first instance of that was in chapter 2, verses 1 through 4. The second instance was in chapter 4, verse 2 to the end of that short chapter.

We ran into some of it in chapter 9, from about verse 1 through about verse 7, I guess. And chapter 11, we have not dealt in detail with those because we'll be looking at those passages separately in our topical treatment. But those are important passages.

I would dare say that those are the most important kind of passages in Isaiah because they're about Jesus. They're about the program of the Messiah and what Jesus came to establish and, in my mind, what he has established. Now, when we come to chapters 13 through 23, which we took last, that's a long section.

We didn't take it in detail because, frankly, I've learned from experience it's not that necessary or profitable to go into detail. There's a great number of predictions about the doom of Moab and so forth. It's mostly in poetry, like most of the prophecy is.

And much of the details, it's very difficult to know how exactly they were fulfilled. This is not a weakness in the text. It simply is a weakness in the historical information that has come down to us.

From secular history, we just don't have minute details about what happened to Moab during the Assyrian period. We know that the prophecies came true or else they would have been, if they had not come true, they would have been rejected. The Jews would

not accept it as valid prophecy if the event did not follow the prediction.

And therefore, we can assume that whatever was predicted actually did happen. But in many cases, reading it is the best we can do. We can't really say, and this was fulfilled when such and such happened because we don't have that detailed historical information surviving for us to look at.

There are some interesting passages in this so-called burdens section, chapters 13 through 23. I tried to point them out. We didn't deal in detail, as we will another time, with chapter 14 and its prophecy about Lucifer.

It's in chapter 14, verse 12 and following, the only place in the Bible that Lucifer is mentioned by that name. And of course, the identity of Lucifer is something interesting to explore. But because most people just assume it's Satan, but the text doesn't say so or give any hint that it is so, in my opinion.

But we'll deal with that another time. That was the third section. We come now to the fourth segment, which is chapters 24 through 27.

And this is four chapters which deal with the transition from the old order to the new order. That's kind of the label I gave this section in the introduction to Isaiah. It talks about the destruction of the old order and its replacement with a new order.

And as I said in our introduction, there are two opinions, essentially, as to what this is referring to. Both opinions agree that the coming of Christ is that which causes this transition to occur. But the difference of opinion lies between two camps.

One, believing that it was the first coming of Christ that brought about this change of economies. The other opinion, which appears to be more commonly held, is that it's the second coming of Christ that brings about this change. Now, if the first opinion is correct, if the first coming of Christ is that which makes this change from the old order to the new order occur, then quite obviously by old order we mean the Old Testament system, the Old Testament economy.

Jerusalem is the center of God's activity and so forth, and then the new order would be the new covenant economy, which is something that we know has been around since Jesus was here and is still the economy under which we live. If this is the correct interpretation, then what we have described in chapters 24 through 27 is the destruction of the old order, including Jerusalem itself by the Romans, and the introduction of the new covenant and a new order that has replaced all that God had set in place through Moses. That, as I think by now clear to you, is my opinion about these chapters.

The other opinion, and I'm pretty sure that probably the vast majority of scholarly interpreters would disagree with my opinion on this, though not all of them, they would hold that what we have here is the end of the world. And when Jesus comes back, or the

end of the world as we know it, some would say what is inaugurated here is the new heavens and the earth. Others would say it's the millennial kingdom when Jesus returns.

Obviously the conflict there would be between different people's opinions about the millennium. A premillennialist would say that what we have here is the second coming of Christ, probably, and the millennial reign. Others who are not premillennial would say no, there's no millennium, but there is a new heaven and new earth that's coming, and that's what this is describing.

When Jesus comes back, it's the end of this world, the heavens shall be dissolved, and the elements will melt with the fervent heat, as Peter says, and then we look for a new heavens and new earth. And so the end of the old order is nothing less than the end of this present physical world. And the new order must necessarily be the new heavens and new earth.

So these opinions all exist out there, there are credible people who hold each of these views. I would say that the main reason, it would seem to me, the main reason that people hold to the view that I do not hold on this, that is that they place the end of the world as the scenario here in chapter 24, is because of the repeated use of the word earth. It says in verse 1, Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty and waste.

It says in verse 4, The earth mourns and fades away. And at the end of that verse, the earth languishes. Verse 5, The earth also is defiled under its inhabitants.

In verse, well, there's got to be more here. 6, Therefore the curse has devoured the earth. And so forth, there's quite a bit here on the earth.

A little later on it says, well, like verse 19, or verse 18, It shall be that he who flees from the noise of the fear shall fall in the pit, and he who comes up from the midst of the pit shall be caught in the snare. For the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth are shaken. The earth is violently broken, it is split open, it is shaken.

The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard. And at the end of that, verse 20 says, It will fall and not rise again. Obviously, if the word earth is the correct translation here, then it sounds like it's talking about the end of the world, or, you know, maybe the earth could symbolize something like, you know, the Babylonian or the Roman Empire or something like that.

But still, it certainly doesn't look like the fall of Jerusalem. However, I have tried to make clear to you that you should always, in the Bible, whether the Old or New Testament, when you find the word earth, you should ask yourself whether the word land would better fit the context. Because the word in the Hebrew is Eretz, and in the Greek, in the New Testament, the word is Ge, G-E, gamma, eta.

And in both cases, it is the only word in those languages for earth or land. So wherever in your Bible you find the word land in the Old Testament, it is the word Eretz. Likewise, wherever you find the word earth, it is the same word, Eretz.

And the decision to translate Eretz as land or earth is simply a call that the translator makes on the basis of what he thinks is being discussed. Likewise with the Greek word Ge in the New Testament. And there are times, most times, I tend to probably agree with the translator's decision, but there are times when we have to challenge them.

In this particular case, you'll note in chapter 24, in verse 3, it says, The land shall be utterly emptied and utterly plundered. Now it's interesting that it would say that, because that's the same word Eretz that's been translated to earth in all the other verses we just looked at. Verse 3, it says, The land shall be entirely emptied.

Now, there's not anything in the passage to justify translating the word land in verse 3 and everywhere else as earth. It's the exact same Hebrew word. The translators just kind of are frivolous.

I mean, I shouldn't say they're frivolous. I'm sure that they have their reasons. But in this chapter, where the word appears a great number of times, let's see how many times, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, at least 13 times in this chapter, the word Eretz appears.

And in most cases, almost every case, they translate it as earth. But on very few occasions, they translate it as land. Now, for instance, verse 13, it's land.

When it shall be thus in the midst of the land among the people. Well, that's still the word Eretz. And so it's a translator's call.

Now, in my opinion, if you translated Eretz as land consistently throughout this chapter, certainly you've got apocalyptic language. I mean, you talk about the land reeling like a drunkard. That's symbolic.

But if you talk about the earth reeling like a drunkard, it's symbolic, too. I mean, you've got to allow for some symbolism in the language. But, I mean, read verse 1. Behold, the Lord makes the land empty and makes it waste, distorts its surface and scatters abroad its inhabitants.

Now, it's easy to see how God could scatter abroad the inhabitants of the land, that is, the land of Israel, into other parts of the world. But if it's the earth, where are they being scattered to? The moon? Mars? I mean, if the earth is destroyed and its inhabitants have been scattered, where are they scattered to? You know? And so forth. I won't go into it in detail now, though I expect to in a later lecture.

But in my opinion, the evidence is strong. If you would, on your own, even look at it, and

just consider that earth can be translated to land. I'm not saying you have to, but just consider it through those eyes.

And realize that land normally means the land of Israel. That this seems to me to be a picture of the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem by the Romans. Now, you have heard, I have a reputation around here of harping on this 70 A.D. business a lot.

You haven't heard as much of it from me this year as some have, because I'm not teaching the life of Christ. Most years I teach the life of Christ, and I see 70 A.D. written all over the pages of the Gospels, in John the Baptist preaching, in Jesus preaching. I see it everywhere.

So if I had been teaching the life of Christ for you, as well as the classes I've been teaching this year for you, you'd be sick of hearing about 70 A.D. by now, and many students are by the time we get here. And so when I say, you know, I think this is about 70 A.D., you know, they just roll their eyes. What else, you know? What else would it be, you know? But I'll tell you my reasons for this.

If you'll look with me at Luke chapter 21, which is, of course, Luke's version of what we usually call the Olivet Discourse, and verse 20 and following. Luke 21, 20, and the verses that follow to verse 22. Jesus says, But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, talking about to his disciples of that generation, when they see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, it happened, 70 A.D., then know that its desolation is near.

Then those who are in Judea, let them flee to the mountains. The Christians in Judea did when Rome came. Eusebius, the Christian historian in the year 325, the earliest Christian historian other than Luke, whose works have survived, tells us that all the Christians fled from Jerusalem when they saw the siege happening.

And they fled to the wilderness, like Jesus said to do. Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. But look at verse 22, For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

And then he says in verse 23, But woe to those who are pregnant with those who are with nursing babies in those days, for there will be great distress in the land of Israel, and wrath upon this people, the Jews, his own people. They will fall by the edge of the sword, they did, and be led away captive into all nations, they were. And Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles, it has been, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, which is to this very day, still.

But the point is, Jesus describes the Romans coming against Jerusalem, his disciples will see it, they are told to flee into the wilderness when this happens, because there's going to be mass destruction, people falling by the sword, Jews carried off into captivity in all

lands, they were, and that Jerusalem will be under the control of Gentiles until the end of the times of the Gentiles. That's a description of the age since 70 A.D. In other words, he was, now by the way, this whole thing was sparked by, in earlier in the same chapter, Luke 21, in verse 5, it says, Then as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, he said, As for these things which you see, the days will come in which not one stone will be left upon another, that is of the temple, that shall not be thrown down. In verse 7, And they asked him, saying, Teacher, when will these things be? When will the temple be destroyed? And what will be the sign that these things are about to take place? And then we have the discourse that we just read, and he comes to verse 26, Well, when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, you know that the desolation is near.

This is the sign that's about to take place. He predicted the destruction of the temple, which occurred in 70 A.D. They said, When will this happen? And he gave them the various answers that he gave, and he said, Now, you know, the real sign that's about to take place is when you see the armies coming. Then you get out of town.

They did. All of this was fulfilled historically. Now, people who are not familiar with that history don't know that, and they assume he's talking about the end of the world.

But the point I want to make is that in Luke 21, 22, Jesus said, These are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Written where? In the Old Testament. Where else? I mean, he's talking about the fulfillment of prophecy.

There was no New Testament at that time, so he must have been talking about the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. He says, All things that are written may be fulfilled by this event. I have held the view for several years.

Go ahead, Sam. Fulfillments? Yeah. There are, and like in Isaiah, I've already mentioned, I think there are some passages that have double fulfillments.

But I'll tell you where I stand on double fulfillments. When I point out how all the things in all of the discourse were fulfilled prior to 70 A.D., and I quote the historians that say so, who weren't even Christian historians, you know, in some cases. You know, the first thing that comes to everybody's mind, who's always thought, Oh, this is talking about the tribulation period, the end times.

They say, Well, maybe, could there be a double fulfillment? And my answer is, There could be, but how are we to know? I mean, we can't just arbitrarily postulate double fulfillments wherever it's convenient to our theories. We can say, Well, I've told you two cases as of today in our studies of the Old Testament. I've told you of two cases I know, or three, where there's double fulfillments, or appear to be double fulfillments.

One, the promise made to David that a son of his would sit on his throne and build a



temple and rule. I think that was fulfilled in Solomon and in Christ. Double fulfillment.

But the reason I know that is because the New Testament quotes it. After its initial fulfillment in Solomon, the New Testament tells us it also applies to Christ. So I know on New Testament authority that has a double fulfillment.

Likewise, you know, prophecy about the virgin shall conceive. I see that as probably having double fulfillment. Likewise, the thing about Eliakim having the key of David and so forth.

Jesus applies that to himself. But the only reason we would know, after the initial fulfillment that we read of in the Old Testament, the only reason we'd know there's another one is because the New Testament identifies it for us. So on biblical authority, there's a double fulfillment to that one.

But where there is no such biblical authority, I don't feel the liberty myself to go in and say, Well, I think I'd like to see double fulfillment here and here and here and here. You know, because we could do that quite arbitrarily, and that wouldn't be safe. So where I stand on that is I do not personally look for double fulfillment in the Olivet Discourse.

If there is one, that's fine. I mean, God's certainly entitled to do what he wants. He may have hidden one in there.

But I don't think we could say on exegetical grounds. I mean, if we're just if we're not if we're not trying to import anything into the text, we're just trying to see what it said and was it fulfilled. You know, there's nothing there that suggests a later fulfillment to my mind as I analyze it.

If it does to someone else, that's all right. But it doesn't to me at this point. Now, in saying that.

I have for several years held the position, though I'm willing to be moved from it. I really am. I'm not stubborn.

I'm just of the opinion. I've become convinced of this at this point. That there may be no prophecies in the Old Testament that look beyond 70 AD, except for those that speak of the inauguration of the church age, which has continued started before 70 AD and has continued to the present.

I believe the church age is there, obviously. And that has continued beyond 70 AD, but but started before that. When Jesus said that these things, the Romans are coming and going to destroy Jerusalem so that all things written may be fulfilled.

That statement, all things could be a hyperbole. It could mean just most things. Sometimes the Bible does use the word all that way.

It doesn't I mean, it sounds so absolute to us, but it's not. I mean, it'll say all the cattle were destroyed by a certain plague in Egypt and then the next plague killed some more of them, you know. Obviously, most of them were killed in the first plague and the word all is being used sort of as a hyperbole.

Could be used by Jesus that way. There could be prophecies in the Old Testament that look beyond 70 AD. But Jesus' statement encourages me to think that he saw the fulfillment of most of them at least in that event.

And therefore, I don't want to artificially force that meaning on any passage. I hope that no one will ever get the impression as you hear me teach the prophets that I'm shoe-horning this and I'm artificially forcing it in. But I'm saying that it looks to me, once Jesus has given you that codebreaker, you know, all things written will be fulfilled in 70 AD, you can see it everywhere.

And that's why I'm reputed to say it so much, because I teach through the prophets verse by verse. I see it there, I see it there, I see it there, I see it there, I see it there. And again, I want everyone here to feel totally at liberty to disagree with me when I see it someplace.

And you don't see it there, do you? You don't have to see it there. No one here has to agree with anything I see in the scriptures. But I make no apologies for seeing it there, because that's what I think is there.

I believe that Jesus tells us that one of the key subjects of Bible prophecy in the Old Testament was the great transition from the Old Testament economy, which prevailed for 1400 years, almost as long, I mean not really quite, but more than half as long, as the church age has lasted so long. It was a major economy that God dealt with people by from the time of Moses until the time of Christ. And, you know, everybody who wanted to relate to God had to relate through that economy.

That was it. It was major. It lasted for over a thousand years.

And when God scrapped that entirely and said, nope, let's replace it with this. This is new. From now on, it's this way.

That was not a minor thing. See, a lot of people say, well, why would the prophets concentrate on something like the fall of Jerusalem? Who cares? I mean, sure, it's a nasty thing. It was an ugly, bloody mess.

But, I mean, the fall of Carthage was ugly, too. I mean, what about the fall of Troy? You know, I mean, why would the Bible concentrate so much on this city falling on this particular occasion? It's more than the fall of the city. It's the destruction of an entire way that God had ordained for people to relate to Him up until that point.

And it's total replacement with something entirely different. And that is the major hinge of all of history was the coming of Christ and what He established as His coming. In my opinion, that justifies a great amount of prophetic attention being given to this change of the guard, changing of the guards, the one time in history that God has really just thrown out the whole old system and said, I'm making something new to replace the old entirely.

From now on, people relate to me this way. And so, I hope no one thinks that I give too much credence or too much importance to this event. I think it's more important than most of us have realized.

And I think it's not strange at all that the prophets would repeatedly, while talking about the Messiah coming and inaugurating the new covenant, that they'd also give attention to the great wrath that God would bring upon the old system. Because the reason He did was because they crucified Christ and they persecuted the apostles. I mean, their hearts were hardened.

Jesus said they were like a generation, like a man who had a demon cast out and seven worse ones came in. Their rejection of Christ made their condition all the worse than it even had been before. And anyway, the more one familiarizes himself or herself with the history, for instance, as recorded by Josephus, or even if you read the Gospels with your eyes open, you see how worthy of utter destruction this old system had become and its leaders.

And so, we read throughout the prophets of these interludes. Now, there are discrete segments in Isaiah, as I've tried to point out. The segment, chapter 24 through 27, is clearly a discrete segment.

And you'll find interwoven here descriptions of utter judgment and destruction, either to the earth or the land. In my opinion, if you read land in those places, and I'll leave it to your judgment whether this is true or not. You read it on your own.

We can't do it right now. You decide whether land or earth works better. But if you put the word land there where it says earth, and understand it to be the land of Israel, the land of the Jews, in the days after Christ, when Jesus had established a new covenant, but they were still hanging on to the old carnal ordinances and so forth, and rejected him and crucified him.

And if you know the details, any of them, about how Jerusalem fell, the language is not at all inappropriate, at all. It's entirely justified, and its significance in terms of God's dealings with humanity throughout history certainly justifies the attention that it gets here. Anyway, I understand chapter 24 not to be a description of the end of the world, which most commentators that I've read, even good ones that I agree with on many other things, they usually see it differently than this.

But you have to allow for apocalyptic language. I mean, when it says, for example, in verse 23, the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed, and the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion in Jerusalem and before his elders gloriously, certainly that sounds like a major change in the cosmos. I mean, the moon is disgraced, the sun is shamed, obviously it's personification.

But Jesus talked about this event as the sun will be darkened and the moon shall be turned to blood and so forth. And Mount Zion, you know, ordinarily refers to the city of Jerusalem. But here, there's something good said about Mount Zion, and persons of my ilk tend to see Mount Zion in this kind of passages as a reference to the spiritual Jerusalem, the church.

Now, I realize that no one should just follow me on that without hearing my reasons, and I can't give the reasons now, but that is one of the topics that we're going to look at in detail, is the use of the word Zion and Jerusalem in Isaiah and the rest of the prophets, and see how they're quoted in the New Testament, these very passages, to give us insight into how the word is being intended. But that's one of those frustrations of going through as quickly as I want to go through right now, that I can't dwell on those points. But this is one of those sections.

As you go through chapters 24, 25, 26, and 27, you'll find intermixed prophecies of wrath on the old system and its utter annihilation, intermixed with statements about how God's replacing it with something good. For example, in Isaiah 5, Judah was compared to a venue that didn't produce good grapes. Jesus picked up the language of Isaiah in Matthew 22 and made a similar parable.

You know, a king of God is like a man who had a vineyard. He planted it in a fruitful hill, put a hedge around it, and so forth, and lent it out to tenants. This referred to the leaders of Israel.

You know the story of how they killed the servants who he sent to get the fruit, and then they finally killed his son. And so Jesus said, what shall he do to those servants who killed his son? And they answered, he'll utterly destroy those sinners and give out the vineyard to others who will bring forth the fruits. He says, that's right, the kingdom of God is taken from you and is now going to be given to a nation that will bring forth the fruits of it.

We'll look at chapter 25, verse 6. In this mountain, the Lord of hosts will make for all people a feast of choice pieces, a feast of wines on the leaves, of fat things full of marrow, of well-refined leaves. He will utterly destroy on this mountain the surface of the covering cast over all people, the veil that is spread over all nations. I take that to be death.

He destroyed death through his crucifixion. He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord God will wipe away all tears from all faces. He will rebuke his people, he will take

away from all.

But it talks about, where do I want to, there's a place where it talks about the vineyard producing wine. Is it chapter 27? Yeah, 27.2. In that day, sing to her, a vineyard of red wine. Not the vineyard of chapter 5 that produced wild grapes, but the vineyard that's really producing what God wanted, the nation that's bringing forth the fruit thereof.

Because the first vineyard didn't produce it. A vineyard of red wine, I the Lord keep it. I water it every moment, lest any hurt it.

I keep it night and day, and so forth. Now, we'll look at this more later, but what I'm saying is, I see in here many allusions to the replacement of the old system with the new. The old vineyard didn't produce wine, but now he's talking about a time when he'll produce a vineyard that will.

He'll get the red wine he was after from his vineyard. Good wine, not sour wine. And we will, again, cross-reference a great deal to the New Testament when we deal with this in more detail.

But those chapters, 24, 25, 26, and 27, are about the passing of the old and the introduction of the new. Either the old earth replaced by a new earth at the second coming of Christ, or, in my opinion, the old covenant system by the new covenant system at the first coming of Christ. Now, the next section of Isaiah that we identified was chapter 28 through, was it all the way up through chapter 33? This section, principally, is, again, about judgment and restoration.

What was the label? Does anyone have their notes out? Remember what label I gave this section? This is the woes, okay. Yeah, 28 through 33, all these chapters, all six of them, with the exception of one, starts with the word woe. Okay? Chapter 28, woe to the pride, the crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim.

That's the northern kingdom of Israel. Chapter 29, woe to Ariel. Now, Ariel is a word that means the hearth of God or the lion of God.

I know some people who've named their children Ariel, and they say it means lion of God. That is one translation. Also, hearth of God, like the hearth of a fireplace.

It is a symbolic reference to Jerusalem, the city, because it says, Ariel, Ariel, the city where David dwelt. Ariel is a poetic name to Jerusalem. So, in chapter 28, there's woe to the drunkards of the northern kingdom of Ephraim.

In chapter 29, woe to Jerusalem. In chapter 30, woe to the rebellious children who take counsel but not of me. In that particular chapter, he talks about the plans that some were making when Assyria was besieging Jerusalem to go down and get help from Egypt.

He warns against this. He says, woe to these people, he says in verse 2, who walk to go down to Egypt and have not asked at my advice to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh and to trust in the shadow of Egypt. So, this particular woe is on those people who are counseling Hezekiah to seek aid from Egypt for security against the Assyrians.

Chapter 31, woe to those who go down to Egypt for help. Same subject, but woe. Chapter 32 is the only one of these chapters that doesn't begin with woe and it's a kingdom passage.

Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in justice and so forth. It's about Jesus, it's about the kingdom age. Virtually the whole chapter, 32, is one of those kingdom passages.

And then chapter 33, woe to you who plunder, and apparently is a reference to Babylon. But context is not clear on that. But you can see chapters 28 through 33 are woe, woe, woe, woe, with one exception, chapter 32 is in its entirety, it would appear a kingdom passage of the sort as chapter 2 and 4 and 9 and 11 gave us.

Like chapter 11, it's a long one. You know, chapter 11 in its entirety was a kingdom passage, a messianic golden age passage, as so is chapter 32, and so, as we will find, so is chapter 35. Now, this section has some interesting things.

There is a short messianic passage in chapter 28, verse 16 and following. It says, therefore, thus says the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation. Now, this is one of the passages I would use to justify seeing Zion as the church, the spiritual Zion.

Why? Because it's a prophecy about Christ, and this stone, Christ, is laid as a foundation where? In Zion. Paul said that Christ is the foundation of the church. Certainly is not the foundation of the present nation Israel, or of Israel at any time in its history.

Behold, I lay in Zion, this must mean the church, because of reference to Christ being the foundation, a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation, whoever believes will not act hastily. And, obviously, that's a prediction about Christ. It is quoted many times, actually, in the New Testament.

Jesus is said to be the cornerstone, he's said to be the foundation. The apostles clearly used this verse as a key verse for understanding Jesus' role in the church under the metaphor of a building. And, since the stone is said to be a foundation in Zion, that is one of the passages, there are certainly more, but one of the places which I use to say, see, Zion, in some of these cases, means the church, the spiritual Zion, not the physical.

Okay, so, there's a lot of good stuff in here, and we'll look at some of it in detail when we go through the topical analysis. But let's look now at the next segment, which is the

sixth, I believe, segment of the Book of Judgment. And that is only two chapters long, chapters 34 and 35.

I gave this short segment the same label I gave to chapters 24 through 27, which we've just talked at length about, namely the transition from the Old Order to the New Order. Chapter 34 describes great judgment and wrath, and chapter 35 speaks of restoration. Now, the language here is very, I would say, symbolic.

The Old Order is spoken of like a wilderness of thorns and thistles and worthy of nothing but burning. The New Order is like a garden blossoming like a rose and producing fruit. We will take the issue of fruitfulness in Isaiah as a topic for special consideration.

We'll look at these passages as well as many others to identify the meaning of this fruitful desert motif that he uses so many times. And we'll do so by cross-reference within the book and outside the book and in the New Testament, and we'll get a grasp for what he's saying. But just by way of preview, I myself understand this to be like chapters 24 through 28, which we just, or 27, which we just discussed.

The Old Order vanishing, the New Order coming in, but in language that is agricultural in nature. One thing that may hang people up on this is that it would appear from the wording of chapter 34 that this is either the end of the world or at the very least a judgment on the nation of Edom. You see, the opening words sound like it's the end of the world.

Come near you nations to hear, and heed you people. Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world and all the things that come forth from it. For the indignation of the Lord is against all nations.

Doesn't sound like it's just Jerusalem there. All nations are against, and his fury against their armies. He has surely destroyed them, he has given them over to the slaughter.

Also their slain shall be thrown out. The stench shall rise from their corpses. The mountains shall be melted with their blood.

Symbolic language, all the hosts of heaven shall be dissolved. And the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll. All the hosts shall fall down as a leaf falls from the vine and like fruit falling from a fig tree.

Now, again, if we're going to go literal on this, there can be nothing other than the dissolving of the present universe in view here. And the decision of whether it should be literal or figurative will have to be based on more data than we have had time to analyze in these classes yet, but we will take plenty of time in this topical treatment to look at all the similar passages to this and in their context and the way they're quoted in the New Testament. This is how we'll try to gain the understanding of the passages that I think the apostles apparently had, because you have to read what they said about it.

Now, here's the thing, though. In verses 5 and 6, Edom is singled out as apparently the culprit. My sword shall be bathed in heaven.

Indeed, it shall come down on Edom and on the people of my curse for judgment. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, is made overflowing with fatness, and the blood of lambs and goats, the fat of kidneys and rams, and the Lord has a sacrifice in Bozrah, great is the slaughter in the land of Edom. Now, Edom.

The presence of the mention here of Edom gives the interpreter several different alternatives. First of all, he can take Edom literally, or he can try to. But if he takes Edom literally, he's got to take other things in the chapter non-literally.

I'll tell you why. Edom doesn't exist today. The Edomites were destroyed as a nation prior to the times of Christ, and there were few stragglers still alive.

Historians say that Herod the Great, who was ruling in Jerusalem at Jesus' birth time, and his immediate family were the last known Edomites, and he was only half. Herod the Great was half Edomite and half Jew. But historians record Herod the Great and his family as the last known Edomites in history, and after 70 A.D., when their dynasty was totally obliterated, historians will all say the nation of Edom as a race, even, is just totally gone.

Since 70 A.D., there hasn't been an Edomite on the planet that anyone knows about. Now, that being so, there obviously is no nation of Edom. Now, you might say, but couldn't we talk about Saudi Arabia, or whatever is now where the region of Edom used to be, and couldn't we say this about them? Well, if so, you're not taking it literally, because Edom refers specifically to the descendants of a man by that name, whose other name was Esau.

Esau was the progenitor of the Edomite race, because his name was Edom, just like the man Israel, Jacob, whose name was Israel, was the progenitor of the nation we call Israel. If all the Jews were banished from the land of Israel, and a bunch of Arabs lived there, would we call them Israel? I doubt it. In other words, it's not the geography, it's the nationality that we're talking about here.

You get every Jew out of Israel today, and fill it with Gentiles, and do you think any Christians are going to say, there's Israel, those people living there are Israel? No, just because they live in the land that Israel used to live in, doesn't make them Israel. Likewise, just because Saudi Arabia or somewhere is now where Edom used to be, doesn't make that Edom. The Edomites are the descendants of Esau, and they don't, they're not around anymore.

They've been around for 2,000 years. Now what I'm saying is, it is possible for this passage to be about the destruction of Edom, but if so, it was fulfilled in pre-Christian



times, or at the very least in 70 AD. The very latest was the end of the Edomites.

Therefore, if we take Edom literally, then we certainly cannot take literally the idea that the hosts of heaven are dissolved, and the heavens are rolled up like a scroll, because that didn't literally happen in 70 AD, or any other time when Edom fell. You've either got to take one or the other literally, or both symbolically. You can't take them both literally.

Do you understand the problem here? Okay, if it's talking about the end of the world, it can't be talking about Edom, because Edom's not around and won't be around at the end of the world for this to happen to. This must be a historic judgment if Edom is in any sense taken literally. It must have happened before, and therefore the business of the rolling up of the heavens like a scroll is what we call apocalyptic language.

It's poetic. It's symbolic language. And could refer, I mean, taken by itself, could refer to any particular battle.

We would just have to decide which one is in view. Now there's another, like I said, you can take Edom literally. That's one option open to us in this chapter.

But if you do that, you have to take other things non-literally. But that may be okay too. And I'm willing to believe this could be talking about literal Edom, but there's two other options open to the interpreter.

One is that Edom is here a symbol for all Gentile nations who are hostile to God. And that it's not, I mean, this would be the way to go if you want to make this a passage about the end of the world. If you want the heavens to be really dissolving and the heavens really rolling up like a scroll, if you want to take verse four literally, the best way to go with Edom would be to say Edom represents all Gentiles.

It's just a name given, you know, one stands for all, you know, sort of representative. As the Edomites were the enemies of God's people in the Old Testament, so they represent whatever last days enemies there are of God's people at the end of the world. Now this is a possible thing to do.

It can be legitimate if the rest of the context justifies it. I'll show you why. Look over at Amos chapter nine.

I'm already getting into this chapter. I'm supposed to be surveying. I just can't help myself.

Amos chapter nine, verses 11 and 12. Amos 9, 11, 12 says, On that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David which is fallen down, and repair its damages. I will raise up its ruins.

I will build it as in the days of old. And all the Gentiles who are called by my name. Now who does Edom, is this literal Edom or does it represent something? Well, look over at

Acts chapter 15.

At the Jerusalem Council this verse is quoted, but from the Septuagint. And in Acts 15, where James says, You know, the Gentiles coming into the church, that was predicted in the prophets, you know. I mean, we're hearing about it happening now, he said.

And to this the words of the prophets agree, verse 15 he says. To this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written. Now he quotes the Amos passage in Acts 15, verses 16 and 17.

And after this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David which is fallen down, and rebuild its ruins and set it up, that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord. Now that line, the rest of mankind, is where in Amos it says, the remnant of Edom. But the apostle takes the remnant of Edom to be the rest of mankind.

So that sets at least one precedent for Edom representing mankind in general. So this would be a way of salvaging the opinion that many people have, I don't, that Isaiah 34 is about the end of the world, even though the Edomites won't be there. They can be mentioned as representative of mankind in general, of Gentiles in general.

And this would then make it possible for those who wish to, to make this the end of the world. You see, you can't make it the end of the world and have it literal Edom, but you could make Edom symbolic. Now, those two alternatives, there's a third one, those two alternatives both require taking something in the passage very symbolically.

If Edom is literal, then the rolling up of the scroll, the heavens like a scroll is symbolic. If the rolling up of the heavens like a scroll is literal, then Edom is symbolic. Something in this passage has got to be symbolic.

My opinion is all of it is. And, you know, as far as the identification of Edom, let me tell you what I am, what I am open to. I wouldn't go to the man about this.

I wouldn't die at the stake for this opinion. But I'll tell you what I'm open to, that Edom could be symbolic for Jerusalem. Now, some might say, there you go again.

OK, Jerusalem, the fall of Jerusalem, I know. Well, I have reasons for this. I have reasons for this.

They may not be just and you don't have to follow them, but I'll tell you why I think this. As a possibility, we saw yesterday in Revelation 11.8, I read to you and you looked it up with me. It was speaking of Jerusalem, the city where our Lord was crucified.

And it said the city which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt. It didn't say Edom, it said Sodom and Egypt. Now, it's very uncommon for Christians, at least, to think of Jerusalem as being called Sodom or Egypt.

But it's not unheard of. Isaiah called Jerusalem Sodom in chapter 1, verse 10 or 11, I think it was. He didn't say, I'm calling Jerusalem Sodom, but that's what he was doing.

And that's what Revelation acknowledges doing. Apparently, according to Revelation, we can look for places in the Old Testament where the word Egypt may be used as a spiritual designation for Jerusalem also. Now, the New Testament doesn't tell us that Edom is ever so used and it may not be.

But there's also no reason to exclude that possibility. If Jerusalem might be symbolically called Sodom or might be symbolically called Egypt, there certainly is nothing in principle to forbid that it might sometimes symbolically be called Edom. Now, that doesn't prove that it is here or that it is anywhere.

It just leaves open the possibility. Now, look over at Isaiah 63. Isaiah 63, beginning of verse 1, says, Who is this who comes down from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah? Bozrah was the chief city of Edom.

The answer is this one who is glorious in his apparel, traveling on the greatness of his strength. I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Then he's asked, why is your apparel red and your garments like one who treads the winepress? This is a description that is picked up in Revelation 19 of Christ.

His garments stained with blood and he comes to tread the winepress of the wrath of God Almighty. It's picked up from this verse here in Revelation 19. But here in verse 3 it says, I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with me, for I have trodden them in my anger and trampled them in my fury.

Their blood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my robes. Notice, for the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed has come. I looked, but there was no one to help, and I wondered that there was no one to uphold.

Therefore my own arm brought salvation for me, and my own fury, it sustained me. Now, what I draw your attention to is, verse 4 especially, the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed has come. Look back at Isaiah 61, verses 1 and 2. This passage should have, I hope, a familiar ring to it.

Isaiah 61, verses 1 and 2. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God. Now, we've got a year and a day there.

A year, the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance. We found that also in 63.4. You have the day of vengeance and the year of the redeemed. Alright? Same thought, presumably.

The year of the redeemed, or the acceptable year, contrasted with the day of vengeance. Now, in Isaiah 61, I hope you are familiar enough with the New Testament to know, Jesus quoted that. In the synagogue of Nazareth, in the fourth chapter of Luke.

He read this passage, Isaiah 61, and he said, today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing. Now, he read the passage up to the middle of verse 2. Isaiah 61, one and a half is what he read. He ended up to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

He didn't quote any further. The rest of it says, and the day of vengeance of our God. Now, there are some who think the reason he didn't read any further is because the day of vengeance is the end times, when Jesus comes back, and that's the day of vengeance.

Therefore, he didn't read it because it wasn't that time, yet. There is, and most of us have heard that explanation, but there is another explanation. The day of vengeance, in fact, wasn't there when Jesus was in the synagogue of Nazareth, but it was not long after that.

We read a moment ago, in Luke 21, Jesus said, when you see Jerusalem and Sabaoth, these are the days of vengeance. That all things that are written may be fulfilled. The days of vengeance, the very term.

When he's talking about the destruction of Jerusalem, when the armies surround Jerusalem, its desolation is near, for these are the days of vengeance. Now, the days of vengeance is, in fact, plural. Isaiah uses a singular, but apart from that, there's no distinction in the expression.

And, you know, the destruction of Jerusalem didn't happen in a single day. It was, you know, there was an extended period of three and a half years of the war. But I am inclined to think that when Jesus said, these are the days of vengeance, that he had these Isaianic passages in mind.

And when he had read Isaiah 61 in the synagogue, he said, this is the acceptable, I've come to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. But he didn't say anything about the day of vengeance, but he did later, at the end of his ministry. He said, you know, now that I'm leaving, I'm going to warn you, the days of vengeance are coming in this generation.

And so I, you know, my feeling is, and of course my own biases, which I'm quite open about on this matter, incline me to think that the reference in Isaiah to the days of vengeance is not the end of the world, but the end of Jerusalem. Jesus came to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance. Now, if you look at Isaiah 63, which was one of the things we did a moment ago, this trampling of Edom, Isaiah 63.1 refers to Edom.

But 63.4 describes this as this is the day of vengeance. Now, if the day of vengeance is

the judgment Jesus brought on Jerusalem, it leaves open the possibility that Edom may be here a symbol of Jerusalem, as I suggested is a possibility in chapter 34. In other words, when you connect the pieces, the case is there.

It's definitely not an airtight case, and a person could reject it outright, and I would give them my blessing to do so. I'm simply pointing out there is a case to be made that Edom might, in Isaiah, sometimes be a symbol of Jerusalem. Now, it may or may not be.

If it is, then it fits well. But on the other hand, Edom did come to its end, historically, at the same time that Jerusalem did in 70 A.D. And the judgment of Jerusalem may well have been as well a judgment on Edom and all the other surrounding nations that were also conquered by the Romans. And while, you know, Edom, in fact, may be mentioned in Isaiah 34 incidentally.

I mean, after all, he does say in verse 1, God's wrath is on all nations. It doesn't mean that at this time he destroys all nations, but his wrath is on all nations, Edom is one of them. And when he judges Jerusalem, Edom is going down too.

I leave to your judgment your choice of the various options here. But, I will say, the evidence is strong in my mind that the end of the old order in the first century of this era is what is being discussed. However we understand Edom there.

And that chapter 35 is talking about the Christian era. And if nothing else, the identification of Isaiah 35 with the Christian era is one of the stronger reasons to identify chapter 34 the way I have. Because Isaiah 35 is one of those kingdom passages that occupies a whole chapter.

A short one, only 10 verses, but still a whole chapter. But though it is short, it's very much like Isaiah 11. Isaiah 11 and Isaiah 35 are both examples of whole chapter long descriptions of the kingdom age.

And both of them are heavily quoted from in the New Testament, which is to our advantage in interpretation. Isaiah 11 is borrowed heavily from by the New Testament writers, and Isaiah 35 is also. And we'll see when we go through these kingdom passages in more detail exactly how much that is true.

But just by way of preview, I just want to say that the way the New Testament writers quote and allude to Isaiah 35, they do so in such a way as to identify its meaning to be about the church and the covenant that Jesus established when he was here the first time. And we'll talk more about this in detail later. So Isaiah 34 and 35, once again, is a... Whatever chapters 24 through 27 are about, chapter 34 and 35 are about the same thing.

I mean, both of them really convey the same thought. The old is going, it's under utter wrath and destruction, and it is replaced by something wonderful that is far superior. I

believe the writer of Hebrews would give us the most New Testament information on what that's referring to.

But anyway, that short segment, 34 and 35, deserves the same label as chapters 24 through 27 do. And then the final segment of the book of Judgment is chapters 36 through 39. It brings us to the end of that segment.

I've already said probably as much as I need to say about these chapters. They are a historical interlude. They're unusual in Isaiah in that they are not prophetic, they're not written in poetry.

You can tell if you're reading any modern translation that sets the type in poetic verse where it's appropriate that the majority of the text in chapters 36, 37, 38, 39 is not in poetry but is in regular prose. You can tell by the paragraph setting. I mean, take for example the difference between 35 and 36.

Those chapters just look at your page. Chapter 36 is set out in ordinary paragraphs. Chapter 35 is set out in poetic verse.

That's because the translators recognize Hebrew poetry when they see it. And so, there is some poetry in the segment we're looking at here. Chapter 37 has some extended prophecy in it, which again is in poetry form.

But most of this four-chapter section is just a historic interlude. Now, I pointed out before, but it always bears repeating things like this, that two of the chapters are set in the Assyrian period, and two of the chapters anticipate the Babylonian period, which is a significant thing for this transition because all the earlier chapters, or almost all of them, have dealt with the Assyrian threat. The Assyrians destroying Israel, the northern kingdom, the Assyrians besieging Jerusalem, and God delivering Jerusalem.

That's what all the earlier chapters up to this point have been, the Assyrian threat. In chapter 40, which is the next thing we come to after this segment we're considering right now, everything beyond that is about the Babylonians as the enemy, and the return of the exiles from Babylon, and so forth. So, the interlude, in a sense, through the use of historic stories, kind of closes down the Assyrian period, and introduces, by way of anticipation, the Babylonian period.

Now, it does so in this manner. Chapters 36 and 37, by the way, the parallels to these chapters are almost verbatim found in 2 Kings 18, 19, and 20. What occupies four chapters in Isaiah is three chapters in 2 Kings.

2 Kings 18 through 20 are the parallels. And you will find almost no differences, even in the words themselves. So, we'll wait on... We probably won't even, in our study of Isaiah, deal with these chapters in any detail because you will come to them in Kings.

But I'll say this. Chapters 36 and 37 tell of how Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, sent Rabshika, his chief general, against Jerusalem. This is in 701 BC.

And Sennacherib's troops under Rabshika had destroyed all the villages of Judea, and were now at the gates of Jerusalem, besieging that city, making threats. Rabshika blasphemed God. He cried out to the people on the wall of Jerusalem, Don't listen to Hezekiah when he says God's going to deliver you, that Jehovah's going to deliver you.

Listen, have any of the gods of these other nations delivered them that I've conquered? No. What makes you think that God will deliver you, your God, when the gods of these nations couldn't deliver them? And he said, After all, guys, Jehovah, your God, is the one who sent me to judge you. Which is an interesting statement he makes because he was right.

But in Isaiah 10 it says he didn't really know he was right. I think he's just using that to demoralize him. He basically says, This Jehovah that you're trusting in, isn't he offended by many of your idolatrous practices? Which, of course, he was.

I mean, this guy was almost speaking prophetically, though he was a creep. Anyway, he had the people really scared. And Hezekiah, most of all.

And what happened is Sennacherib sent a very threatening letter into Jerusalem to Hezekiah, saying he was going to wipe them out. And Hezekiah, who was, as I mentioned earlier, encouraged by many to go seek help from Egypt, didn't. Isaiah said, Don't seek Egypt.

Seek the Lord. So Hezekiah took this letter he'd received from Sennacherib into the temple. And he opened the letter before the Lord on the altar.

He said, Here, God, read this. Here's the threat. And he prayed and he says, God, you know, he's right.

The gods of the other nations haven't been able to deliver them from this man. But they aren't like you. They are not real gods and you are a real god.

We're looking to you because we're outnumbered here. We're in trouble. And that was the occasion that God sent the angel.

That one night, apparently the night after Hezekiah prayed in this manner, an angel of the Lord went out and smote 185,000 of the Assyrians. And that was a sufficient defeat to dishearten them. And they left.

They left and Isaiah actually predicted that the Assyrians would not so much as shoot one arrow into the city. And he was correct. They didn't.

There was no war. I mean, there was no battle ever took place at the walls. The angel

killed all the, you know, the majority of the troops.

And the survivors were spooked by the strange death of all their comrades. And they just fled. And so, Sennacherib later was killed by his own sons, which also Isaiah predicted in this section.

So that's chapters 36 and 37. It tells basically about the end of the Assyrian threat to the Jews. And then chapters 38 and 39 tell the story of how Hezekiah got sick.

Now when he got sick, he apparently was near death because Isaiah the prophet came and said, Get your house in order. You're going to die. And Hezekiah prayed again and called on the Lord and said, God, do you remember I've been a good king? I've tried to obey you.

I've tried to honor you. And he was going to die childless without an heir. He said, God, couldn't you spare my life? And so God sent Isaiah back to him and said, I'll give you 15 more years.

And he gave him a sign where the shadow on the sundial went backward 10 degrees to show that this was a true word from the Lord. And so Hezekiah's life was extended for 15 years, which ended up being not all that good because he did have a son during that time. Three years later, he had a son named Manasseh.

And of course, Hezekiah died 15 years after his cure of his illness and left a 12 year old son to be king, who became the worst king, the most idolatrous and abusive king Judah ever had. One wonders whether it would have been better had Hezekiah resigned himself to die at that time. But we'll never know.

In any case, once Hezekiah was cured of his sickness and his life was extended, he wrote a lengthy prayer, which is recorded in verses 10 through 20 of chapter 38. And then chapter 39, which as you can see is very short, only eight verses, tells how that after Hezekiah was cured, some emissaries from Babylon came to visit to congratulate him on his recovery. And while they were there, he showed them all the treasures of Jerusalem.

And when they were gone, Isaiah approached Hezekiah and said, What have you shown these men? He said, I've shown them everything. I haven't hidden anything from them. And Isaiah predicts in verse 5, chapter 39, verse 5, Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the Lord of hosts.

Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house and what your fathers have accumulated until this day shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the Lord. And they shall take away some of your sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, The word of the Lord which you have spoken is good. It's



never good to me, but before he said, at least there will be peace and truth in my days. Okay, my sons, you know, they get what they get.

At least this is going to happen after I'm gone. That's not very selfless of him, but frankly, I'd rather think that I was going to be tortured for my whole life if I had a guarantee from God that my sons would have a lifetime of peace as a result of it. Hezekiah seemed to have the opposite approach to things.

But anyway, the reason this story is told, no doubt, is because it introduces 100 years before the captivity itself. The fact of the captivity. Isaiah says they're going to come, they're going to take everything.

They did. But a long time after this, 100 years later, the Babylonians came and did this. And that sets the stage for chapters 40 and the rest, because it is the redemption of Judah from Babylon that occupies those chapters.

Now, that brings us, as I say, to the Book of Comfort. Do not worry that we only have a short time to survey it. It doesn't probably require as much detailed survey as some of the previous, because instead of having seven sections, it only has three and they're longer and there's a lot of repetition in them.

It's beautiful stuff, though. Some of the best passages in Isaiah are definitely in the latter 27 chapters and great stuff. And once we begin to become acquainted with some of the meanings of the favorite symbols and motifs that Isaiah likes to use, these chapters will probably just come really come alive for you, I hope.

But essentially, the first third of them, chapter 40 through 48, emphasizes a number of things. It emphasizes, first of all, the sovereignty of God and his superiority over the idols. I dare say that that's the principal subject of chapters 40 through 48, is the superiority of God over the idols.

But he illustrates it several ways. One is that he knows all the future and the idols don't. Something emphasized again and again in this section is that God's superiority over the idols is seen in one way, in the fact that he can predict the future.

And in fact, these chapters are very example of him predicting future because he goes on to predict what Cyrus will do hundreds of years after Isaiah's time. But it is principally God's knowledge of the future and his ability to accurately predict it that he calls upon as the proof of his true deity, that he is the true God and that all the idols who cannot do anything close to that are obviously not real gods. Another aspect of his sovereignty and his superiority, he tells about, is his power to order history.

Not only can he foretell the future, but he can make it happen. And there is where he talks about Cyrus. But chapter 40 is an absolutely beautiful poem about the sovereignty of God.

I mean, look at verse 12. Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, measured the heaven with a span and calculated the dust of the earth in a measure, weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? Who has directed the spirit of the Lord, or as his counselor has taught him, with whom did he take counsel and who instructed him? In other words, he makes his own decrees. No one has to counsel him or tell him what to do.

And taught him the path of justice. Who taught him knowledge and showed him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket and are counted as the small dust in the balance. Look, he lifts up the isles as a very little thing and Lebanon is not sufficient to burn.

Lebanon is famous for its forests of cedars. It's not even enough to burn. To him it's not big enough to even be a match.

And it's beasts are not sufficient for burnt offerings. All nations before him are as nothing and they are counted by him as less than nothing and worthless. With whom then will you liken God? Etc.

etc. You see, he goes on to say the workman makes an image in verse 19 and talks about idols and how impoverished and foolish they are. That's what this section is about.

God's sovereignty. But it is illustrated in two particular ways. By frequent references to God's ability to know the future.

He challenges the false gods particularly in chapter 41. Verse 21 and following. Present your case, says the Lord.

Bring forth your strong reasons. This is 41.21. Says the king of Jacob. Let them bring forth and show us what will happen.

Let them show the former things what they were. That would be easier. That we may consider them and know the latter end of them.

Or declare us things to come. Show the things that shall come hereafter. That we may know that you are gods.

He's challenging the false gods. Listen, I can do this. Can you? Can you tell us things are going to come later? If not, put up or shut up really.

So, God's ability to tell the future is a repeated theme. But the particular future thing that he's talked about most in this segment is Cyrus. Cyrus was the Persian king who conquered Babylon.

He was the human instrument by which the Jews were permitted to go back from the captivity and rebuild their temple. And he mentions that as early as chapter 41.2. He

doesn't mention Cyrus by name there. But he says that God raised up one from the east.

That's Cyrus. Who in righteousness has called him to his feet. Who gave the nations before him and made him rule over kings.

Referring to Cyrus conquering Babylon. And God's giving the nations to Cyrus. God is an ordering history.

That's how superior he is over the idols. He can do whatever he wants in heaven and earth. He orders creation.

He gives the kingdoms to whoever he wants to. And Cyrus is the particular guy. In chapters 44 and 45 in particular.

The end of 44 and the opening of 45. We have one of the most outstanding prophecies in the Bible. Where 150 years before Cyrus was born.

And 200 years before he actually conquered Babylon and fulfilled these prophecies. Isaiah says in verse 28 of 44. Who says of Cyrus he is my shepherd and he shall perform all my pleasure.

Even saying to Jerusalem you shall be built and to the temple your foundation shall be laid. Which is what Cyrus did decree. Thus says the Lord to his anointed to Cyrus whose right hand I have held.

To subdue nations before him and to loose the armor of kings. To open before him the double doors so that the gates shall not be shut. I will go before you and make the crooked places straight.

I will break in pieces the gates of bronze and cut the bars of iron. I will give you the treasures of darkness. The hidden riches of the secret places.

You talk about the treasures of Babylon. I mean Cyrus did all of that. 200 years after Isaiah was dead.

And it is prophecies like this that are the most determinative of the liberals who reject the supernatural. Saying these chapters can't be written by Isaiah. It must be someone else.

Isaiah couldn't have said that. Cyrus wasn't even born yet. I mean but as we pointed out the evidence internally and even the New Testament testimony is that Isaiah wrote these chapters too.

200 years before Cyrus time. So and God gives this as a remarkable instance of how he can tell the future and order history. So the sovereignty of God illustrated in his ordering of history and his ability to foretell the future.

Are marks of his superiority over idols that are a major focus of this section. 46 and 47 which are in this section. Kind of stand out.

Not that they are really talking about something different but they look at it from a different angle. 46 and 47 are like a burden against Babylon. Just like we had in chapters 13 and 14.

The burden against Babylon. But we have something like that in chapters 46 and 47. And basically God talks about how Babylon has fallen.

Babylon falls. Will rise no more and so forth. And he indicates that the reason he does that is for his people to get them back to Jerusalem to rebuild things.

Now the next segment of the Book of Comfort is chapters 49 through 57. Another nine chapters. This segment mainly focuses on the servant of Jehovah.

I mentioned that that's a technical term in Old Testament studies. The servant of Jehovah. Usually Jehovah says my servant but emphasizes my servant sayeth Jehovah.

So that that's where Old Testament scholars refer to this particular motif for this this entity as the servant of Jehovah. And an interesting thing about the servant of Jehovah. The discussion is confined to a certain number of chapters in Isaiah.

This main section. When you when we study this out you'll find that initially the servant of Jehovah is Israel. Israel is described.

Look at verse 3 of chapter 49. And he said to me you are my servant. Oh Israel in whom I will be glorified.

But later not very much later. The servant is no longer Israel. The servant is someone else who is there to redeem Israel.

So that in chapter 53 which is in the center of this section. Or actually earlier 52 verse 13 which introduces chapter 53. Isaiah 52 13 says behold my servant shall deal prudently.

He shall be exalted. He shall be extolled very high. Just as many as were astonished at you.

His visage was marred more than any man is for more than the sons of men. So shall he sprinkle many nations and kings shall shut their mouths at him. For what had not been told them they shall see and what they had not heard.

They shall consider for who is believed our report. To whom is the arm of the Lord been revealed. For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant.

As a root of dragon. I still talk about my servant from chapter 52 verse 13 on. And of

course chapter 53 is one of the most universally recognized messianic prophecies.

I mean not not that non-christians recognize it as such. The Jews reject it as such and liberals do. But all the New Testament writers believe it is one.

Because Jesus quoted it about himself. Paul quoted it about Jesus. And Peter quoted it.

And Philip quoted it. The Ethiopian eunuch was reading this passage when he met Philip. And he says is the prophet talking about himself or some other man.

And the Bible says from this passage he preached Jesus to him and told him about Jesus. The New Testament writers throughout indicate this is about Jesus. And yet he is here the servant of Jehovah.

So the servant idea in Isaiah has some development. Really how it goes. And we'll look at this in detail as a separate topic.

The servant of Jehovah starts out being Israel. Israel is commissioned by God to be his servant. To accomplish certain things.

Bring light to the Gentiles. To bring blessing to the world. But there are passages in this section that point out that Israel fails.

Israel does not fulfill its commission. Israel does not become a light to the Gentiles. It becomes corrupted by the Gentiles.

And it does not ever carry out the purposes that God commissioned Israel as a servant to do. Therefore another servant comes to fulfill what the first servant failed in. And that servant is an individual.

The Messiah. And so we have many messianic references in this section. Many passages about Christ referred to as the servant.

My servant says Jehovah. But earlier, even prior to this segment. Back in chapters 40 through 48.

There are places where the servant of Jehovah is mentioned. But in most of them, the servant is Israel. For example, in Isaiah 43.10. In Isaiah 43.10. It says, You are my witnesses, says Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen.

That you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me there was no God formed nor shall there be after me. I am the Lord, said it.

This is a reference to Israel. Because it's plural. You are my witnesses.

Plural. You are my servant. Singular.

His servant there is not an individual but people. The Israelites. And so throughout much of the earlier servant passages in Isaiah.

Though one of the very earliest. In fact, it may be the earliest servant passage in Isaiah. The servant is Christ.

In chapter 42.1-4. Behold. 42.1-4. Behold my servant whom I uphold, my elect one in whom my soul delights. I have put my spirit on him.

I will bring forth the justice to the Gentiles. He will not cry out nor raise his voice. Nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

A bruised reed he will not break. A smoking flag he will not quench. You know this passage.

It's quoted in the New Testament. And applied to Christ. And that being so.

We know that the servant here. In 42. Is Christ.

So how do we. You know. It's.

It's a. It's a perplexing thing. That. That Old Testament theologians like to discuss among themselves.

As to who's. You know. What theory is what.

Because the passages are not chronologically arranged. So that Israel is always the servant. The beginning and later.

Christ is the servant. They're kind of intermixed. But when you take the whole counsel.

Of this section of Isaiah. About the servant. You'll find.

That Israel was commissioned to be a servant. But you'll find. There are passages that mention.

Israel's failure in that role. And because of that. Because of that.

Israel has to. Be replaced. Isaiah 42.

Verse 19 for example. Referring to Israel as the servant. God says who is blind.

But my servant. Or deaf as my messenger whom I send. Who is blind as he who is perfect.

But my servant. And blind as the Lord's servant. Seen many things.

But you do not observe. Opening the ears. But he does not hear.

It's a strange passage. But one thing it makes clear. Is that the servant that he chose.

Is blind and dumb. And not a very good messenger. But that's why he had to be replaced.

And so Israel. Which was God's messenger. And God's servant.

And God's witnesses. Has been rejected as such. And Christ replaced Israel.

And of course. Those who are in Christ. Because we are considered to be one entity with Christ.

We are one entity. We are members of his body. So Christ.

Seen not only as the individual man. Jesus. But as he is the head of a body.

The corporate body of Christ. Is the new Israel. The new servant.

But we'll talk about that in detail. Another time. The latter part of this middle section.

Chapter 54 and following. Definitely talks about the church. I say definitely.

And I can say it dogmatically. Because Paul quotes from it. And applies it to the church.

We'll see that in detail later on. Okay. The last section.

Of Isaiah. Is. Excuse me.

Chapters 59 through. Or 58 through 66. This section.

Is yet another. Section that deals with the same subject. I think.

As those two sections mentioned earlier. 24 through 27. And 34 and 35.

The transition. From the old order. To the new order.

The focus. Of this. Section.

Seems to be on the glories. Of the new covenant order. But there's a fair amount.

Of negative stuff. In here. About.

Jerusalem. Now. This section.

Chapters 58 through 66. Is one of those. Index.

Sections. That helps us to decide. What these kinds of passages.

Are about. When I say index. Sections.

I coined the word. From the. Evolutionist.

Use of index. Fathers. Fossils.

Trying to determine. What strata. How old.

A certain strata. Is there dealing with. They find out.

What kind of fossils. Are found in it. And their assumption.

About the age of the fossils. Tells them how old. The strata.

Is in their opinion. So I mean. If they assume.

That dinosaur bones. Are 70 million years old. You find a dinosaur bone.

In a rock. Even if you have no other way. Of dating the rock.

You assume that rock. 70 million years old. Because the fossils.

Are index fossils. They determine. They are the starting point.

Of reference. To determine. Other things.

Deduced from it. Well. I consider this passage.

In Isaiah. Chapters. 58 through 66.

To be like an index passage. It is like. Chapters 34 and 35.

It is like. Chapters 24 through 27. Those are the sections.

Where there's the passing. Of the old order. In the introduction.

Of the new order. That's definitely. What these chapters.

About. It talks about judgment. And talks about glory.

You know. Judgment and destruction. Elimination.

Followed by. Creation. And the restoration.

Of a new thing. Now. The reason.

This passage. Is particularly helpful. For us.

To understand. What these passages. Are about.

Is because. It is a section. Heavily quoted from.



Again. In the New Testament. Heavily alluded to.  
Heavily quoted from. As is chapter 11. As is chapter 35.  
This whole section. Has yielded. A wealth.  
Of images. Vocabulary. And actual quotes.  
Taken up in the New Testament. To help us understand. What's going on here.  
And to. Basically. To summarize it.  
Because we'll take it. More in detail. Later.  
To summarize it. Now. It is talking about.  
At least the way. The New Testament. Applies it.  
Is talking about. The end of the. Old system.  
The old Jerusalem. The old. Covenant.  
Order. Economy. And the introduction of the new covenant economy.  
There are many. As I said. Indicators of this.  
In individual. Passes. Passages.  
That we will have. An occasional look at. Certainly.  
We have already noticed. Isaiah. Sixty one.  
Jesus quoted. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. Because the Lord has anointed me.  
To preach. Good tidings. To the poor.  
He said. He was doing that. In his very presence.  
There in the synagogue. Of Nazareth. In Luke chapter four.  
He said. This scripture is fulfilling. You are hearing.  
Quite obviously. This is talking about the inauguration. Of the Messianic.  
Age. In Christ. But.  
The same passage. Goes on to talk about. The desolation.  
Of the cities. And. That it be of Judah.

And so forth. Because that is. The upshot.  
Of that. It talks about. The making.  
In chapter. Sixty one. Verse eight.  
Of an everlasting covenant. Which. Is the new covenant.  
That Jesus made. With his disciples. In the upper room.  
When he said. This cup. Is the new covenant.  
In my blood. It. Talks about.  
In verse ten. Being clothed. With the garments.  
Of salvation. A new testament image. Earlier still.  
In verse three. Of Isaiah. Sixty one.  
The last line. Says that the people. Of God.  
Will be called. Trees of righteousness. The planting.  
Of the Lord. Well. People compared to trees.  
Is a common image. In the Bible. But Jesus.  
When his disciples. Said. Do you know.  
You offended the Pharisees. By what you said. As if he cared.  
In Matthew. Fifteen. Thirteen.  
In Matthew. Fifteen. Thirteen.  
The disciples. Do you know. The Pharisees were offended.  
By what you said. Jesus said. Every tree.  
That my father's not planted. We plucked up by the roots. Not all trees.  
Of the planting. Of the Lord. My father's not planted.  
All of these trees. The ones that are. Are the righteous remnant.  
The ones that are not. Get plucked. Out.  
In Isaiah. Chapter. Sixty.

Three. We talked. About the day.  
Of vengeance. Is there. The day.  
Of vengeance. Is also. In Isaiah.  
Sixty. One. An expression.  
That I. Felt. Corresponds. Nicely.  
With Jesus. Statement. These are.  
The days. Of vengeance. Referring to.  
The destruction. Of Jerusalem. In seven.  
A.D. A great. A great. A great deal.  
Of data. Like this. Can be found.  
For example. In chapter. Sixty.  
Five. Verses. One.  
And two. I was sought. By those.  
Who did not ask. For me. I was found.  
By those. Who did not seek. Me.  
And then. In verse. Two.  
I have stretched out. My hands. All day.  
Long. To rebellious. People.  
Now. You've been through. Isaiah.  
Recently. Enough. I mean.  
Romans. Recently. Enough.  
To know. That Paul quoted. These two.  
Verses. At the end. Of Romans.  
Ten. And he applied them. To the present.  
Situation. Of the Jews. And Gentiles.

He applied. Verse. One.  
To the fact. That Gentiles. Who had not formerly.  
Been seekers. Of God. Have found.  
God. Through Christ. In the gospel.  
In the church. And. That the Jews.  
Have been rejected. Because of their rejection. Of Christ.  
Paul quotes. These verses. As explanatory.  
Of the present. Circumstance. Of Jews.  
And Gentiles. Since Christ. Has come.  
And obviously. Apply. He felt.  
This chapter. Applies. To that.  
He felt. This chapter. Applies.  
To the age. In which he was living. And that we are living.  
In Isaiah. Chapter. Sixty.  
Six. And verse. Twenty.  
Or. Nineteen. And.  
Twenty. Allowing. First.  
Symbolism. Of language. Where.  
Ancient nations. Represent. Other nations.  
Later on. In history. That.  
You know. After these ancient nations. Are no longer there.  
Says. I will set. A sign.  
Among them. And those. Among them.  
Who escape. I will send to the nations. Jesus.  
God. Make disciples. Of all nations.

Gives. Some names. Of some ancient nations.  
And then it says. My. Those.  
Who have not heard. My fame. Nor seen.  
My glory. And they shall declare. My glory.  
Among the Gentiles. Now. Verse.  
Twenty. Says. Then they shall bring.  
All your brethren. For an offering. To the Lord.  
Out of all nations. Now. He's talking about sending his people.  
To the Gentiles. To declare his glory. To the Gentiles.  
And to bring. The Gentiles. To the Lord.  
As an offering. To God. Look what Paul did.  
With his passage. Over in Romans. Fifteen.  
And verse. Sixteen. Then that's all.  
We'll have time for it. In this survey. But in Romans.  
Fifteen. Sixteen. Paul's talking about his ministry.  
Among the Gentiles. And he says that. The last line of verse.  
Fifteen. Says. Because of the grace.  
Given to me. By God. Verse.  
Sixteen. That I might be a minister. Of Jesus Christ.  
To the Gentiles. Ministering the gospel of God. That the offering.  
Of the Gentiles. Might be acceptable. Sanctified.  
By the Holy Spirit. He talks about the Gentiles. He's converting.  
As an offering. To God. If.  
You have the same Bible. I do. Or even if you don't.  
There's a good likelihood. That the editors. Or publishers.

Have put a footnote there. Or a marginal note. By the word.  
Of the offering. It should. Point you back.  
To. Isaiah. Chapter.  
Sixty. Six. In verse.  
Twenty. Where it speaks of the Gentiles. Being brought as an offering.  
To the Lord. Virtually all. Bible publishers.  
Have recognized that Paul. There is alluding back. To this passage.  
What's that tell you. Again and again and again. The New Testament writers.  
Interpret these chapters of Isaiah. As being fulfilled in their own. Ministries.  
And so. The application. These passages.  
Though many people. Apply them to a future millennium. Or.  
Something. Beyond. The New Testament writers.  
Applied them to. The church. Age.  
To the present economy. Of things. And that is.  
There's more. Than this. But we won't take.  
Any more time today. To look at them. But.  
It is things like this. That have. Led me.  
To the conclusion. That these passages. About the end of the old.  
And the beginning of the new. Especially when you consider. How the New Testament.  
Writers. Use the parts. About the introduction.  
Of the new. And how they. Applied it to.  
The church. And the new covenant. The end of the old.  
Naturally. Seems to be. The end of the old covenant.  
And. I would agree with Jesus. Saying that all things.  
Might be fulfilled. By what happened. When the Romans came.

So. These considerations. Of course.

Are. Some that will go into more deeply. As we take individual topics.

To delve into. But I. I hope this gives you. Enough of an outline of Isaiah.

That if you read it now. You kind of know. Where what you're reading at the moment.

Fits into the bigger picture. And I hope even some of the comments. I made will bring some of the passages.

To life for you though. Are further studies in the topic. Should I hope do that even to a greater degree.

What I'm going to ask. I should have actually asked this last night. So giving you last night to it.

But I'd like for you to read. On your own. Before tomorrow.

The first ten chapters. Of Isaiah. And I'm going to have you read.

Between ten and thirteen chapters. A night. In order to get through it.

We won't be taking those chapters. Verse by verse. But I want you to be reading them.

So they're fresh in your mind. And we're going to be drawing from them.