

Bible Challenge 2018

Week 26-27: June 24-July 7

Outline

Isaiah 1: The Unfaithfulness of Israel
Isaiah 2-3: The Judgment of God against Israel and Judah
Isaiah 4: The Propheted Branch
Isaiah 5: Woes to those under God's hand of Judgment
Isaiah 6: The Call of Isaiah
Isaiah 7-8: The Coming Judgment and a Sign
Isaiah 9-12: The Messiah is Born and Salvation Comes
Isaiah 13-20: Oracles against the Nations
Isaiah 21: The Judgment of Babylon
Isaiah 22: Eliakim and Shebna
Isaiah 23-26: The establishment of the Valley of Dry Bones
Isaiah 27-29: The establishment of Jerusalem's Cornerstone
Isaiah 30-31: Warning about Looking to Egypt for Help
Isaiah 32-35: A Righteous King will Reign
Isaiah 36-39: Hezekiah and Sennacherib
Isaiah 40-44: The Suffering Servant's Song
Isaiah 45-47: God punishes Idolatrous Nations
Isaiah 48: Refining God's People
Isaiah 49-51: The Servant's Call to the People
Isaiah 52-56: The Salvation of our God
Isaiah 57-59: The Hypocrisy of False Worship
Isaiah 60-62: The Coming Messiah
Isaiah 63-65: The Coming of God's Judgment
Isaiah 66: The Reign of God over the World and His Promise to the Nations

In 722 B.C., the northern Kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians and the Assyrian army, led by Sennacherib was heading south for Jerusalem. Humanly speaking, the fall of the second kingdom would soon follow. In disobedience to God's command that Israel was never to return to Egypt for any reason (Deuteronomy 17:16), the Judean king began appealing to Egypt for help and assistance against their common foe. In the midst of this, God raised up the prophet Isaiah to preach to the people...to warn them against turning to Egypt for help and to remind them of God's judgment against the idolatrous nations around them. And further, to promise that even under the hand of judgment, there was still the promise of a Messiah that would come. Thus, Isaiah's name appropriately means, "Yahweh has saved."

The Unfaithfulness of Israel

As one enters into the book of Isaiah, one is almost immediately confronted with the sins of which the people are guilty. They are going through the motions, they are making sacrifices and they are celebrating the festivals. They are doing the things that God commands, but they are not doing them in the right spirit. How often that is also the case in the church of Jesus Christ. God's call to the people? Repent.

Isaiah's Call

John 12:41 records that when Isaiah was in the Temple, he saw the Lord Jesus "high and lifted up," a reminder of Jesus' active role in the saving of his people even in the Old Testament era. And so, Isaiah will witness the coming Christ in glory and we are told that his robe — his kingly authority — consumed and filled the Temple itself. Jesus is ruler not over only the universe, but he is ruler especially of his spiritual worship. There is also a picture for us of Isaiah's repentance and of God's forgiveness and reinstatement of Isaiah to service...a reminder for us of God's character. The most challenging passage for many of us is the final section, one where Isaiah is charged with preaching with the promise that the people

will not hear and they will not respond...God is going to keep them under his hand of Judgment. Further than that, Jesus quotes from this passage in Matthew 13:14-15 as an explanation for why he often taught in parables.

Prophecies of the Coming of Christ

Isaiah 7 and 9 provide us with some important prophetic statements about the Birth of the Messiah that must not be overlooked. In Isaiah 7:14, it speaks of the Messiah being born of a virgin, a miraculous work as a sign that God's redemption has come. Sadly, some translations have chosen to translate the passage to say that the sign (the redeemer) will be born of a "young woman" (the NET, JPS, RSV, and NRSV have all gone this way along with the "Good News Bible"). The biggest problem with this is that a Jewish reader would have assumed that a young woman was a virgin. Further, when the Jews translated this into Greek long before Jesus was born, they used the Greek word for virgin, not for a young girl. Most of our translations preserve the translation and thus the miraculous event to which it points, but we ought to be familiar with translations floating around that make some intentional changes to the text that obscure the meaning.

As we move into Isaiah 9, we find familiar language — such that we commonly read around Christmas. A light appeared in the Messiah to the people trapped in darkness (see John 8:12) and then the words: "for to us a child is born, to us a son is given..." followed up by the character of this Messiah: "Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Eliakim and Shebna

The second major narrative in this prophetic work takes place around the replacement of Shebna as the manager of the Temple's treasures. Shebna had been abusing his privileges and making a tomb for himself in the mountain, a place typically reserved for Kings. God thus removes him from his charge and places Hilkiah in Shebna's role. Note that the language found here anticipates Jesus' language regarding the Keys of the Kingdom (Matthew 16:19; Revelation 3:8).

Hezekiah and Sennacherib

The third and final major narrative in Isaiah takes place just prior to the songs of the suffering Servant. Here is God's protection of Hezekiah by slaying 185,000 Assyrian troops in the middle of the night. This action was executed by the the Angel of Yahweh, the pre-incarnate son of God.

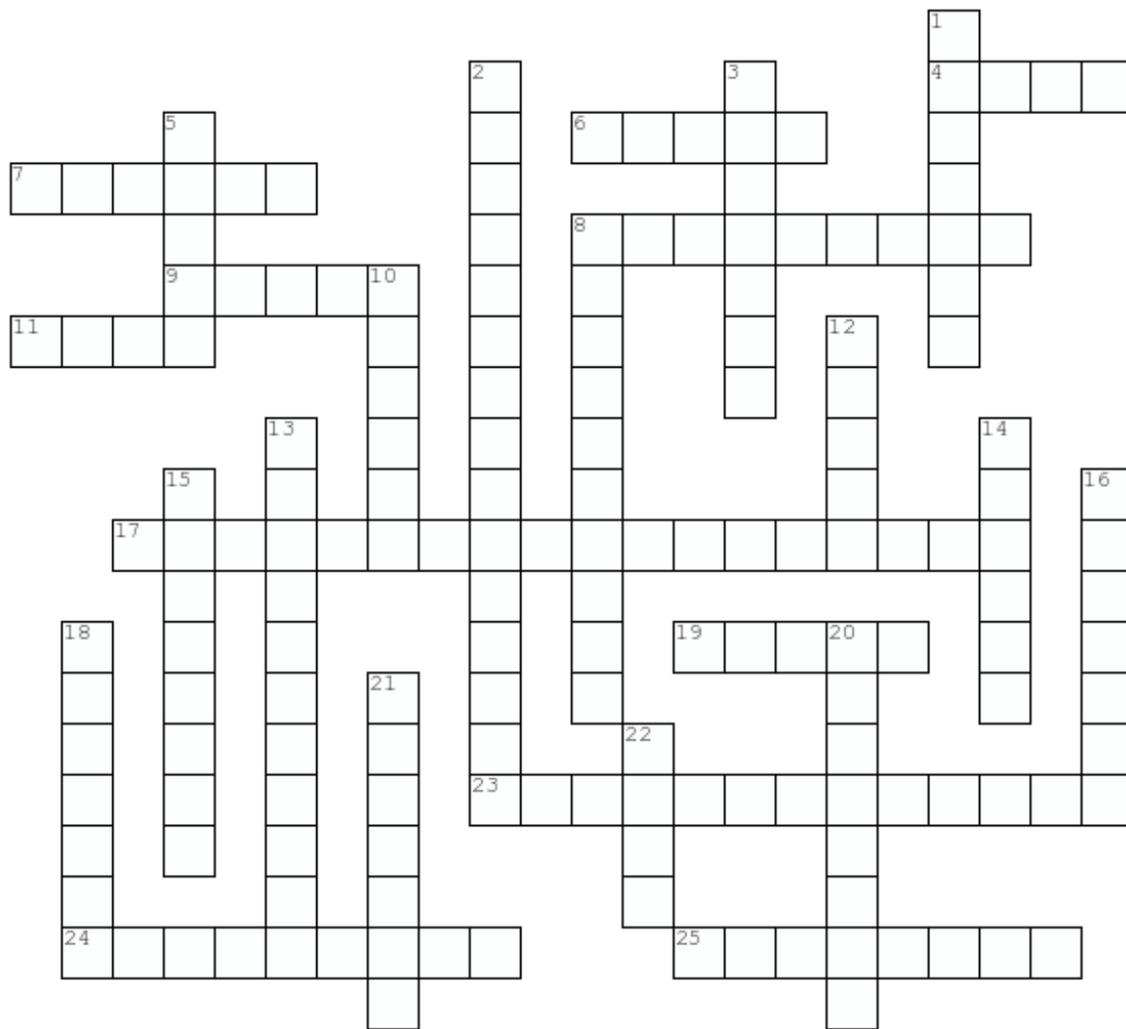
Dry Bones Prepared

When we think of the Valley of Dry bones, we ordinarily think of Ezekiel 37 and his prophesy. Yet, those bones had to get in that valley of death (figuratively, of course). They arrived in that condition as a sign of God's judgment over idolatry and false worship and in chapters 23-26 you see the judgments of God that culminate in a foreshadowing of Ezekiel's prophesy in Chapter 26:19-21.

The Suffering Servant

While chapters 1-39 are rather grim and marked by judgment, chapters 40-66 contain more of a focus on the promised Messiah, one who will substitute himself for the sins of his people (Isaiah 51). When John the baptist comes along, he cites Isaiah 40 as part of his initial message — a reminder of his role as the forerunner (Matthew 3:3; Malachi 4:5).

Weeks 26-27: Isaiah



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Across

4. Isaiah's father.
6. During his prophetic call, who did he see 'high and lifted up'?
7. The sign that God will send is that a _____ will bear a son.
8. The Messiah destroys this dragon of the sea.
9. The Messiah will be known as the Prince of _____.
11. God refers to justice and mercy as the _____ that he chooses. (see Isaiah 58)
17. The name of Isaiah's second son.
19. The people who have walked in darkness have seen a great _____.
23. Jesus was stricken for the _____ of God's people.
24. The Messiah will become a rock of _____ to both houses of Israel.
25. 'I form light and create darkness, I make well-being and create _____, I am the Lord, who does all these things.'

Down

1. 'Call my _____ a delight.'
2. Our righteous deeds are like a _____. (2 words)
3. In Isaiah 14:12, the fallen one is referred to as 'Son of Dawn,' in Latin it is this name for the Devil.
5. Israel must never turn to this nation for help.
8. The Messiah comes to declare the year of the _____. (2 words)
10. Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength and mount up with wings like _____.
12. Isaiah says that if you are not firm in this, you will not be firm in anything at all.
13. The name of Isaiah's eldest son.
14. Isaiah received his prophetic call in the year that this king died.
15. Isaiah decrees that the Lord is our _____ (see Isaiah 33).
16. 'Fallen, Fallen is _____' decries both Isaiah and the Apostle John.
18. In the end times, God will call priests and _____ even from the gentiles.
20. The Angel of Yahweh delivers this king by slaying 185,000 Assyrian troops.
21. He replaces Shebna.
22. 'though your sins are like scarlet they shall be white as _____.'