

The background of the image is a composite of two scenes. The lower portion shows a rugged mountain range with brown and tan slopes, receding into the distance. The upper portion is a sky filled with vibrant, ethereal light rays in shades of teal, yellow, and orange, creating a sense of divine illumination. The text is centered over this background.

SALVATION IS
OF THE LORD

A Study of Isaiah

INTRODUCTION



Challenges to Understanding Isaiah

- Class Format
- Author & Authenticity
- Language
- History
- Themes
- Outline

Format Challenges

- **Pace**

- Isaiah – 66 Chapters, 1291 verses
- Class – 25 sessions → 3 chapters (54 verses) per class (average) ☹️
- High-level Overview – Detail only for select passages
- 291 Total Questions
- 12 questions per class – 4.5 verses per question
- Traditionally average 9-10 per class. ☹️ ???
- Skip a few. Provide answers directly for a few.

- **Nature**

- Exceptional introduction today
- Prefer thought questions for depth of understanding and applicability.
- Focus on discussion of answers to questions.

- **Online until ???**

Who Was Isaiah?

- First “major (literary) prophet” distinguished by length, not significance.
- *“Isaiah the son of Amoz”* (**1:1**)
- (?) Hebrew tradition:
 - Amoz, brother to King Amaziah, son of King Joash
 - Isaiah, cousin to King Uzziah
- *“Prophetess”* for wife (**8:3**). Their children were:
 - *“Shear-Jashub”* – “a remnant shall return” (**7:3**)
 - *“Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz”* – “the spoil speedeth, the prey hasteth” (**8:1-4**)
- (?) Hebrew tradition: Sawed in half by Manasseh.

*For the time would fail me to tell of ... others ... were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, **afflicted, tormented** – of whom the world was not worthy ... (Hebrews 11:32-38).*

But, Who Really Wrote “Isaiah”?

- Refers to himself by name at least **15** times.
- Unquestioned by all scholars until 19th century.
- Modern critics assert collection by 2-12 people over 100's years:
 - Highly subjective presupposition based on:
 - Disregarding all prior tradition.
 - Alleged disjointedness.
 - Slight variation in wording style (but not too varied).
 - Alleged use of modern, sophisticated wording.
 - Also assume miracles, inspiration, and foretelling are impossible.
- Most quoted of NT (~213), even by Jesus (**Luke 4:17-21**).
- Lifetime of visions; cultural invasions; Compiled late himself.

Challenges of Language

- **Figurative:**

- First to use *apocalyptic, hyperbolic* language.
- Establishes much of later prophets' and Revelation's vocabulary.
- Even his "literal" language is interspersed with flowery, *picturesque*.
- Both of these types of "figures" make Isaiah harder to understand.
- But, they also *enrich* its meaning, emphasize its lessons and truths.
- Invents "nicknames" for cities and people based on characteristics.
- Adopts rarely re-used figures without elaboration.

- **Well-Educated:**

- Manifests a *large vocabulary*.
- Fond of plays-on-words, alliteration, and abbreviations.

Challenges of Language

- **Majestic:**

- Addresses the morality, rise, fall and judgment of kings, nations.
- Exalts Jehovah as the majestic, holy sovereign king.
- Foretells many surprising characteristics of God's Messianic king.

- **Emotional:**

- Vividly depicts the grief and joy of others.
- Displays *his own* grief and joy, despite his best efforts for restraint.

Challenges of History

- Filled with many references to kings, nations & cities.
- Long passing of time. Some details unverifiable.
- Some locations are lost to time.
- Coregency of kings complicates dating.
- Kings and others assume both honorary titles and nicknames.
- Contradictions in secular records (e.g., destroyer of Samaria?).
- Dates refined over time – but, which ones are the “good” ones?
- Regardless, most major events pinned within ± 1 year. ...

Isaiah's Career

Assyria

Tiglath-Pileser III [Pul] – Sennacherib

Israel (Samaria)

739/741 B.C.

Uzziah

Ahaz

726 B.C.

Hezekiah

697 B.C.

Manasseh

Jotham

750 B.C.

734 B.C.

Amos

Hosea

Micah

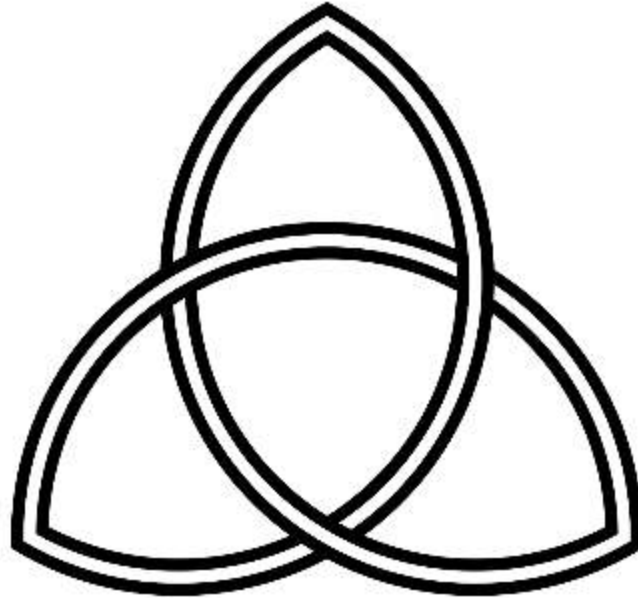
Major Themes of Isaiah

- Salvation is of the Lord, **not**:
 - Unrestrained Passion
 - Greed, Materialism
 - Unmerciful, Lawless Injustice
 - Idolatry
 - Assyria
 - Egypt
 - Babylon
 - All the kingdoms and peoples of the world joined together (**Proverbs 16:5**).
 - “Good” Kings and Heroes of Faith
 - Man in any shape, form, fashion, organization or arrangement



Jerusalem's Practical "Trinity"

Pagan
Idolatry



Carnal Greed
& Lust

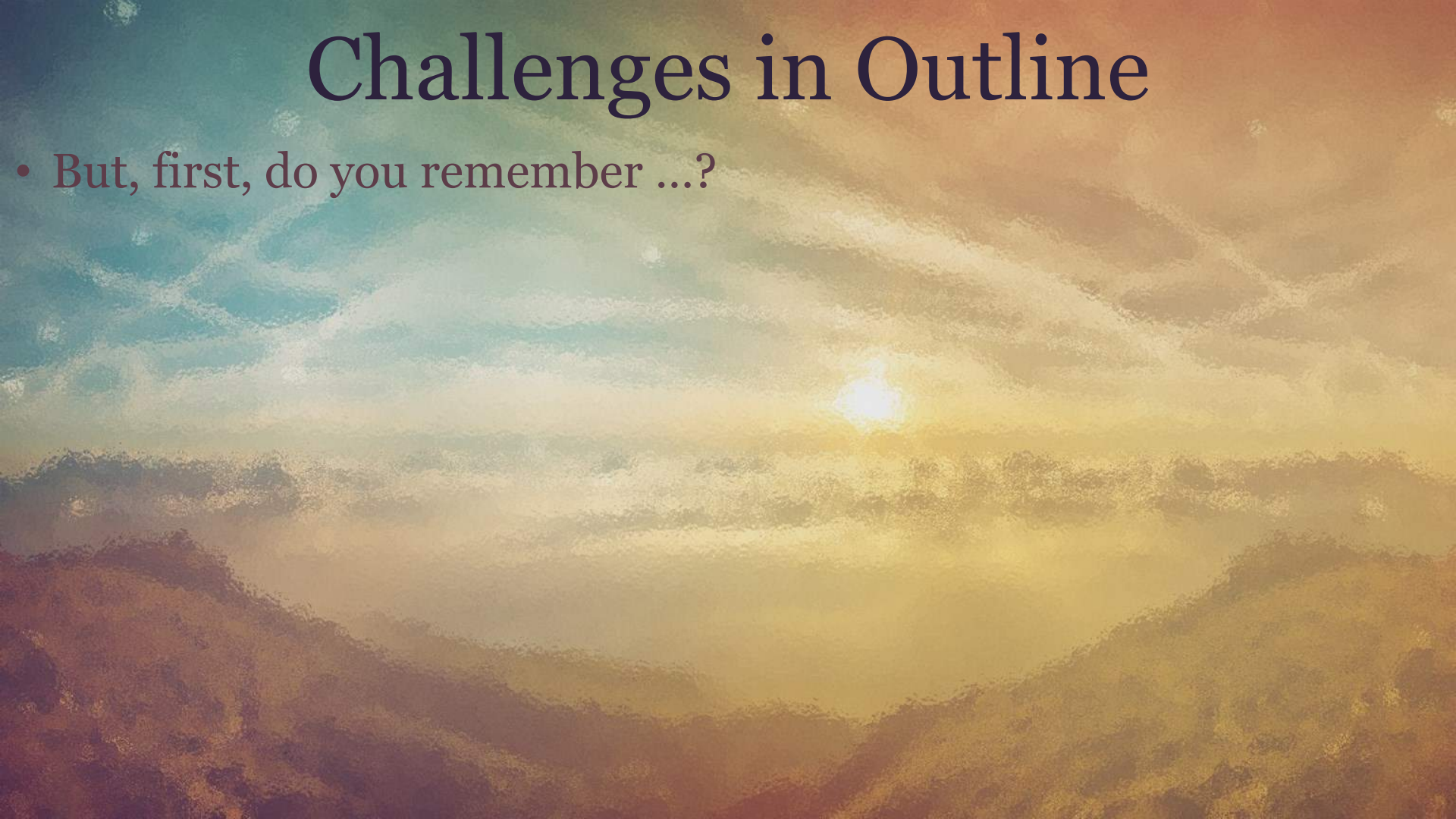
Foreign
Nations

Major Themes of Isaiah

- Salvation is of the Lord, because He:
 - “*the Lord of hosts*” (62)
 - “*the Holy One of Israel*” (25), “*the God of truth*” (**Deu. 32:4; Psa. 31:5**)
 - Alone foresees, declares and ensures the future.
 - Triumphs over all (idols, kings, the world).
 - Ensures success of His servants.
 - Patient, exhausting mercy – but still ***only a remnant saved***.
 - Provides and denies peace. “*God of all comfort*” (**2 Corinthians 1:3-6**).
 - Establishes His Messiah and Kingdom for Jew and Gentile.
- Turn*** to the Lord. ***Trust*** in the Lord. ***Wait*** on the Lord. ***Joy*** and ***take comfort*** in the Lord. ***Overcome*** through the Lord.

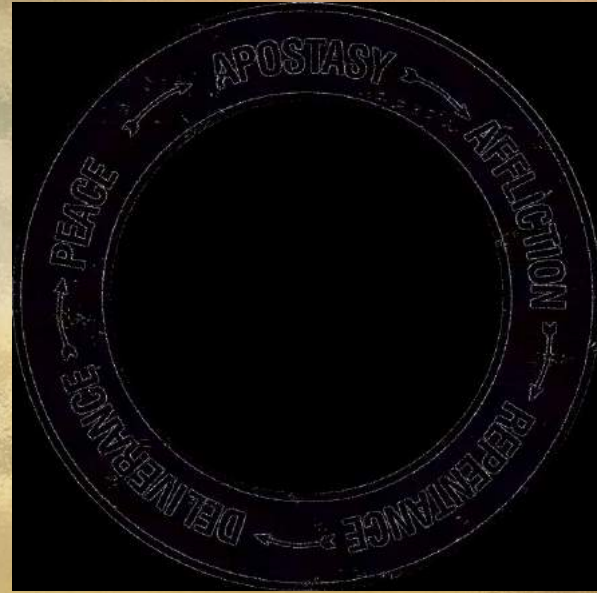
Challenges in Outline

- But, first, do you remember ...?



Book of Judges: Cycle of Sin & Salvation

1. Apostasy
2. Affliction
3. Repentance
4. Deliverance
5. Peace



- Can represent regional, national “highs” and “lows”.
- What happens when “lows” get lower, more frequent?

Isaiah's Vantage: Cycles of Decline

Repeating, Climaxing Application:

- **Condemnation** – Increasing Guilt of Sin
- **Warning** – Judgment through Increasing Invasion, Destruction
- **Hope** – Promised Protection for a (Repentant) Remnant
- **Avenging** – Judgment against Destroyers
- **Peace** – Future Blessing and Victory (Declines until Climaxes)

Shifting, Expanding Focus across Vast Distances of Time:

1. Immediate Foreground – **Israel and Syria**
2. Emerging Foreground – **Assyria**
3. Distant Background – **Babylon**
4. Horizon – **World versus Messianic Kingdom**

Richness and challenge presented by overlap and multiple focal points.





Traditional Stairstep Outlines



Isaiah's Outline?



Interwoven Threads of a Rope

Outline Benefits

- Possible Benefits to Interweaving:
 - Easier to reject any multiple author theory.
 - Maybe more effective in converting entrenched sinners, because error is intertwined and entangled in their minds?
 - Maybe more effective in reaching impatient, hard-hearted, rebellious souls with short attention spans?
 - Easier to accept when protection is mingled with terror, joy with sorrow, salvation with judgment.
 - Harder to break once grasped, like a rope.

Regardless, we must: trust, accept and learn. 😊

High-Level Outline of Isaiah

I. Sovereign Judgment of All (1-39)

- A. Judgment on Judah (1-6)
- B. Judgment on Judah and Her Invaders (7-12)
- C. Judgment against Heathen Nations (13-27)
- D. Woes against Jerusalem (28-35)
- E. Transition of Threatening Empires (36-39)

II. God's Salvation of Zion (40-66)

- A. Superiority of Jehovah over Idols (40-48)
- B. *“Things That Make for Peace”* (49-57)
- C. Establishment of Zion (58-66)

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