

Foundations Devotional

• FOR THE WEEK OF JAN 3 - JAN 9 •

MONDAY // ISAIAH 6; 9

The heart of the Book of Isaiah is to demonstrate God's holiness and grace and issue a call for His people to return to Him in obedience and faith. Isaiah 6 records Isaiah's encounter with God when he was called to be a prophet. Isaiah's response to God's commission—"Here I am! Send me."—is one of the greatest pictures of obedience in all of Scripture. In Isaiah 9, we read the first of many Messianic prophecies in the book when God promised the birth of a child who would deliver His people. Matthew revealed in his Gospel that Isaiah's prophecy pointed to the birth of Jesus, the One who takes away the sins of the world. Despite our disobedience and sinfulness, God has given us a Redeemer in Jesus, and through Him, we gain eternal life in the presence of that same glorious God Isaiah witnessed.

TUESDAY // ISAIAH 44-45

While the first half of Isaiah is about God's judgment for people's sins, the second half brings words of peace and hope to the people as He reminds them of His covenant by continuing to point them to the coming Messiah. In today's reading, God reminded the people that He chose them, and that He alone—not any of their man-made idols—has the power to restore them. With powerful imagery, God listed many ways that the people's idols were foolish and helpless to save them. Isaiah also prophesied about how King Cyrus of Persia would defeat the Babylonians and help bring God's people back from exile. These chapters remind us that God alone is the Creator and Sustainer of the world and that He orchestrates everything according to His will and good purposes. When life seems hopeless and God seems far away, God's faithfulness to His people throughout Scripture reminds us that He is always at work in our lives.

WEDNESDAY // ISAIAH 52-53

Isaiah 52-53 is part of Isaiah's "Servant Song," a lengthy prophecy about Jesus, the Messiah and Suffering Servant of God. In these chapters, we read about God's solution for His people's sin problem: God would send His servant to suffer on humanity's behalf, an act that would bear the punishment for all human sin and extend forgiveness to all who would believe. Unlike the Israelites, who continued to fall into patterns of disobedience and lack of faith, the coming Servant would be obedient and faithful always, even at the cost of His own life. As people living on this side of the cross, we know that only Jesus, the Son of God, could live the perfect and sinless life necessary to be the sacrifice for our sins. When we reflect on the suffering Jesus endured and the lengths God went to in order to offer us forgiveness and eternal life in Him, we can't help but want to live our lives in service to Him.

THURSDAY // ISAIAH 65-66

Through God's use of Isaiah, the Israelites were convicted of their sins, recognized God's faithful love, and prayed for Him to again look with favor upon them (Isa. 63-64). The book closes with God's response to Israel's prayer, which was a final reminder of His faithful love and their repeated disobedience. God used Isaiah to tell the people that they would be punished for their sins but that they would also be restored to Him, and eventually, that restoration would be eternal. As a result, people everywhere would recognize God for who He is and serve and worship Him in response. From the vision of the future in Revelation, we are reminded that one day this eternal worship will be a reality for all of God's people. And so, in the meantime, we are to serve God and live for Him today.

FRIDAY // MICAH 1; 4:6-13; 5

The prophet Micah's ministry overlapped with Isaiah's and shared many of the same themes, but Micah targeted his prophecies at the southern kingdom, Judah. Like Isaiah, Micah's prophecies describe God's judgment of wickedness and His mercy for those who come to Him in repentance and faith. The main sin God spoke out against was idolatry. These were God's people, but they rejected Him and His laws by allowing and even participating in idol worship. As we saw in Isaiah, though, Micah also prophesied about the hope that would come through a Deliverer. Micah proclaims a few different Messianic prophecies about Jesus, including His birth in Bethlehem, His second coming, and His eternal reign. Some of these promises have already come to pass. However, we can have confidence in God today, knowing that He will be faithful to do what He has promised. The promised return of Jesus gives us the hope and strength we need to face all of life's present difficulties, and it should motivate us to live in daily obedience to Him.

WEEKEND // FINISH UP ANY YOU DIDN'T DO