

Isaiah 1-2

Read the passage through a few times, and think about the structure and themes (it may help to map it out on paper). Are there any repeated portions? Any confusing bits?

Explain the passage and how it fits into the history of God and his people as if you were talking to someone who doesn't understand 'religious' language.

Look through the passage and list all of the names of God...what do we learn about God's character? Are there any aspects of His character seen in this passage that are foreign or alien to you?

A major portion of these chapters are concerned with the sin of God's people which takes a number of forms:

False religion (1v10-16)

How did this happen to God's people i.e. what is the root of false religion?

Read Isaiah 28v10-13....how is it linked?

How is this sin present in our society? And in us personally?

'Quit your worship charades. I can't stand your trivial religious games: Monthly conferences, weekly Sabbaths, special meetings – meetings, meetings, meetings –I can't stand one more! Meetings for this, meetings for that. I hate them! You've worn me out! I'm sick of your religion, religion, religion, while you keep on sinning. When you put on your next prayer performance I'll be looking the other way. No matter how loud or how often you pray, I'll not be listening. And do you know why? Because you have been tearing people to pieces, and your hands are bloody.'

(Isaiah 1v11-15 The Message)

Injustice (1v16-17, v23)

How/why does injustice happen?

Who are those with no rights in our lives? What about our rights?

Idolatry (2v8)

Catalogue your life.....take what is on your walls and bookshelves, on your computer and the TV, in your conversation and daydreams and look at it with the eyes of one who doesn't know you...completely objectively. What matters most to you?

What were the consequences of sin for the Israelites?

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy on us

Praise God that 'though your sins are like scarlet they shall be as white as snow'.

It is always challenging to see sin in ourselves...it is equally challenging sometimes to believe 1v18, to believe that God forgives completely. But we are free from guilt; free to live lives of holiness, that are full of the 'splendour of his majesty'.

Pray

2v2 - praise God that this is true...that God will be king, and his temple will be raised up

2v3 - pray that God will teach us to walk in his paths

2v4 - praise God that this is what will come to be...that the glory of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea...and pray that we might be peace loving people

2v5 - pray that we will encourage one another, and that God will be our light now and always