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THE 66-BOOK 8-WEEK GROUP BIBLE STUDY SERIES • BOOK 23 OF 66

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ISAIAH

An 8-Week Group Bible Study

By Greg and Kayla Gibson

WEEK 1 OF 8 • GENERAL / MIXED GROUP EDITION

Holy God, Unholy People, Called Prophet — Isaiah 1:1–6:13

Scripture Scope: Isaiah 1:1–6:13 (ESV) • Session Length: 75–90 Minutes

LEADER GUIDE EDITION

Complete Participant Text + Interleaved Pacing, Hebrew Word Studies, Facilitation Probes & Pitfalls

Isaiah — 8-Week Group Bible Study (Leader Guide Edition)

Week 1: Holy God, Unholy People, Called Prophet (Isaiah 1:1–6:13)

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- **The prophet:** "The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah" (1:1). Isaiah preached in Jerusalem for about forty years in the second half of the 700s BC.
- **The setting:** The Assyrian Empire was swallowing the nations. The northern kingdom of Israel fell in 722 BC, and Judah was nearly overrun in 701 BC. Later chapters look ahead to exile in Babylon and the return.
- **Its form:** Prophetic poetry and preaching, with a few chapters of history (36–39). Words of judgment and words of comfort are woven together.
- **The structure:**
  - The Holy One and a rebellious people; Isaiah's call (1–6).
  - Immanuel and the coming King (7–12).
  - The LORD judges the nations, and a feast for all peoples (13–27).
  - Whom will you trust? Woes, Hezekiah, and Assyria (28–39).
  - Comfort, the incomparable God, and his Servant (40–48).
  - The Suffering Servant and the invitation to come (49–55).
  - True worship and the coming Redeemer (56–59).
  - Good news, the glory of Zion, and new heavens and a new earth (60–66).
- **Why it matters:** Isaiah asks how the Holy One of Israel can dwell with and save a sinful people. His answer reaches from cleansing at the altar to a Child born to reign, a Servant pierced for our transgressions, and a new creation. Isaiah is among the prophets most frequently quoted in the New Testament.

How This 8-Week Study Works

Designed for weekly small groups, mini-churches, and community gatherings (75–90 minutes per session) rather than daily homework checklists, this 8-week study walks through all sixty-six chapters of Isaiah by following the book's own argument. Some weeks cover many chapters; in those weeks a few focal passages are read closely and the rest is summarized. Each week invites you to listen to the prophet together through six repeatable sections:

- **Section X.1 — Opening:** Sets the scene, the Week at a Glance, Head, Heart, and Hands objectives, the Opening Frame, and the Opening Entry Question.
- **Section X.2 — Historical & Literary Context:** Places the week's chapters inside the structure of Isaiah and the ancient Near Eastern world.
- **Section X.3 — Movement 1:** The week's first guided passage: Guided Scripture Reading, Anchor Verses, Teaching Narrative, and Group Discussion Questions.
- **Section X.4 — Movement 2:** The week's second guided passage, following the same flow.
- **Section X.5 — Canonical Horizon:** Traces how the passage echoes across Scripture and finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.
- **Section X.6 — Application, Looking Ahead, and Closing Prayer:** Moves the week's study into everyday life, previews next week, and closes in prayer.

Key anchor verses are printed in each section for quick reference. Longer focal passages are read aloud together from the ESV.

Choosing a Bible Translation: Top 5 Translations Compared

Every English Bible translation falls along a spectrum between two primary approaches: word-for-word translation (formal equivalence, which prioritizes literal accuracy to the original phrasing and sentence structure) and thought-for-thought translation (dynamic equivalence, which prioritizes immediate modern readability by translating idioms and ideas into natural contemporary expressions). Here is how five widely used English translations compare:

- **ESV (English Standard Version) — Word-for-Word**
  - Pros: Follows the wording and sentence structure of the original Hebrew and Greek closely while using modern English; well suited to close study.
  - Cons: Because it tracks the original sentence structure, some phrasing can feel more formal than everyday speech.
- **NIV (New International Version) — Balanced (Between Word-for-Word and Thought-for-Thought)**
  - Pros: Widely read; balances accuracy to the original languages with natural, everyday readability.
  - Cons: Because some idioms are rendered as modern expressions, a few literal wordplays or technical terms can be less visible.
- **NLT (New Living Translation) — Thought-for-Thought**
  - Pros: Warm and conversational; reads smoothly aloud and helps readers follow the big picture of long passages.
  - Cons: Because it prioritizes meaning over literal phrasing, it can be harder to use for close word study.
- **CSB (Christian Standard Bible) — Optimal Equivalence (Balanced)**
  - Pros: Stays close to the original words where possible while smoothing awkward phrasing into natural modern English.
  - Cons: Because it is a newer translation, some well-known verses may sound different from the wording many readers remember.
- **KJV / NKJV (King James Version & New King James Version) — Traditional Word-for-Word**
  - Pros: Historic cadence that shaped English literature and church history; the NKJV updates archaic pronouns ("thee/thou") while keeping the classic rhythm.
  - Cons: Often reads like older English poetry, with complex sentences and archaic or formal vocabulary that can be harder for modern readers to follow.

This study quotes the ESV.

Greg & Kayla's Recommended Study Bibles

Having a trusted study Bible on hand is one of the best ways to go deeper as you read through Isaiah:

- **Greg's Favorite Study Bible:** The MacArthur Study Bible (ESV), which contains extensive explanatory notes beneath almost every verse, ideal for detailed study.
- **Kayla's Favorite Study Bible:** The ESV Study Bible, containing over 20,000 study notes, articles, and explanations.

The 8-Week Isaiah Study at a Glance

Week	Title & Passage	Movement 1 / Movement 2	Canonical Horizon
1	**Holy God, Unholy People, Called Prophet** (1:1–6:13)	A Rebellious People and the LORD's Vineyard (1:1–5:30) / Holy, Holy, Holy (6:1–13)	The Holy One seen in Christ; cleansing for the unclean
2	**Immanuel and the Coming King** (7:1–12:6)	Immanuel, God With Us (7:1–8:22) / The Child, the King, and the Branch (9:1–12:6)	Immanuel, the Child, and the Branch fulfilled in Jesus
3	**The LORD Judges the Nations** (13:1–27:13)	Judgment on the Proud Nations (13:1–23:18) / A Feast for All Peoples (24:1–27:13)	Christ the King of the nations; death swallowed up
4	**Whom Will You Trust?** (28:1–39:8)	Woe to Those Who Trust in Egypt (28:1–35:10) / Hezekiah, Assyria, and the Test of Trust (36:1–39:8)	Christ the tested cornerstone; the God who answers prayer
5	**Comfort, My People** (40:1–48:22)	Comfort and the Incomparable God (40:1–42:25) / Redeemed, Called by Name (43:1–48:22)	The voice in the wilderness; the chosen Servant
6	**The Servant Who Saves** (49:1–55:13)	The Servant's Mission (49:1–52:12) / The Suffering Servant and the Invitation to Come (52:13–55:13)	Jesus the Suffering Servant; the invitation to come
7	**True Worship and the Redeemer** (56:1–59:21)	The Worship God Desires (56:1–58:14) / Sin, Separation, and the Coming Redeemer (59:1–21)	A house of prayer for all peoples; the Redeemer who comes to Zion
8	**New Heavens and a New Earth** (60:1–66:24)	Good News and the Glory of Zion (60:1–62:12) / New Heavens and a New Earth (63:1–66:24)	The Spirit-anointed preacher; the new creation

How to Use This Leader Guide Edition

This **Leader Guide Edition** is built on a synchronized two-edition architecture so you never have to juggle two separate books during your small group or mini-church gathering:

1. 100% Word-for-Word Participant Text Included: Every section, Scripture reading prompt, verbatim ESV anchor verse callout, teaching narrative, table, and discussion or reflection prompt appears here **word-for-word identical** to what your group members see in their Participant Study Edition. Section numbers and question labels match exactly, so leaders and participants can stay on the same page.

2. Interleaved `[LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY]` Blocks: Immediately following each section, you will find a dedicated leader block containing:

- **Pacing & Time Targets** calibrated for a 75–90 minute session. Pacing targets appear in every Leader section header. If time runs short, shorten the Teaching Narratives rather than the discussion.
- **Hebrew Word Study & Ancient Near Eastern Research Quick-References** so you can explain terms naturally without lecturing, when they add something useful.
- **Question-by-Question Facilitation Probes** listed in question order, designed to move conversation past polite answers into honest reflection.
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around** so you can gently redirect common rabbit trails back to the biblical text.

- **Additional Research Notes** appear when they add something useful.

3. Leader Flags: Numbered in reading order, they mark passages that need pastoral care or tend to raise hard questions. Isaiah speaks of war, siege, exile, and judgment, and some scenes involve violence against the vulnerable. Those scenes are told in brief and never printed as anchors. Some members carry deep shame, have lived through war or violence, or have served faithfully without visible results. Do not rush past hard words, and do not leave anyone under judgment without the comfort God offers in the same book. If someone discloses abuse, exploitation, trafficking, coercion, or immediate danger, listen without interrogation, take the disclosure seriously, help the person reach safety, and follow applicable law and your organization's safeguarding and reporting procedures. If someone expresses current thoughts of suicide or self-harm, ask directly whether there is immediate danger, intent, a plan, or access to means. Do not leave the person alone when imminent risk is present. In the United States, call or text 988 (for the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline), and call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department for immediate danger. Outside the United States, use the appropriate local crisis or emergency service for your location. Inform the appropriate pastor or safeguarding leader while prioritizing immediate safety.

4. Reading aloud: Assign readers ahead of time for the Guided Scripture Reading. Printed anchor verses are for quick reference; read the longer focal passages from an open ESV. Passages marked "in brief" are summarized or retold by the leader rather than read.

5. Large sections: Several weeks cover many chapters. Read the focal passages closely and summarize the rest in a sentence or two; encourage members to read the whole section at home.

6. Facilitating well: Ask the printed question, wait, and let silence work. Use the probes to deepen, not to lecture. Aim for every voice to be heard at least once each session.

Week 1 Session Pacing at a Glance (75–90 Minutes)

Section	Focus	Time Target
Section 1.1	Opening: Holy God, Unholy People, Called Prophet (Isaiah 1:1–6:13) (1.1 Q1)	**10 mins**
Section 1.2	Historical & Literary Context: The Prophet in the Days of Assyria (1.2 Q1–Q3)	**12 mins**
Section 1.3	Movement 1: A Rebellious People and the LORD's Vineyard (Isaiah 1:1–5:30) (1.3 Q1–Q5)	**22 mins**
Section 1.4	Movement 2: Holy, Holy, Holy (Isaiah 6:1–13) (1.4 Q1–Q5)	**20 mins**
Section 1.5	Canonical Horizon: The Holy One Seen in Christ; Cleansing for the Unclean (1.5 Q1–Q3)	**12 mins**
Section 1.6	Application, Looking Ahead, and Closing Prayer (1.6 Q1–Q3)	**9 mins**
Total	**Full Week 1 Group Session**	**75–90 mins**

WEEK 1 OF 8

WEEK 1 SESSION GUIDE · ISAIAH 1:1–6:13

Week 1: Holy God, Unholy People, Called Prophet

Scripture Scope: Isaiah 1:1–6:13 (ESV) • Focal Passages: Isaiah 1:1–20; 2:1–5; 5:1–7; 6:1–13 • Session Length: 75–90 Minutes

Section 1.1

Opening: Holy God, Unholy People, Called Prophet (Isaiah 1:1–6:13)

Passage Isaiah 1:1–6:13

Opening

Isaiah opens in a courtroom. Heaven and earth are called as witnesses while the LORD charges his own children with rebellion. Their worship is busy, but God cannot bear it, because their hands are full of blood and the widow and the orphan are neglected. Yet the Judge makes an astonishing offer: come and settle the case, for sins like scarlet can become white as snow. The prophet lifts our eyes to a day when the nations stream to the LORD's mountain to learn his ways.

He sings a love song about a vineyard that produced only wild grapes. Then he takes us back to the year King Uzziah died, when Isaiah saw the Lord on a high throne, heard the seraphim cry "Holy, holy, holy," confessed that he was a man of unclean lips, was cleansed by a burning coal, and answered, "Here I am! Send me."

Week 1 At a Glance

Scripture Scope	Isaiah 1:1–6:13 (the LORD's charge against his people, hollow worship, the call to wash and the invitation to reason, the mountain of the LORD, the day of the LORD and Zion's humbling, the vineyard song, six woes, and Isaiah's vision and call)
Focal Passages	Isaiah 1:1–20; 2:1–5; 5:1–7; 6:1–13
Literary & Structural Anchor	Chapters 1–5 show the problem: a holy God and a sinful people. Chapter 6 shows the answer in miniature: a vision of holiness, confession, atonement, and sending. "Come" rings through these chapters (1:18; 2:3; 2:5).
Big Idea	The Holy One confronts his people's rebellion, yet he provides cleansing and calls a messenger.

Week 1 Learning Objectives (Head, Heart, Hands)

HEAD **Know the Holy One:** Learn the setting and shape of Isaiah and the meaning of "the Holy One of Israel" in chapters 1–6.

HEART **Be Cleansed:** See that the Lord Isaiah saw is revealed in Christ, whose blood cleanses from all sin.

HANDS **Answer the Call:** Take one step to join worship with justice and to say "Here I am" to God's call.

Opening Frame: Holy, Holy, Holy

The Song of Solomon closed with a call for the beloved to come and spoke of a woman's own vineyard. Isaiah also sings of a vineyard, but in a different key: the LORD planted it with love and found only wild grapes. Isaiah son of Amoz prophesied in Jerusalem in the days of the Assyrian empire, through the reigns of four kings of Judah. His book moves from judgment to comfort to a new creation. This is an 8-week study, and in some weeks large sections will be summarized so that we can follow the book's whole argument. At its center is one question: how can the Holy One dwell with and save a sinful people? The question for this week: what happens when we see the holiness of God? Before we read together, take a moment to share with the group:

Opening Entry Question (Icebreaker)

1.1 Q1 (Opening Entry Question): Have you ever entered a place or moment that made you aware of greatness beyond yourself? What stood out to you?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.1 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 10 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 10 minutes. Opening and At a Glance, 3 minutes; Head, Heart, Hands, 2 minutes; Opening Frame, 2 minutes; Opening Entry Question, 3 minutes.
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Briefly walk through the front matter before 1.1, especially the eight-part structure and the eight-week table. The icebreaker prepares for Isaiah's vision of the King in chapter 6.
  - Follow-up probe for 1.1 Q1: What made that place or moment feel weighty? What stood out? How does awe shape how people respond?
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not spend so long on the front matter that the vision of chapter 6 is rushed.
- **Additional Research Notes:** Isaiah follows Song of Solomon in this series and comes before Jeremiah. The name Isaiah means "the LORD saves," which fits the book's message.

Section 1.2

Historical & Literary Context: The Prophet in the Days of Assyria (Isaiah 1:1–6:13)

Passage Isaiah 1:1–6:13

Entering the World of the Prophet in the Days of Assyria

1. Historical Background

Isaiah's call came "in the year that King Uzziah died" (6:1), about 740 BC. Uzziah's long, prosperous reign ended in leprosy because he proudly entered the temple to burn incense (2 Chronicles 26:16–21). Assyria under Tiglath-pileser III was expanding west; Samaria would fall in 722 BC, and Sennacherib would devastate Judah in 701 BC.

2. Cultural Setting

Ancient Near Eastern treaties called heaven and earth as witnesses, and Israel's covenant did the same (Deuteronomy 30:19; 32:1). Planting a vineyard, clearing stones, and building a tower and wine vat took years of investment.

3. Literary Structure of Isaiah 1:1–6:13

- **The charge** (1:1–9)
- **Hollow worship** (1:10–15)
- **The call to wash** (1:16–17)
- **The invitation** (1:18–20)
- **The faithful city corrupted and restored** (1:21–31)
- **The mountain of the LORD** (2:1–5)
- **The day of the LORD and Zion's humbling** (2:6–4:6)
- **The vineyard song** (5:1–7)
- **Six woes** (5:8–30)
- **The vision and call** (6:1–13)

4. Key Themes

The Holy One of Israel; a courtroom charge and an invitation; worship joined to justice; the nations drawn to God; the remnant and the holy seed.

5. Theological Considerations

God rejects worship that ignores injustice, but he does not reject worship itself; he calls for repentance. His holiness is both the reason for judgment and the ground of cleansing.

6. Relevant Scholarly Insights

Chapter 6 tells Isaiah's call after five chapters of preaching. Some think it was placed later on purpose so that the vision answers the problem the first chapters raise.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.2)

> **1.2 Q1:** Isaiah saw the Lord's throne in the year a proud, long-reigning king died. Why might a vision of the true King matter most when human leaders fail?

1.2 Q2: The LORD calls heaven and earth as witnesses against his people (1:2). What does this courtroom picture teach about how seriously God takes his covenant?

1.2 Q3: Isaiah speaks of both judgment and hope. Why do you think God's messages so often hold both together?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.2 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 12 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 12 minutes. Context summary, 5 minutes; discussion, 7 minutes (about 2 minutes per question).
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Keep the history brief and concrete: a great empire, a small kingdom, a failing king, and a prophet who saw the true King.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.2 Q1**: Which king died? Why does the timing matter? Where do you look when leaders fail?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.2 Q2**: Who are the witnesses? What is the charge? What does it say about God?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.2 Q3**: Why both? What happens if we hear only one? Where do you need both?
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not let the session become a debate about who wrote which parts of Isaiah; the series reads the book as received.
- **Additional Research Notes:** Second Kings 15–16 and 2 Chronicles 26–27 give the history of Uzziah, Jotham, and Ahaz. Micah 4:1–3 contains a near-identical prophecy of the mountain of the LORD.
- **Ancient Near Eastern Research Notes:** Treaties between great kings and their vassals listed witnesses and the curses for breaking the covenant. Ancient Near Eastern kings received envoys in throne rooms surrounded by attendants; Isaiah sees the true King's court. Winged guardian figures were common in royal art, but in Isaiah's vision the seraphim cover their own faces before God.

Section 1.3

Movement 1: A Rebellious People and the LORD's Vineyard (Isaiah 1:1–5:30)

Passage Isaiah 1:1–5:30

Guided Scripture Reading

Read aloud in this order, with brief connecting summaries between readings:

- **Reader 1: Isaiah 1:1–9** (focal passage) — The LORD's children have rebelled; the nation is like a beaten body from head to foot, and only a small remnant has been spared. (Tell 1:7–8, the land's devastation, in brief.)

- **Reader 2: Isaiah 1:10–20** (focal passage) — God rejects sacrifices, festivals, and prayers from hands full of blood; he calls them to wash, do good, seek justice, and care for the fatherless and widow, and invites them to reason with him.
- **Leader summary of Isaiah 1:21–31** — The once-faithful city has become corrupt; God will purge her like metal in a furnace and restore her as a city of righteousness.
- **Reader 3: Isaiah 2:1–5** (focal passage) — In the latter days the nations will stream to the LORD's mountain to learn his ways; swords will become plowshares; Judah is called to walk in the LORD's light.
- **Leader summary of Isaiah 2:6–4:6** — The day of the LORD will bring down human pride and idols; Jerusalem's leaders will fail; the proud women of the city will be humbled; yet the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful, and God's cloud and fire will shelter a cleansed Zion.
- **Reader 4: Isaiah 5:1–7** (focal passage) — A love song: the beloved planted a choice vineyard, but it yielded wild grapes; the vineyard is Israel, and God looked for justice but found bloodshed.
- **Leader summary of Isaiah 5:8–30** — Six woes on those who seize land, live for drink, mock God, call evil good, are wise in their own eyes, and take bribes; God will summon a distant nation as his instrument.

Anchor Verses (ESV)

> **Isaiah 1:16–17:**
>
> Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
> remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes;
>
> cease to do evil,
>
> learn to do good;
>
> seek justice,
>
> correct oppression;
>
> bring justice to the fatherless,
>
> plead the widow's cause.
>
> **Isaiah 1:18:**
>
> “Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD:
> though your sins are like scarlet,
>
> they shall be as white as snow;
>
> though they are red like crimson,
>
> they shall become like wool.
>
> **Isaiah 2:2–3:**
>
> It shall come to pass in the latter days
> that the mountain of the house of the LORD
>
> shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
>
> and shall be lifted up above the hills;
>
> and all the nations shall flow to it,
>
> and many peoples shall come, and say:

> “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
>
> to the house of the God of Jacob,
>
> that he may teach us his ways
>
> and that we may walk in his paths.”
>
> For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
>
> and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
>
> **Isaiah 5:7:**
>
> For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts
> is the house of Israel,
>
> and the men of Judah
>
> are his pleasant planting;
>
> and he looked for justice,
>
> but behold, bloodshed;
>
> for righteousness,
>
> but behold, an outcry!

Teaching Narrative: A Rebellious People and the LORD's Vineyard

1. Rebellious Children (Isaiah 1:1–9)

The charge, and a remnant spared.

2. Hollow Worship (Isaiah 1:10–15)

Busy religion that God cannot bear.

3. Wash and Reason (Isaiah 1:16–20)

Repentance, justice, and an invitation to be made clean.

4. The Mountain of the LORD (Isaiah 2:1–5)

The nations come to learn God's ways.

5. Pride Brought Low (Isaiah 2:6–4:6)

Retold briefly, ending with the Branch.

6. The Vineyard Song (Isaiah 5:1–7)

God's care and Israel's wild grapes.

7. Six Woes (Isaiah 5:8–30)

Retold briefly. Sins that call evil good.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.3)

1.3 Q1: God tells his worshiping people, "your hands are full of blood" (1:15). Why does God reject worship that is separated from how we treat others?

1.3 Q2: God commands, "seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause" (1:17). Who are the vulnerable people in our community today, and how can we seek justice for them?

1.3 Q3: "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (1:18). What does it mean to you that the Judge himself invites the guilty to be made clean?

1.3 Q4: Many peoples say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD" (2:3), so that he may teach them his ways. What would it look like for people to be drawn to God by the life of his people today?

1.3 Q5: God "looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed" (5:7). What forms of injustice or unfaithfulness can grow even in a community that has received much from God, and how should a community examine itself?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.3 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 22 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 22 minutes. Guided Scripture Reading with brief retellings, 7 minutes; Anchor Verses and Teaching Narrative, 5 minutes; discussion, 10 minutes (about 2 minutes per question).

- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Have readers take 1:10–20, 2:1–5, and 5:1–7. Summarize 1:1–9, 1:21–31, 2:6–4:6, and 5:8–30 yourself in a sentence or two each. Encourage members to read all of chapters 1–5 at home.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.3 Q1**: What does God reject? Why? What does he want instead?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.3 Q2**: Who is vulnerable? What does justice look like? What could we do?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.3 Q3**: Who invites? What is offered? How do you receive it?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.3 Q4**: What draws the nations? What would draw people today? How can our lives point to God?
  - Follow-up probe for 1.3 Q5: What care had God given Israel? What forms of injustice replaced it? How can a community examine itself honestly?
- **LEADER FLAG 1: Hollow worship (1:10–17)**
  - Do not imply that church attendance or prayer is worthless. The point is worship joined to justice and repentance. God rejects worship that covers injustice, not worship itself.
- **LEADER FLAG 2: The daughters of Zion (3:16–4:1)**
  - Tell this in brief only. The passage includes images of exposure and shame. Do not use it to criticize women's appearance; it condemns the pride and luxury of the city's elite while the poor were crushed (3:14–15).
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not turn 1:17 into a partisan political talking point; keep it on God's concern for the fatherless, the widow, and the oppressed.
- **Additional Research Notes:** First Samuel 15:22, Amos 5:21–24, and Micah 6:6–8 make the same point about worship and justice. Psalm 80:8–16 also pictures Israel as a vine God brought out of Egypt.
- **Hebrew Word Study:**
  - Qedosh Yisra'el (קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל), "the Holy One of Israel," in 1:4 and 5:19, 24. In this movement Isaiah's signature title is first used of the God Israel has despised; sin is personal rebellion against a holy God.
  - Yakach (יָכַח), "reason" or "settle the case," in 1:18. In this movement it is a courtroom word: the Judge invites the guilty to settle the case on his terms of cleansing.
  - Mishpat (מִשְׁפָּט) and mispach (מִשְׁפָּח), "justice" and "bloodshed," in 5:7. In this movement the near-identical sounds make a painful pun: Judah's life looked right but produced the opposite of what God desired; tsedaqah ("righteousness") and tse'aqah ("an outcry") make the same point.

Section 1.4

Movement 2: Holy, Holy, Holy (Isaiah 6:1–13)

Passage **Isaiah 6:1–13**

Guided Scripture Reading

Read aloud in this order, with brief connecting summaries between readings:

- **Reader 1: Isaiah 6:1–4** (focal passage) — In the year King Uzziah died, Isaiah sees the Lord on a high throne; seraphim cry "Holy, holy, holy"; the temple shakes and fills with smoke.
- **Reader 2: Isaiah 6:5–7** (focal passage) — Isaiah cries that he is lost, a man of unclean lips; a seraph touches his lips with a burning coal from the altar, and his guilt is taken away.
- **Reader 3: Isaiah 6:8** (focal passage) — The Lord asks whom he shall send; Isaiah answers, "Here I am! Send me."
- **Reader 4: Isaiah 6:9–13** (focal passage) — Isaiah is sent to a people who will hear but not understand; judgment will continue until the land is empty, yet a holy seed remains in the stump.

Anchor Verses (ESV)

> **Isaiah 6:1:** In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple.
>
> **Isaiah 6:3:**
>
> And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;
>
> the whole earth is full of his glory!”
>
> **Isaiah 6:5:** And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!”
>
> **Isaiah 6:8:** And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.”

Teaching Narrative: Holy, Holy, Holy

1. The True King (Isaiah 6:1–4)

A throne, the seraphim, and the triple "holy."

2. Woe Is Me (Isaiah 6:5)

Seeing God reveals sin.

3. The Coal from the Altar (Isaiah 6:6–7)

God provides atonement.

4. Here I Am (Isaiah 6:8)

The cleansed one is sent.

5. A Hard Commission (Isaiah 6:9–13)

A resisting people and the holy seed.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.4)

> **1.4 Q1:** "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up" (6:1). How does seeing God as the true King change the way you face uncertain times?

> **1.4 Q2:** The seraphim cry, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts" (6:3). What do you think it means that God is holy, and why is it repeated three times?

1.4 Q3: Isaiah cries, "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips" (6:5). Why does a clear sight of God's holiness lead to an honest sight of our own sin?

1.4 Q4: The seraph says, "your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for" (6:7). What does it show that God himself provides the cleansing before he sends Isaiah?

1.4 Q5: Isaiah answers, "Here I am! Send me" (6:8), even though his message will be hard. What makes a person willing to serve God when results are uncertain?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.4 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 20 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 20 minutes. Guided Scripture Reading, 5 minutes; Anchor Verses and Teaching Narrative, 5 minutes; discussion, 10 minutes (about 2 minutes per question).
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Read all of chapter 6 aloud; it is short. Pause after 6:3 and after 6:7. Let the movement from "Woe is me" to "Here I am" be felt.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q1**: What did Isaiah see? What was happening in his world? How does it help you?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q2**: What is holiness? Why three times? How should we respond?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q3**: What did Isaiah see in himself? Why then? When have you felt that?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q4**: Who provided the coal? Why first? What does that say about grace?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q5**: What did Isaiah say? Why was he willing? Where is God calling you?
- **LEADER FLAG 3: "Woe is me" (6:5)**
  - Members with deep shame or scrupulosity may feel only condemnation here. Move quickly to the coal and the atonement (6:6–7). The vision does not leave Isaiah undone; it cleanses and sends him.
- **LEADER FLAG 4: A hard commission (6:9–13)**
  - Members serving without visible results may be discouraged or confused by this language. 6:9–10 does not describe God refusing repentant people; it describes the hardening of a people already resisting him. Emphasize faithfulness and the holy seed that remains. If anyone shares deep discouragement or hopelessness, follow up privately. If someone expresses current thoughts of suicide or self-harm, ask directly whether there is immediate danger, intent, a plan, or access to means. Do not leave the person alone when imminent risk is present. In the United States, call or text 988 (the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline), and call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department for immediate danger. Outside the United States, use the appropriate local crisis or emergency service. Inform the appropriate pastor or safeguarding leader while prioritizing immediate safety.
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not make 6:8 a guilt-driven recruitment for church programs; the call flows from cleansing.

- **Additional Research Notes:** First Kings 22:19, Ezekiel 1, and Daniel 7:9–10 also describe visions of God's throne. Jesus quoted 6:9–10 in Matthew 13:14–15, and Paul did in Acts 28:25–27.
- **Hebrew Word Study:**
  - Qadosh (קָדוֹשׁ), "holy," three times in 6:3. In this movement Hebrew repeats a word to express the highest degree; the threefold repetition gives "holy" the highest emphasis and makes God's holiness the defining sound of Isaiah's throne-room vision, leaving Isaiah undone.
  - Kipper (כִּפֶּר), "atoned for," in 6:7. In this movement it is the word for covering sin through sacrifice, here applied from the altar's coal; God himself provides atonement before he sends his messenger.

Section 1.5

Canonical Horizon: The Holy One Seen in Christ; Cleansing for the Unclean

Passage Isaiah 6:1

Tracing the Thread Across Scripture

Isaiah's vision of the Lord on his throne points to Christ, whose glory Isaiah saw (John 12:41), and the altar coal anticipates the complete purification Christ provides rather than serving as a direct prediction of Christ. Turn to each passage as the connections are traced.

1. Isaiah Saw His Glory (John 12:41)

John says Isaiah saw Jesus' glory and spoke of him, linking the throne vision of chapter 6 to Christ.

2. The Vineyard and the Son (Matthew 21:33–44)

Jesus' parable of the wicked tenants deliberately echoes Isaiah's vineyard imagery and adds the owner's rejected son.

3. Cleansed by His Blood (1 John 1:7; Hebrews 9:11–14)

The altar coal anticipates the complete purification Christ provides as the atoning sacrifice whose blood cleanses from all sin, rather than being a direct prediction of Christ.

4. Still Holy, Still Sending (Revelation 4:8; Romans 10:14–15; Matthew 9:37–38)

The living creatures around God's throne still cry "holy, holy, holy," and the Lord still asks whom he will send.

Anchor Verse (ESV)

> **Isaiah 6:1:** In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.5)

> **1.5 Q1:** John writes, "Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him" (John 12:41). How does it change your reading of Isaiah 6 to know that Isaiah saw the glory of Jesus?

1.5 Q2: John writes, "the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). How does Christ fulfill what the burning coal pictured for Isaiah?

1.5 Q3: Paul asks, "how are they to hear without someone preaching?" (Romans 10:14). How might God be calling you to be sent to someone this week?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.5 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 12 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 12 minutes. Canonical Horizon teaching, 5 minutes; discussion, 7 minutes.
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Assign participants to look up John 12:37–41; Matthew 21:33–44; 1 John 1:7–9; and Revelation 4:8 ahead of time.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.5 Q1**: Whose glory did Isaiah see? What does that mean? How does it change your view of Jesus?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.5 Q2**: What did the coal do? What does Christ's blood do? How do you receive it?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.5 Q3**: Who needs to hear? What could you say? When?
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not skip the Old Testament scene to get to the New; let Isaiah's vision be seen first, then its fulfillment.
- **Additional Research Notes:** Revelation 4:8 says the living creatures "never cease to say, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty.'" Hebrews 9:14 speaks of the blood of Christ purifying the conscience to serve the living God.

Personal & Group Application (Head, Heart, Hands)

HEAD	The Holy One of Israel confronts rebellion and hollow worship, invites the guilty to be made clean, draws the nations, and calls a cleansed messenger.
HEART	Isaiah saw the glory of Christ, whose blood cleanses from all sin.
HANDS	Faith joins worship with justice, confesses sin honestly, receives cleansing, and answers God's call.

Section 1.6

Application, Looking Ahead, and Closing Prayer

Application

Take a few minutes to move this week's study into everyday life. Discuss these three questions together and write down what you want to remember:

1.6 Q1: What does God's promise in 1:18 teach about bringing "scarlet" sin to him for cleansing? Take a moment of silent reflection—no one needs to disclose personal sins aloud.

1.6 Q2: What is one way you could seek justice or care for someone vulnerable this week?

1.6 Q3: What might a faithful "Here I am" response to God look like in ordinary obedience this week? (Personal application may remain private.)

Looking Ahead to Next Week

Recap: In Week 1, we heard the LORD's charge against his people, his invitation to be made clean, the vineyard song, and Isaiah's vision and call.

Transition: Next week a frightened king is offered a sign, and Isaiah announces a Child who will reign on David's throne.

Week 2 Overview — Immanuel and the Coming King (Isaiah 7:1–12:6): Movement 1, Immanuel, God With Us (7:1–8:22), covers King Ahaz's crisis and the sign of Immanuel. Movement 2, The Child, the King, and the Branch (9:1–12:6), covers the great light, the Child born to reign, and the Branch from Jesse. The Canonical Horizon traces Immanuel, the Child, and the Branch fulfilled in Jesus.

Focal Readings to Preview

- Isaiah 7:1–17
- Isaiah 8:11–22
- Isaiah 9:1–7
- Isaiah 11:1–16
- Isaiah 12:1–6

My One Concrete Step for the Week Ahead

Write down or name aloud the specific rhythm, boundary, or conversation you want to practice before next week's gathering:

Closing Prayer

Close your time together by inviting each person to share a one-sentence takeaway or prayer request, then pray together along these lines:

> **Closing Group Prayer**
>
> LORD of hosts, you are holy, holy, holy, and your glory fills the earth. Forgive our hollow worship, our unclean lips, and our neglect of the vulnerable. Thank you that sins like scarlet can be made white as snow through the blood of Jesus. We pray for those who carry shame. Give us courage to seek justice and to answer your call. Thank you that Christ is the King on the throne. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.6 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 9 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 9 minutes. Application and questions, 5 minutes; Looking Ahead and Focal Readings, 2 minutes; Concrete Step and Closing Prayer, 2 minutes.
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Encourage members to read chapters 7–12 at home this week; the focal readings will be read in the session.
  - Follow-up probe for 1.6 Q1: What keeps people from trusting God's promise of cleansing? (Hold space for silent reflection; do not ask anyone to disclose personal sins.)
  - Follow-up probe for **1.6 Q2**: Who? What would you do? When?
  - Follow-up probe for 1.6 Q3: What faithful obedience looks like in daily life? (Personal application may remain private.)
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not end on condemnation; end on cleansing and the call.
- **Additional Research Notes:** Next week's key verse is "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (7:14).