

WEEK 28 — ISAIAH’S PROPHECIES OF CONSOLATION, PART 1

Date: about 701 BC (2 Kings 20, 2 Chronicles 32, Isaiah 36-39) • probably sometime after 701 BC (Isaiah 40-51)

The Story: God rescues Judah from the Assyrian invasion of 701 BC as we complete the threefold telling of that story and the stories of Hezekiah’s illness and his prideful welcome of Babylonian envoys. Then our readings bring us into Isaiah’s “Book of Consolation” (Isaiah 40-66), a lengthy prophecy of God’s restoration of his people after captivity in Babylon—which has not yet taken place, but will a century later. In this section of Isaiah, notice God’s encouragement for his people to be done with the worship of idols, his words of comfort after their distress, and his message of hope for Israel’s restoration and a bright future.

* Kids’ readings may not align with the daily full readings. Parents, see the content ratings on the back page.

JULY 10 2 KINGS 20 • 2 CHRONICLES 32 • ISAIAH 36

Today’s reading continues the triple account of the Assyrian siege of Jerusalem (about 701 BC), Hezekiah’s encounter with Babylonian envoys, and his illness that nearly took his life. 2 Kings 20 tells of the latter two portions of this three-part story. 2 Chronicles 32 focuses mostly on the Assyrian threat against Jerusalem, then mentions Hezekiah’s illness (32:24) and pride (32:25) only very briefly along with a few other notes from his reign. Isaiah 36 relates the first part of the story of the Assyrian threat.

Date: about 701 BC

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: 1 Kings 20 • 2 Chronicles 32:24-33 • Isaiah 36

Kids’ Reading*: 2 Kings 20

JULY 11 ISAIAH 37-39

Today’s reading devotes a chapter to each part of the three-part story (also told in 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles) of the Assyrian threat against Jerusalem, Hezekiah’s illness, and Hezekiah’s pride in his interaction with envoys from Babylon. In these stories we witness both Hezekiah’s powerful faith in God and his human weakness as he struggles with the temptation of pride and with his impending death.

Date: about 701 BC

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Isaiah 37-38

Kids’ Reading*: Isaiah 40

JULY 12 ISAIAH 40-41

Today’s reading launches us into a distinct section of Isaiah—chapters 40-66, sometimes called Isaiah’s Book of Consolation. This section speaks God’s message of comfort and hope to his people, a message designed to sustain their faith after their nation is conquered and exiled by the Babylonian empire. Babylon will conquer Judah in 586 BC, as God disciplines Judah for its wickedness; but God will also restore his people. Isaiah 40 is one of the greatest messages of hope in Scripture; don’t miss verses 27-31. Chapter 41 acknowledges Israel’s weakness after its demise, yet foretells that God will strengthen his people again.

Date: probably after 701 BC

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Isaiah 40-41

Kids’ Reading*: Isaiah 41:5-10 • Isaiah 41:17-24 • Isaiah 42:1-17

JULY 13 ISAIAH 42-43

Today’s reading, the second part of Isaiah’s Book of Consolation, foretells the coming of God’s servant—perhaps, to Isaiah, meaning Israel itself or a future, godly king; but later revealed to be Jesus (see Matthew 12:15-21). This section juggles Israel’s weakness and brokenness with God’s faithfulness and power, promising that God will be with his people, will forgive their sins, and will gather them back to himself.

Date: probably after 701 BC

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Isaiah 42-43

Kids’ Reading*: Isaiah 44:1-23

JULY 14 ISAIAH 44-45

Today's reading brings us the third part of Isaiah's Book of Consolation. Chapter 44 presents Isaiah's most scathing (and humorous) critique of idol worship. The point is that God is not like the idols; he is "the Maker of all things" (44:24) and the one who will bring Cyrus to do his will. We'll read more about this mysterious Cyrus in the coming weeks. Here he is described as the one whom God will send to rebuild Jerusalem and the foundations of the temple (44:28), who will subdue nations (45:1), and who will set all of God's exiles free (45:13).

Date: probably after 701 BC

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Isaiah 44:6 to 45:19

Kids' Reading*: Isaiah 45

JULY 15 ISAIAH 46-48

Today's reading covers the fourth part of Isaiah's Book of Consolation, which includes a critique of the Babylonian gods Bel and Nebo in contrast to God (chapter 46), a prophecy of the future fall of Babylon (chapter 47), a rebuke of Israel and Judah for their stubbornness (48:4), and a prophecy of Israel's restoration when they leave Babylonian captivity (48:20).

Date: probably after 701 BC

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Isaiah 46-48

Kids' Reading*: Isaiah 46 • Isaiah 48:12-22

JULY 16 ISAIAH 49-51

Today's reading offers—you guessed it—more of Isaiah's Book of Consolation. It contains a remarkable prophecy foretelling God's use of Israel to bring the Gentiles (non-Jews/Israelites) into God's salvation (49:6); God's desire for Israel was that it would become a light to bring all peoples to God. More hope for Israel's future restoration, in spite of the people's sins, follows: after God has disciplined his people, he will raise them up again and deal with their oppressors.

Date: probably after 701 BC

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Isaiah 49-50

Kids' Reading*: Isaiah 51:1-16

Parents' Guide

PG preview for young children

2K 20:18 (S)

2Chr 32:9-10 (V), 14 (V), 21 (V)

Is 36:1 (V), 6 (V), 10 (V)

Is 37:3 (T), 7-13 (V), 18 (V), 26-29 (T, V), 36 (V), 38 (V)

Is 38:13 (V), 18 (T)

Is 39:7 (S)

Is 41:2 (V), 12 (V), 25 (V)

Is 42:14 (T), 22-25 (T, V)

Is 43:17 (V)

Is 47:3 (N), 8-15 (T)

Is 50:1-2 (T), 6 (V), 11 (T)

Is 51:17-23 (T, V)

PG-13 preview for under age 13

none

R shocking, graphic, or disturbing

Is 36:12 (T)

Is 49:28 (T)

C = Circumcision

N = Nudity

S = Sexuality

T = Dark/Sensitive Themes

V = Violence