

Reflection Guide to the Prophet Isaiah

Meeting is Tuesday, January 21 at 7:30 p.m.

Scholars divide Isaiah into two or three parts: Chapters 1-39, during Isaiah's lifetime from 742 until 701 or 687 B.C.E. when the Northern Kingdom of Israel was annexed to the Assyrian empire and the Southern Kingdom of Judah was a tributary. Chapters 40-66 come from the time of Cyrus of Persia (539 B.C.E.), immediately after the fall of Babylon to Cyrus and the return of the people who were in exile. Chapters 55-66 are sometimes called Third Isaiah and suggest a latter date of between 530 and 510 B.C.E. More details can be found in the introduction to the book.

Four overarching questions for our discussion:

1. How does Isaiah view God working in human events? As a child how did you? How do you now?
2. How does Isaiah view individual and communal sin and redemption? As a child how did you? How do you now?
3. Do Isaiah's warnings have any relevance to recent history or current events?
4. How would you hear and interpret Isaiah if you were a member of an oppressed nation or group? As an American?