

Firestarter 2

Scripture: Isaiah 3–5

Before you read

1. Gather a pen, paper, and highlighters (for marking in your Bible) if you don't want to mark in your Bible. Print off this sheet and mark it here.
2. Pray, asking God for wisdom and understanding of the words you are about to read.
3. Read the section more than one time.
 - First, read to understand
 - Second, read to notice
 - Third, read for questions. Record your questions as you read and see if you can answer them. Then choose three questions from the observation section and find answers to them.
 - Fourth, In chapter 3, mark all the words that are signs of **judgment**; in chapter 4, mark words that demonstrate **restoration**; in chapter 5, mark any word that refers to a **garden** or **vineyard**.

READ: Isaiah 3–5

OBSERVATION:

What would God take from Jerusalem, and why?

What eventually happens to a society that rejects God? (See 3:5 note.)

What was God's message to the faithful (3:10)?

How had the leaders treated the poor, and how would God respond (3:14-15)? (See 3:14 note.)

Why does Isaiah use metaphors like the woman he calls "Beautiful Zion" and a vineyard/garden to describe God's people?

How does chapter 4 describe those who survive the coming judgment (4:3)? (See 4:3 note.)

What does the song about the vineyard (ch. 5) represent? (See 5:1-7 note)

Chapter 5 describes the Lord's sorrow at six types of sin. What specific sins? (See 5:8-32 note.)

In what ways do people *today* portray evil as good (5:20)?

What's significant about Isaiah's reference to "distant nations" (5:26)? (See 5:26 note.)

APPLICATION:

Don't be judgmental! Don't be closed-minded! Don't be hateful! These seem like reasonable restrictions; even the Bible warns against such things. Yet, people today twist these standards to justify ungodly behaviors, portraying evil as good and wrong as right—often in the name of freedom, compassion, understanding, and "tolerance." Society openly accepts and celebrates behaviors and lifestyles God condemns as deviant and destructive. Those who challenge these immoral norms are accused of being closed-minded, judgmental, hateful, and even dangerous to society. While demonstrating compassion, Christ's followers must never compromise the standards of good and evil—right and wrong—that are revealed in God's Word.

Action Step:

Stop and think about the health of your spirit. Are your thoughts focused on Jesus? Are you actively working to correct character issues? Do you focus on helping others?

PRAY:

Thank God for helping when you do what's right and for providing patient correction and discipline when you aren't. Pray for people you know who might misjudge and oppose you because of your stand for God. Pray that the truth of Jesus will open their minds and hearts.