

Firestarter: Isaiah

Scripture: Isaiah 15-18

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, as you read, mark any similarities between the oracles. Mark places where they are alike and places where they are different.

READ: Isaiah 15-18

OBSERVATION:

Who or what was Moab, and why would it be destroyed? (See 15:1 note.)

Even though Moab opposed God's people and brought destruction on itself, how did the Lord feel toward the victims of destruction (15:5), and why? (See 15:5 note.)

What is "the mount of beautiful Zion," and how could the refugees from Moab find safety there? (See 16:1-5 note.)

Looking to the future, when did Isaiah see an end to destruction and oppression (16:4-5)? (See 16:4-5 note.)

Who will end the destruction and oppression?

What attitude led to the Moabite's demise (16:6)? (See 16:6-13 note.)

What was Damascus? What would happen to it, and why would Israel (Ephraim) also suffer? (See 17:1-6 note.)

How does the downfall and destruction of many nations mentioned in these chapters serve as a warning regarding our associations? (See 17:1-6 note.)

What good would ultimately come of God's judgments, and what would terrible times cause people to do (17:7-8)? (See 17:7 note.)

Why do people—even those who have known God—tend to forget or neglect Him (17:10)? (See 17:10 note.)

APPLICATION:

Do you ever forget God?

Do you sometimes lose awareness of His presence or activity?

Do you neglect time with God or take for granted His care and provision in your life?

God's people through the ages have struggled with a nasty habit of forgetting God and disregarding His instructions and intentions. That's easy to do if we're not careful. Jesus warns that the worries of life, the deceitfulness of wealth, and the pursuit of sinful pleasures can distract us from devotion to God and prevent His Word from affecting our lives.

What can you learn from these chapters regarding those who oppose and defy God today?

What are some signs and symptoms of fading devotion to God, and how can you guard against this in your own life?

Action Step: Demonstrate compassion and kindness to those who dislike or oppose you. If you can think of anything or anyone that influences you negatively, make a change in that relationship.

PRAY:

As you pray today, thank God that His justice is united with compassion. Ask God to give you wisdom and discretion regarding the people, activities, and things you associate with.