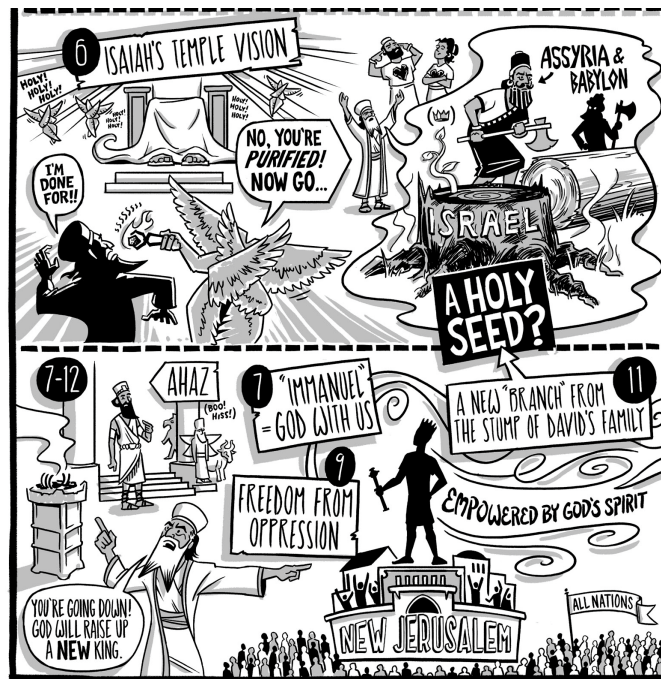


Rel A 304 Reading Questions for Thursday, October 5

Isaiah 9–12

Camille N. Johnson, “Jesus Christ Is Relief,” *Liahona*, May 2023, 81–84.

This will be our second day covering Gen 2 of Isaiah’s ministry. Last time you read the historical background as presented in 2 Kings 18–20. The reason I had you read that first is that Isaiah 9–12 is going to be talking about the exact same stories (Hezekiah’s reign, Sennacherib’s invasion, Jehovah saving the remnant) but it’s going to be in poetry/prophesy form and thus not nearly so easy to understand. However, if you keep the history in mind as you read it will make it a lot easier to recognize the poetic and prophetic descriptions of that history.



A Davidic King Will Bring Justice and Righteousness (9:1–7)

Isaiah 9:6–7 are among the most famous verses in Isaiah because Christians associate them with Christmas. We’ll return to how this passage is fulfilled in Christ later in the semester, but for now we’ll start with its application in ancient Israel. In that earlier context, this section is usually interpreted as an announcement of the birth of Hezekiah, a righteous king whose light would replace the darkness brought on by his wicked father and all the problems he caused.

1. While fully acknowledging that this section finds its fullest expression in the mission of Jesus Christ, what are some ways in which the Davidic king described here can also find an initial fulfillment in the life of King Hezekiah? Because Hezekiah can function as a

type of Christ, exploring that initial application in ancient Israel can help us later when we return to examine this passage in light of the Savior's ministry.

Judgment on the Northern Kingdom of Israel (9:8–10:4)

2. In Isaiah 9:8–10:4, Isaiah keeps declaring that “his [God’s] hand is stretched out still.” Based on the context, is this good news or bad news for the Israelites?

Arrogant Assyria Also Judged (10:5–19)

The Surviving Remnant Will Return to God (10:20–23)

3. In between two sections announcing judgment and destruction for the Assyrian army, Isaiah describes the remnant in Judah that will survive the Assyrian assault. The people of Judah had once “stayed upon” (or “leaned upon,” meaning “relied upon”) the Assyrians to protect them, but then their protectors turned and “smote them.” Whom does this remnant rely upon now?
4. The remnant that survives the Assyrian assault “shall return,” but they will not be returning to a place. To what or to whom will they be returning to? Notice that in Isaiah 10:21 the phrase “[a] remnant shall return” comes from the Hebrew *she’ār yāshûb*, which was the name of Isaiah’s son (cf. 7:3). The idea of this remnant “returning” was so important to Isaiah that he named his son after the message!

The Advancing Assyrian Army Will Be Cut Down (10:24–34)

The Coming Messianic Age (11:1–9)

While it’s at least possible that this section has some initial application in Hezekiah’s day, the image it paints is so grand that it seems to move far beyond ancient Israel to a kingdom that will only be realized at the end of history—what we call the Millennium. A messianic king (Jesse was King David’s father) will finally do everything that Israelite kings were supposed to do, transforming our world of wickedness and violence into one of righteousness and peace.

5. When the messianic king comes at the end of days, how will he treat the poor and the lowly? How will he respond to the wicked (presumably those who oppressed the poor)?

Scattered Remnants of Israel Will Be Gathered Again (11:10–16)

If vv. 1–9 are talking about the Millennium, starting in v. 10 Isaiah seems to move back in time a little to just before the Millennium—the last days.

6. Isaiah 11:11 is a key prophecy for the entire message of Isaiah 1–12, and it is quoted and discussed several times in the Book of Mormon. Let's lock down the key phrases: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand _____ the _____ time to recover the remnant of his people.... And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."

Two Hymns of Praise (12:1–6)

This brief chapter is the capstone to Isaiah 1–12. Those who have lived through the glorious events described in chapter 11 will sing songs of praise to the Lord for the "excellent things" He has done.

Camille N. Johnson, "Jesus Christ Is Relief," *Liahona*, May 2023, 81–84.

Isaiah 1–12 describe many people turning to the wrong sources for relief from their troubles. When Israel and Syria/Aram invaded, Ahaz turned to Assyria for relief. Isaiah describes some Israelites seeking relief from their challenges through drunkenness. When Assyria threatened Judah, the government sought relief through an alliance with Egypt. Some Israelites sought for relief through idol worship or seeking after riches. The repentant remnant that survived in Jerusalem finally learned that true relief comes from making and keeping covenants with God. In this talk, President Johnson teaches about covenant obligations today and how we can find the blessing of true relief.

7. President Johnson describes three kinds of burdens we carry in mortality: (1) those of our own doing because of sin; (2) those that result from the poor decisions, misconduct, and unkindness of others; and (3) those that come with living in a fallen condition, including disease, pain, chronic illness, grief, disappointment, loneliness, and the effects of natural disasters. For which of these can Jesus Christ provide relief?

8. President Johnson calls Jesus Christ “the Reliever” and quotes President Nelson’s teaching that “Jesus Christ ... stands with open arms, hoping and willing to heal, forgive, cleanse, strengthen, purify, and sanctify us.” This doctrinal concept is taught in Isaiah through the story of the Assyrian invasion of Judah. How did the remnant experience Jesus Christ as the great Reliever? What are the “Assyrians” that you need relief from in your own life?

9. President Johnson teaches, “As covenant members of His Church, ... we ‘are willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light’ [Mosiah 18:8]. Our covenantal blessing is to partner with Jesus Christ in providing relief, both temporal and spiritual, to all of God’s children. We are a conduit through which He provides relief.” During the last couple of weeks, you’ve read how the covenant people of Isaiah’s time had forgotten this covenant obligation. How did Jehovah, the premortal Jesus, react to what they were doing? What do you think that suggests about the importance of this commandment today?