**The Book Of Isaiah of Jerusalem: “The Fifth Gospel”**

**Introduction:** History of Ancient Israel

* 2000 B.C. - The Pre-history of Israel: The Patriarchs (Gen 12-50) Abraham, Isaac & Jacob, semi-nomadic people who migrated to Palestine
* 1650 – 1300 B.C. – There was not a people Israel until the 13 century under Moses and God is revealed as Yahweh, Hebrews in Egypt
* 1280 B.C. - Exodus
* 1250-1200B.C. – Conquest of Palestine
* 1200-1020 B.C. – Period of Judges
* 1050 B.C. – Samuel
* 1020-1000 B.C. Saul – first King
* 1000-961 B.C. – King David captures Jerusalem- the Ark is enshrined
* 961-922 – Solomon builds the first Temple on Mt. Moriah where Abraham sacrificed Isaac
* 922 B.C. – Schism of Kingdom into Northern: Israel and Southern Judah (Capital City is Jerusalem)
* 796-767 B.C. – Isaiah the Prophet
* 783-742 B.C. - King Uzziah (Isaiah 1:1)
	+ He was second only to Solomon in fame and brought Judah to the summit of its power, economic resources, and military strength (much like America today). His strength became his weakness. He grew proud and entered the Temple and offered incense on the altar, which was reserve for priests and descendants of Aaron. Azariah, the chief priest pleaded with him to stop. (II Chron. 26:18-21). He was stricken with leprosy and excluded from the house of the Lord.
* 742-735 B.C. – King Jotham, the son of Uzziah.(Isaiah 1:1)
* 740-700 B.C. – Isaiah
* 735-715 B.C. – King Ahaz (the son of Jotham) (Isaiah 1:1)
* 715-687 B.C. – King Hezekiah (Isaiah 1:1)
* 605-562 B.C. Nebuchanezzar of Babylon removed Temple treasures and destroyed the building in 587
* 587 B.C. – the Fall of Jerusalem,
	+ 598 – 1st deportation
	+ 587 – Fall of Jerusalem: 2nd deportation
	+ 582 – 3rd Deportation
* 550 B.C. – Exile of Judah (southern Kingdom)
* 520-515 B.C – the Temple was rebuilt

**Overview**: “We find that Jerusalem is at the same time the location of the Temple, where the God of Israel has promised to be present and the seat of the Royal dynasty of David… (in) the book of Isaiah, the city is in turn affected by the ominous Assyrian Empire (745-712 BC), the Babylonian Empire (615-540 BC), and eventually the Persian Empire (540-330 BC)…Isaiah invites us to study the interrelation of life and faith…(Walter Brueggemann).”

**Themes: Divine Judgment and Divine Promise dominate Isaiah**

* Isaiah presses towards the fulfillment of God’s promises to protect and sustain Jerusalem for the sake of the Temple and the Davidic dynasty. In 701 miraculously God delivers Jerusalem from the Assyrians (Is. 37:33-38)
* At the same time,, Jerusalem was a city that endlessly was short of fulfilled promises as a result of Yahweh’s judgement. A century after the miracle in 701 BC, Jerusalem falls to the Babylonian in 598 BC and are deported into exile. (Is. 39:6-8). During this time, Isaiah invites us to grieve the loss of Jerusalem but to also anticipate a restored, renovated, revivified Jerusalem.

**Jerusalem functions metaphorically to remind us that God is powerfully and decisively engaged – though hiddenly - everywhere in the reality of the world. The “New Jerusalem” is the Church and its inter-relationships within the world (political, economic, psychological or ecclesial) are always subject to being “fallen” and in need to redemption.**

**Feast of the Prophet Isaiah – May 9**

**Outline of Isaiah:** Walter Brueggemann

* Isaiah 1-39 (especially chaps. 1-12, 28-31, 36-39) – are about loss, God will judge the City and its wayward economic and military policies, which are rooted in faithlessness.
* Isaiah 40-55 - The Prophet of Hope & Salvation: written after Isaiah during the Babylonian exile, there will be a speedy recovery of the city of Jerusalem and it will be glorious. They will return from exile.
* Isaiah 56-66 – The Prophet of Restoration & Hope: this reflects the struggle after the return of the exiles to order the restored city in ways that are faithful. We are focused on the good future that God will give us.

In chapters 1-12 a persistent message of divine judgment is punctuated by divine promises (2:2-4; 4:2-6; 9:2-7; and 11:1-9). We can trust that God’s last word to us is always promise…a promise that comes after judgment and not in place of judgment.

The “Royal Oracle”/ The Real King who is to come: the early church made these two connections between Isaiah and Christ

1. (Isaiah 9:1-6 “For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.)

“And having left Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which *is* beside the sea, in *the* borders of Zabulon and Nephthaleim, 14in order that it might be fulfilled that which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, 15“O land of Zabulon, and land of Nephthaleim, *by the* way of *the* sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations, 16“the people who sit in darkness saw a great light; and to those who sit in *the* region and shadow of death, light rose up to them.” [Mt. 4:13-16]

1. The Song of the Servant (52:13-53:12: “Surely He has borne our griefs, And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.)

“And the section of the Scripture which he was reading was this: “As a sheep He was led to slaughter; and as a lamb dumb before him who shears him, thus He opens not His mouth. “In His humiliation, His judgment was taken away; but who shall describe His generation? For His life is being taken away from the earth.” [Acts 8:32,33]

**The Fifth Gospel** (St. Isidore of Seville)

1. **Isaiah foretold the virgin birth of Christ** according to the flesh from the seed of David.

“A branch (virga) will come forth from the root of Jesse. Mary the Virgin was born from the stock of David; and a flower will arise from his root (11:1). This refers to our Lord Jesus Christ, who was brought forth from the flesh from Mary. And he added: On account of this the Lord himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will conceive in her womb and bear a son, and you will call his name Emmanuel... (7:10-14).

1. **He foretold the Incarnation**

“A child, he says, has been born to us, a Son has been given to us. And the government is upon his shoulders; and his name will be called Marvelous, Counselor, God, Mighty, Father of the World to Come, the Prince of Peace. His empire will be increased, and there will be no end to his peace (9:6-7).

1. **Isaiah foretold the signs that would accompany the Messiah**

“Behold, our God, he himself will come and save us. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf will hear. Then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb will be clear (35:5-6). Likewise, Isaiah says: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me; he sent me to the meek in order that I might heal the contrite in heart, announcing that he proclaims redemption to the captive and restores light to the blind (61:1). And again Isaiah says: For in the strength of his virtue he stirred up the dead with his voice (unknown source). To be sure, many saints and prophets did wonders; yet none of them brought the dead back to life except by the word of the Lord....

1. **Isaiah foretold the Passion of Christ & Crucifixion** – the Suffering Servant

“Who is that man who comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? He is beautiful in his robe, walking in the multitude of his strength. I am he who speaks justice, and I am a defender in order to save. Why then are your clothing and vestments red just like the clothing of those who tread in a winepress? I treaded the winepress alone, and of the peoples there was none with me (63:1-3).” And his government will be upon his shoulders (9:6), that is, he carried the wood of his own cross on his shoulders. He did not say that he had a crown on his head or a scepter in his hand or wore some peculiar clothing, but only the new King, the King of the Ages, Jesus Christ, bore on his shoulder his power and majesty. Isaiah also asserts: Behold, my servant understands and will be exalted and lifted up and will be very lofty (52:13), that is, through the victory of the cross, his royal power will exalt the form of a servant, that is, the flesh, which he had put on.

1. **That He Died Not for His Own Sins but for Ours**

The prophet Isaiah says: “For the iniquities of his people he was led to death. And also: All we like sheep have gone astray; each and every one has turned to his own way; and the Lord placed on him the iniquities of us all (53:6).

1. **That He Died**

The prophet Isaiah also speaks about the death of the Lord: “Just as a sheep is led to death, and even as a lamb in the presence of the one shearing it is without a voice, so he did not open his own mouth. By the iniquities of his own people was he led to death (53:7-8).”

1. **That Christ Rose from the Dead and Ascended into Heaven**

“Now I shall rise up, says the Lord, now I shall be exalted, and now I shall be lifted up (33:10). A testimony to the resurrection and ascension of Christ is proclaimed as if to say: Now I shall rise up from the dead, now I shall be exalted in the sky, now I shall be lifted up in my kingdom. In another place Isaiah says: Behold, my servant understands and will be exalted and will be elevated and will be very lofty (52:13), which certainly pertains to the ascension to heaven and the glory of his kingdom.

1. **That, the Gift of the Holy Spirit Will Be Poured Forth upon the Apostles and the Faithful**

“I shall pour forth my Spirit, says the Lord, and my blessing upon your seed, Jacob; and they will sprout forth among the grasses as willows beside flowing waters (44:3-4). Likewise Isaiah says: Let the Spirit be poured forth from on high (32:15). Again he says: When the Spirit of the Lord will have come like a violent river, and will have come to Zion (59:19-20). And again: The Spirit of the Lord, even as a flooding torrent, will come (30:28), that is, the Spirit comes like the great sound of rushing waters.

1. **That Christ Would Send the Apostles to the Gentiles of the Glory of His Resurrection**

“I come to gather together all nations and tongues. And they will come and see my glory, and I shall place on them a sign — certainly the sign of the cross — and out of those who will have been saved I shall send men to the nations on the sea and into Africa and into Libya, bearing an arrow — that is, the proclamation of the gospel — into Italy, into Greece, and to islands far off and to those who have not heard about me and have not seen my glory; and they will announce my goodness among the nations (66:18-19)

1. **That the Lord Would Give the Gospel to the Faithful as a New Law**

“He first says to Zion: Behold, I am present and I shall give good news to Jerusalem (41:27), because surely the Lord came first to Zion and proclaimed the gospel to Jerusalem. And again Isaiah says: the law will go out from Zion, that is, the gospel of the New Covenant; and the word from Jerusalem, that is, the proclamation of the faith; and He will judge the nations and will reprove many peoples from far away (2:3-4), that is, the teaching of the gospel reproves nations believing in Christ for doing unlawful deeds.

1. **That God Presents to the Faithful the Gift of the Grace of Baptism**

“You will draw water joyfully from the springs of the Savior; and you will say on that day: We confess to the Lord and invoke his name (12:3-4). Who is that Savior, from whose springs the prophet says you draw water, except Jesus Christ, Savior of the world, who taught that you are cleansed by the water of holy baptism? Again Isaiah urges: All who thirst, come to the waters, and you who do not have silver, hasten, buy, and eat. Come and buy wine and milk without silver or any exchange (55:1).

1. **That the Gentiles Are Converted to Belief in Christ**

**“**The nations will come, and many peoples will come and will say: Come, and let us ascend to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us about his good paths, and we shall walk on his footpaths (2:2-3). Likewise Isaiah says: They sought me, who previously did not ask about me; they found me, who did not seek me. And I said: Behold, I have come to the nation which did not call on my name (65:1). Again Isaiah says: Everyone from all nations will bring a gift to the Lord… to my sacred mountain into Jerusalem into the house of the Lord; and I shall take some of them for priests and Levites, says the Lord (66:20-21), that is, the faithful will make pilgrimage to the Lord's tomb.

GREAT LENT

First Week of Great Lent (Monday-Friday) **JUDGEMENT**
**Monday - Isaiah 1:1-20 1:**17 Learn to do good, search for justice, help the oppressed, be just to the orphan, plead for the widow. 1:18 ‘Come now, let us talk this over, says Yahweh. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. 1:19 ‘If you are willing to obey, you shall eat the good things of the earth.
**Tuesday - Isaiah 1:19-2:3;** 1:19 ‘If you are willing to obey, you shall eat the good things of the earth. 1:20 But if you persist in rebellion, the sword shall eat you instead. 1:21 What a harlot she has become, the faithful city, Zion, that was all justice! Once integrity lived there, but now assassins. 1:23 Your princes are rebels, accomplices of thieves. All are greedy for profit and chase after bribes. They show no justice to the orphan, the cause of the widow is never heard.
**Wednesday - Isaiah 2:3-11; The Day of the Lord is Coming**  2:10 Get among the rocks, hide in the dust, at the sight of the terror of Yahweh, at the brilliance of his majesty**, when he arises to make the earth quake.** 2:11 Human pride will lower its eyes, the arrogance of men will be humbled. Yahweh alone shall be exalted, on that day.
**Thursday - Isaiah** 2:11-22; 2:12 Yes, that will be the day of Yahweh Sabaoth against all pride and arrogance, against all that is great, to bring it down,
**Friday - Isaiah** 3:1-14; 3:8 Yes, Jerusalem is falling into ruins and Judah is in collapse, since their words and their deeds affront the Lord, insulting his glory. 3:9 Their insolent airs bear witness against them, they parade their sin like Sodom. To their own undoing, they do not hide it, they are preparing their own downfall. 3:10 Tell them, ‘Happy is the virtuous man, for he will feed on the fruit of his deeds; 3:11 woe to the wicked, evil is on him, he will be treated as his actions deserve…3:13 Yahweh rises from his judgement seat, he stands up to arraign his people. 3:14 Yahweh calls to judgement the elders and the princes of his people: ‘You are the ones who destroy the vineyard and conceal what you have stolen from the poor.\

**Second Week of Great Lent – Calling & Discipleship -**

Monday - Isaiah 4:2-6, 5:1-7;
Tuesday - Isaiah 5:7-16;
Wednesday - Isaiah 5:16-26;
Thursday - Isaiah 6:1-12;
Friday - Isaiah 7:1-14;

* Third Week of Great Lent

Monday - Isaiah 8:13-9:7
Tuesday Isaiah 9:9-10:4
Wednesday - Isaiah 10:12-20
Thursday - Isaiah 11:10-12:2
Friday - Isaiah 13:2-13;

* Fourth Week of Great Lent

Monday Isaiah 14:24-32; Genesis 8:21-9:7; Proverbs 11:19-12:6
Tuesday
Isaiah 25:1-9; Genesis 9:8-17; Proverbs 12:8-22
Wednesday
Isaiah 26:21-27:9; Genesis 9:18-10:1; Proverbs 12:23-13:9
Thursday
Isaiah 28:14-22; Genesis 10:32-11:9; Proverbs 13:20-14:6
Friday
Isaiah 29:13-23; Genesis 12:1-7; Proverbs 14:15-26

* Fifth Week of Great Lent

Monday
Isaiah 37:33-38:6; Genesis 13:12-18; Proverbs 14:27-15:4
Tuesday
Isaiah 40:18-31; Genesis 15:1-15; Proverbs 15:7-19
Wednesday
Isaiah 41:4-14; Genesis 17:1-9; Proverbs 15:20-16:9
Thursday
Isaiah 42:5-16; Genesis 18:20-33; Proverbs 16:17-17:17
Friday
Isaiah 45:11-17; Genesis 22:1-18; Proverbs 17:17-18:5

* Sixth Week of Great Lent

Monday
Isaiah 48:17-49:4; Genesis 27:1-41; Proverbs 19:16-25
Tuesday
Isaiah 49:6-10; Genesis 31:3-16; Proverbs 21:3-21
Wednesday
Isaiah 58:1-11; Genesis 43:26-31; 45:1-16; Proverbs 21:23-22:4
Thursday
Isaiah 65:8-16; Genesis 46:1-7; Proverbs 23:15-24:5
Friday
Isaiah 66:10-24; Genesis 49:33-50:26; Proverbs 31:8-31
Lazarus Saturday

Holy Friday
VESPERS: (1) Exodus 33:11-23; (2) Job 42:12-16; (3) Isaiah 52:13-54:1;

Holy Saturday
VESPERS: (1) Genesis 1:1-13; (2) Isaiah 60:1-16; (3) Exodus 12:1-11; (4) The Book of Jonah; (5) Joshua 5:10-15; (6) Exodus 13:20-15:19; (7) Zephaniah 3:8-15; (8) 1 Kings 17:8-24; (9) Isaiah 61:10-62:5; (10) Genesis 22:1-18; (11) Isaiah 61:1-9; (12) 2 Kings 4:8-37; (13) Isaiah 63:11-64:5; (14) Jeremiah 31:31-34; (15) Daniel 3:1-23 and the Song of the Holy Children (Apocrypha). LITURGY: Romans 6:3-11; Matthew 28:1-20

**FEAST DAYS**

**SEPTEMBER 1: Indiction: Is 61:1-10a**

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because of which He anointed Me. He sent Me to proclaim good news to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to preach liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to declare the acceptable year of the Lord, the day of recompense, and to comfort all who mourn; to give those who mourn in Zion glory instead of ashes, the oil of gladness to those who mourn; the garment of glory instead of a spirit of indifference. They shall be called generations of righteousness, the planting of the Lord for glory. They shall build the ancient deserts, raise up those formerly abandoned, and renew the desert cities that laid waste for generations. Foreigners shall come and shepherd your sheep, and aliens shall be your plowmen and vinedressers; but you shall be called priests of the Lord and the ministers of God. You shall eat the strength of nations and be admired because of their wealth. So they shall inherit the land a second time, and eternal gladness shall be upon their head. For I am the Lord, who loves righteousness and hates robberies of wrongdoing. I will give their labor to the righteous and will make with them an everlasting covenant. Their seed and their offspring shall be known among the Gentiles. All who see them shall know these are the seed blessed by God; and they shall have exceeding gladness in the Lord.”[SAAS]

**Eve of the Nativity of Christ (December 24/ January 6)**
VESPERS: Isaiah 11:1-10; Isaiah 9:6-7; (8) Isaiah 7:10-16; 8:1-4, 8-10;

 BLESSING OF WATER: (1) Isaiah 35:1-10; (2) Isaiah 55:1-13; (3) Isaiah 12:3-6;

**Eve of the Theophany** (January 5/18)

Isaiah 1:16-20; (8) Genesis 32:1-10; (13) Isaiah 49:8-15.

((9) Exodus 2:5-10; (10) Judges 6:36-40; (11) 1 Kings 18:30-39; (12) 2 Kings 2:19-22;))

**MAY 9 FEAST OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH**

**Is 55:1; 12:3-4; 55:2b-3a, 6-13**

Thus says the Lord: You who are thirsty, go to the water, and all who have no money, go and buy wine and fat, and eat and drink without money and price. For thus says the Lord Almighty to you: You will draw water with gladness from the wells of salvation. In that day, you will say, “Praise the Lord; call upon His name. Declare His glorious things among the Gentiles and make mention that His name is exalted.” My people, listen to Me and eat good things, and your soul will delight in good things. Incline your ears and follow my ways. Listen to Me, and your soul shall live in good things; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you. Seek God, and when you find Him, call upon Him when He draws near to you. Let the ungodly man abandon his ways, and the lawless man his counsels; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him; for He shall forgive your sins abundantly. “For My counsels are not as your counsels, neither are your ways My ways,” says the Lord. “But as heaven is distant from earth, so is My way distant from your ways, and your thoughts from My mind. For as rain comes down, or snow from heaven, and does not return until it saturates the earth, and it brings forth and produces, and gives seed to the sower and bread for food, so shall My word be, whatever proceeds from My mouth. It shall not return until it accomplishes whatever I willed, and I shall prosper your ways and My commandments. For you shall go forth with gladness and shall be taught with joy, for the mountains and hills shall exult to receive you with joy; and all the trees of the field shall applaud with their branches. Instead of the broom-tree shall come up the cypress, and instead of the nettle shall come up the myrtle; and the Lord shall be for a name and for an everlasting sign, and He shall not fail,” says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel.

**Exaltation of the Precious Cross**

Isaiah 60:11-16

Meeting of Our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ: Vespers

Isaiah 6:1-12

Isaiah 19:1, 3, 4-5, 12, 16, 19-21

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| First and Second Finding of the Precious Head of Saint John the Baptist | [Isaiah  40, 41, 45, 48, 54 (Vespers, 1st Reading)](https://churchmotherofgod.org/orthodox-terminology/glossary-e/100-scripture-readings/old-testament-readings/wisdom-of-sirach/2083-isaiah-composite-of-40-41-45-48-54-vespers-forerunner.html) |
| 9 | Forty Holy Martyrs of Sebaste | [Isaiah 43:9-14  (Vespers, 1st Reading)](http://www.churchmotherofgod.org/scripture-readings/100-isaiah/2086-isaiah-439-14-vespers-all-saints-1st-reading-.html) |

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| 23 | Great Martyr George, Victor and Wonderworker | [Isaiah 43:9-14  (Vespers, 1st Reading)](http://www.churchmotherofgod.org/scripture-readings/100-isaiah/2086-isaiah-439-14-vespers-all-saints-1st-reading-.html) |

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| 26 | Great Martyr Demetrios Myrovlitis of Thessalonika | [Isaiah 63:15-64:5, 8-9 (Vespers, 1st Reading)](https://churchmotherofgod.org/orthodox-terminology/glossary-e/100-scripture-readings/old-testament-readings/wisdom-of-sirach/2971-isaiah-6315-645-8-9-vespers-great-martyr-demetrios-myrovlitis-of-thessalonika.html) |