

Lesson 37 - “Thou Hast Done Wonderful Things”

Isaiah 24-30

Purpose: To help us come unto Christ through recognizing some of the wonderful things he has done.

My lessons take a different path than the Gospel Doctrine lesson manual. The lesson outline looks closer at the doctrinal topics included in the lesson purpose and scripture block. The lessons are designed to challenge mature, active Latter-Day Saints who have a solid Gospel foundation and are looking for insights into the scriptures that will broaden their faith and understanding.

If you are interested in downloading the PowerPoint file, links to source material or reading posts about improving Gospel Doctrine class preparation, delivery and engagement, you can join my Facebook Group and have full access to the content posted there. The link is <https://www.facebook.com/groups/188904648521022/>

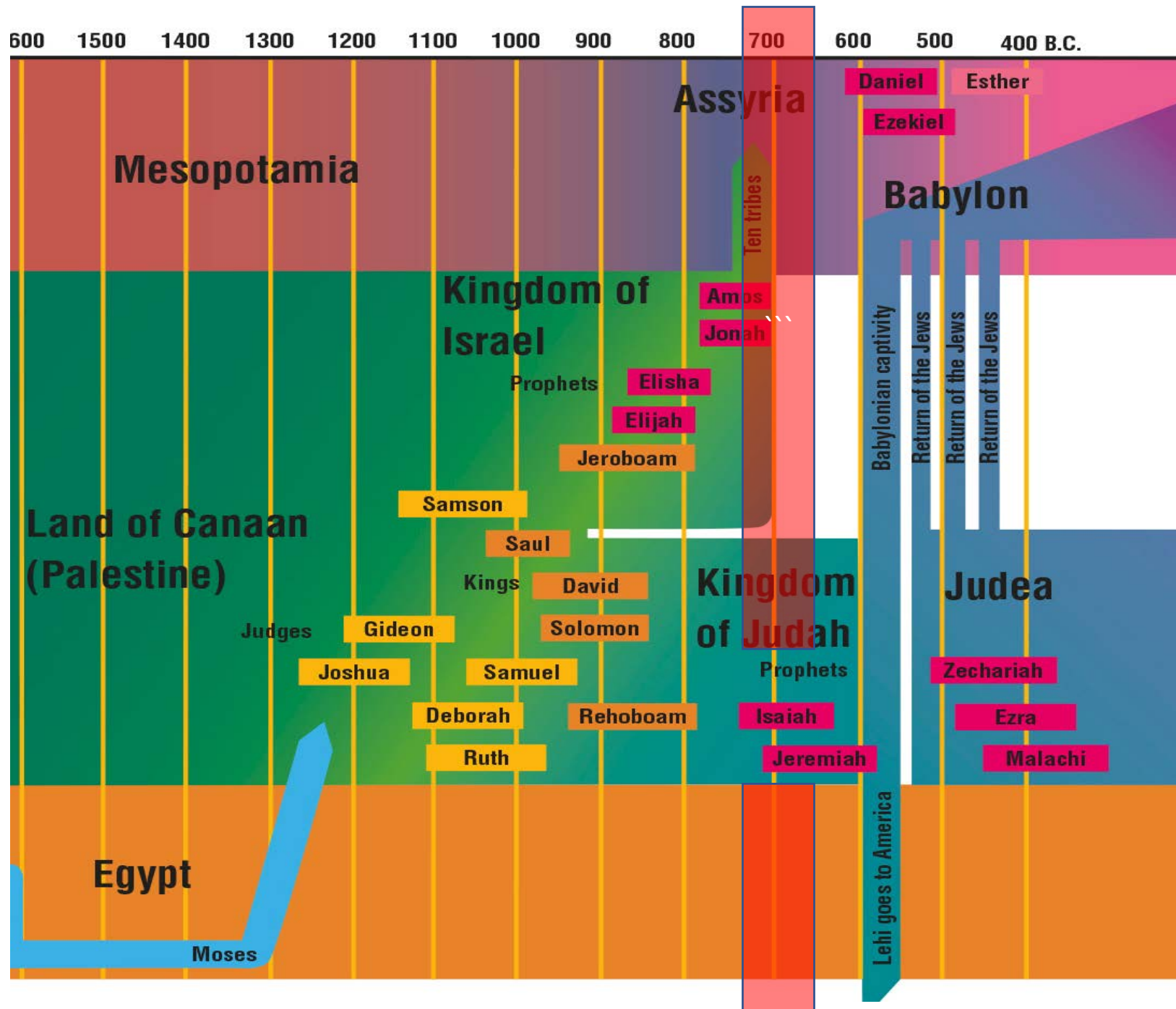
Last Week's Lesson Challenge

Last week's lesson challenge was to spend time each day studying small parts of Isaiah and pray for guidance, understanding and enlightenment. The exercise will be difficult, but if you persevere, understanding the words of Isaiah will open up a new level of Gospel knowledge that you never had before.

Few valuable things come easy in this life. Understanding Isaiah is a valuable thing to have.

Would anyone wish to share their thoughts at this time?

Isaiah



Studying Isaiah we learn about his role as a prophet, seer and revelator. Isaiah was Jehovah's prophet in King Hezekiah's court. Hezekiah was a righteous king over Judah. We also see evidence of Isaiah's role as a seer as he was able to see much of the Savior's life and ministry. He saw his birth, ministry and resurrection. He was also a revelator and revealed many things about our time and the Savior's Second Coming.

Studying Isaiah we can understand how much the people of the Old Testament knew about the Messiah, 700 years before his birth. You would think, given Isaiah's descriptions of the events of the Savior's life that he saw, that the Jews would have been ready for his coming. Unfortunately, by the time the Savior was born, the Jews had become hard hearted and had lost their way in their anticipation of a Messiah. This disbelief in the prophets of old and their time led them to believe that the Messiah would be a warrior king, able to loose the Jews from Roman bondage. The Savior was not a warrior king in that way, but a warrior for the souls and eternal lives of His chosen people.

In this lesson we will look at some of Isaiah's scriptures that tell us what the Savior has and will do for His people.

Isaiah 24:16-23

16 ¶ From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous. But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.

17 Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.

18 And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.

19 The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.

20 The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

21 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.

22 And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.

23 Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.

Isaiah 24:16–23. Great Physical Changes Will Attend the Second Coming of the Lord

Isaiah 24:16–23 describes events and conditions as they will be just before or in conjunction with the Second Coming of the Lord. A more penetrating description of these same events is found in Doctrine and Covenants 88:86–94. The “prisoners ... gathered in the pit” and those “shut up in the prison” (Isaiah 24:22) are those locked in the spirit world awaiting the preaching of the gospel (see Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:155).

According to Elder Orson Pratt, the moon will be confounded and the sun will be ashamed because the brilliance which attends Christ in His return to earth will be a “superior light,” one which will make all else seem dark by comparison (in *Journal of Discourses*, 20:12).

What can we gain in our Gospel understanding that Isaiah saw the events of the Savior's Second Coming and revealed to us what will happen to the wicked in Spirit Prison at that time?

- Those who continue in wickedness, even in the Spirit Prison, will be punished in the Lord's time for their continued wickedness and their unrepented spirit.
- The physical manifestations of the Second Coming will be great and mighty. Verses 19 and 20 say *"The earth is broken up, the earth is split asunder, the earth is violently shaken. The earth reels like a drunkard, it sways like a hut in the wind; so heavy upon it is the guilt of its rebellion that it falls—never to rise again."*
- The Savior's glory in His Second Coming will be so bright that even the brightness of the Sun will be ashamed and seem dark compared to the Savior.

Isaiah 25:1-5

1 O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.

2 For thou hast made of a city an heap; of a defenced city a ruin: a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built.

3 Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee.

4 For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.

5 Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low.

Isaiah 32:1-4

1 Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.

2 And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

3 And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken.

4 The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly.

In his time, especially as King Hezekiah's principal advisor, Isaiah saw the Northern Kingdom besieged and dispersed by the Assyrians. Shortly after, the Assyrians attacked Judah and laid a long siege of its capital, Jerusalem. Isaiah and the Judaeans understood that Jerusalem was a strong refuge and was able to withstand the Assyrian siege. Isaiah knew that Jerusalem held because King Hezekiah and his people looked to Jehovah for strength.

In Isaiah 25:1-5 and 32:1-4 we can see Isaiah praising Jehovah for being a strength and a refuge for his people not only in Jerusalem, but also in their faith. Metaphorically, Isaiah writes in Isaiah 25:4 *"For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall."*

Isaiah 32: 2-4, he writes *"And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly."*

Isaiah, King Hezekiah and the Judeans were able to withstand the Assyrian siege because they knew that Jehovah would protect them and fight their battles for them as long as they were faithful.

Isaiah 25:6-12

6 ¶ And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

7 And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.

8 He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it.

9 ¶ And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

10 For in this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest, and Moab shall be trodden down under him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill.

11 And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim: and he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands.

12 And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust.

“In the Mountain”

Isaiah repeats the phrase “in this mountain.” Also, Isaiah frequently referred to the “mountain” or the “mountain of the Lord.” It is by no accident that Jerusalem was built as a fortress on a mountain and that the Lord’s temple was constructed on the highest part of the mountain. Mountain means several, related things in Isaiah. The mountain is Jerusalem itself. The mountain is the Temple located on what is referred to as the Temple Mount. Isaiah also refers to the mountain as Zion, the City of God that will be located on a mountain to shine for all to see. In many ways, when Isaiah uses the phrase in or on this mountain, he doesn’t distinguish between the meanings because they are all one in Jehovah.

Isaiah 25:6–12 includes some of Isaiah’s prophecies about the joy the righteous will feel when the Lord comes again.

The phrase “he will destroy ... the veil that is spread over all nations” in verse 7 is a prophecy that refers to the time in which we live (see Moses 7:60–61). The “veil” of darkness that covers the earth represents a time of unbelief and a lack of knowledge of the kind of being God is and of His saving laws and commandments. The darkness is driven away by the light of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which will eventually penetrate all nations (see D&C 38:8; 101:23; 121:26–33).

The symbolic feast described in verse 6 represents the idea that people of all nations will be invited to partake of the blessings of the gospel (see also D&C 58:8–12).

Isaiah 26:16-19

16 Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.

17 Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord.

18 We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.

19 Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

Childbirth is the most natural part of humanity. The difficulties that women face in childbirth – the pain, the anticipation of birth, the chance of death especially in Isaiah’s time --, are all part of childbirth. Childbirth is often used in the scriptures as a metaphor for the difficulties that life has for us.

In Isaiah 26:16-19, Isaiah uses childbirth as part of the explanation for Judah’s troubles and the troubles of the Judeans with sin and transgression. In verse 18 he writes *“We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.”*

However after all of the pain of mortality, through the Savior is the hope of resurrection that is found in Verse 19. Isaiah’s explanation of the resurrection is very important. Verse 19 says the following:

“Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.”

Isaiah makes it clear that not only with the soul or spirit rise from the earth, but also the dead body will rise and be reunited with the soul or spirit. The belief that resurrection will be an eternal unification of spirit and body is a uniquely Latter-day Saint belief. Mainstream Christianity believes that only the spirit will be resurrected in line with their belief that God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost are also a single spirit and not eternal beings of flesh and blood.

Isaiah 29:9-14

9 ¶ Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink.

10 For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.

11 And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed:

12 And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.

13 ¶ Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

14 Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.

One of the most important scriptures in both Isaiah and the Bible. Isaiah saw that there would be an apostasy and prophets would no longer prophesy until there was a restoration of all things. Verse 10 reads:

10 For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.

Isaiah also say the meeting that would occur between Dr. Charles Anton and Martin Harris where Dr. Anton would say that he couldn't read a sealed book. However, Joseph Smith, an unlearned man will be able to read and translate the Book of Mormon.

11 And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed:

12 And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.

Finally, in Verse 14, Isaiah writes the wonderous words that will usher in the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the Priesthood and finally the Restoration of Gospel of Jesus Christ.

14 Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.

Isaiah 30:19-21

19 For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.

20 And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers:

21 And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

Isaiah 30:19-21 is a very poignant verse that shows Jehovah's limitless love for His people. The following is a verse by verse review of the scriptures.

19 For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.

Ultimately, Israel will return to Zion at Jerusalem and be redeemed. They will weep no more and Jehovah will hear their prayers and answer them.

20 And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers:

Adversity and affliction are as much a part of mortal life as bread and water are. However, thy teachers, the prophets beginning with Moses and Joshua through to Isaiah will always be there to show you the way.

21 And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

Your ears have heard the way, the commandments, and how you should follow, or walk, with them. Historically, references to the right hand and left hand have been used to differentiate good from evil choices, respectively. You have been taught what is right and good and when you choose left, or evil, you should return to the good.

These verses are only a few of the many verses in Isaiah that tells us about Jehovah, Jesus Christ, the Lord and Savior. They illustrate Isaiah role as Jehovah's prophet, seer and revelator for his time and place. They also illustrate the role that Jehovah had Isaiah play in preparing Israel for the Savior's birth, ministry, crucifixion and resurrection. We see that in Isaiah's time, they knew who Jehovah was and that he would be born, teach and save humankind from both physical and eternal death. It was only after 700 years of no longer listening to the prophets and turning their back on the commandments they were taught, that they would choose to ignore, whip and crucify the Savior in His time.

This Week's Lesson Challenge

We can learn much about the Savior in our study of Isaiah.

This week's challenge is to continue to study Isaiah and look for references that Isaiah uses to describe the Savior and his love for us.