

Dr. John Oswalt, Isaiah, Session 16

Isaiah 32-33

Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Oswalt, Isaiah, Session 16, Isaiah 32-33, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. John Oswalt's lecture on Isaiah 32-33 focuses on the themes of **waiting on God**, **trust**, and the **contrast between God's promised kingdom** and the people's **complacency**. He **interprets** the chapters as **a parable of the Christian life**, emphasizing the **importance of the Holy Spirit's work** in producing **righteousness** rather than relying on human efforts. Oswalt highlights the **danger of complacency** and the need for **ongoing spiritual growth**, illustrating this through various biblical images and metaphors. The lecture concludes with a discussion on God's judgment and the ultimate importance of exalting God over self.

2. 21 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Oswalt, Isaiah, Session 16 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Major Prophets → Isaiah).



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on16.mp3

3. Briefing Document

Briefing Doc: Isaiah Chapters 32-33 by Dr. John Oswalt

Main Themes:

- **The Promise of a Righteous Kingdom:** God promises a future kingdom characterized by righteousness, justice, peace, and understanding, led by a king who rules in righteousness and princes who rule in justice. This kingdom stands in stark contrast to the current leadership, which is characterized by blindness, deafness, and foolishness.
- **The Danger of Complacency:** Dr. Oswalt warns against complacency in light of God's promises. He emphasizes that simply knowing God will ultimately triumph doesn't absolve us of the responsibility to actively cultivate faithfulness, righteousness, and justice in our lives. Otherwise, our lives, like the unkept land, will be overrun with "thorns and briars".
- **The Power of the Holy Spirit:** The barrenness and desolation resulting from complacency will only end when the Holy Spirit is poured out. Dr. Oswalt emphasizes that the primary work of the Holy Spirit is to produce fruit, which refers to character transformation and the development of Godly attributes in believers.
- **The Exaltation of the Lord:** Chapter 33 focuses on the exaltation of the Lord as the answer to the problems of life. Exalting God involves acknowledging His sovereignty, trusting in His power and wisdom, and submitting to His will. This act of humility allows God to work in and through us.
- **The Importance of Righteous Living:** Dr. Oswalt unpacks Isaiah 33:14-15, highlighting the importance of righteous living in light of God's judgment. However, he cautions against interpreting this as "salvation by works", emphasizing that true righteousness stems from the transformative work of the Holy Spirit within us, driven by love for Christ.

Key Ideas and Facts:

- Chapters 32 and 33 offer a message of hope amidst judgment, transitioning from a predominantly negative tone in previous chapters to a more positive outlook.
- The imagery of barrenness and thorns represents the spiritual state of those who become complacent, neglecting their spiritual growth and allowing sin to flourish.

- The pouring out of the Holy Spirit signifies a new relationship with God, empowering believers to live righteously and bear fruit.
- Dr. Oswalt uses the analogy of a "blast furnace" to illustrate the consuming holiness of God, emphasizing that only those covered by Christ's blood can dwell with Him.
- He distinguishes between genuine righteousness, produced by the Holy Spirit and motivated by love for Christ, and self-righteousness, which is ultimately worthless in God's eyes.

Quotes:

- "The good thing about telling the truth is you don't have to remember what you said the last time. Here again is this transparency that comes from His righteousness being written on our hearts and we then can be who we are and not live in fear."
- "Thorns and briars are painful. Yes, yes, yes. Yes, they exact their own price."
- "The difference between fruit and gifts. Fruit refers to character. Gifts refer to utility, and usefulness. The work of the Holy Spirit above everything else is to reproduce in us the character of God."
- "In returning and rest shall be your salvation...Oh Lord, be gracious to us. We wait for you. Be our arm every morning, our salvation in the time of stress."
- "Exalt man and there's no regard for man. Exalt the Lord and there is."
- "Who among us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who among us can dwell with everlasting burning?"
- "The truth is my righteousness is like a bloody rag because it's mine...Why am I living this righteous life? Because I love the Lord Jesus who died for me and has come to take up residence in me by his spirit."

Concluding Remarks:

Dr. Oswalt's session on Isaiah 32-33 provides a compelling message of hope and challenge. He reminds us that while God has promised a glorious future, we have a responsibility to actively participate in our spiritual growth, allowing the Holy Spirit to transform us into people who reflect His character and live lives of righteousness and justice.

4. Isaiah Study Guide: Session 16, Isaiah 32-33

A Study of Waiting on the Lord: Isaiah Chapters 32-33

Quiz

Instructions: Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. What is the main contrast presented in Isaiah 32:1-8 and 9-14?
2. According to Isaiah 32, what must happen before the land can experience true fruitfulness?
3. What are the four key results of the Holy Spirit's work mentioned in Isaiah 32:16-18?
4. How does Isaiah 33:2 demonstrate a shift in the people's attitude compared to chapter 30?
5. According to Isaiah 33, what three titles are used to describe God in verse 22? Briefly explain the significance of each.
6. In Isaiah 33:7-9, what is the consequence of the people's failure to exalt the Lord?
7. According to Isaiah 33:14, what challenge does the consuming fire of God's presence present?
8. What is the answer given in Isaiah 33:15 for who can dwell with the consuming fire?
9. Why is the righteousness described in Isaiah 33:15 not ultimately sufficient for salvation?
10. What is the essential difference between pursuing righteousness for personal gain versus pursuing it out of love for the Lord?

Answer Key

1. The contrast lies between the nobility and righteousness of the coming kingdom (1-8) and the people's present complacency and lack of spiritual fruitfulness (9-14).
2. The land will only become fruitful when the Holy Spirit is poured out upon the people, transforming their barren hearts into fertile ground.

3. The Holy Spirit brings righteousness, justice, peace, and quiet trust. These represent the transformation of character and the establishment of God's order.
4. In chapter 30, the people reject God's call to return and rest in Him, choosing instead to rely on Egypt. In 33:2, they express a willingness to wait for the Lord's gracious deliverance.
5. God is described as Judge (restoring order and ensuring justice), Lawgiver (providing instructions for life), and King (the ultimate authority who upholds His kingdom).
6. The failure to exalt the Lord leads to societal breakdown, the destruction of nature, and a lack of regard for human life.
7. The consuming fire represents the holiness of God's presence, which is inherently incompatible with human sinfulness.
8. The text states that those who walk righteously, speak uprightly, reject oppression, and turn away from evil can dwell with God's fire.
9. This righteousness, while outwardly good, may be motivated by self-interest rather than genuine love for God. Human righteousness alone cannot bridge the gap between us and a holy God.
10. Righteousness pursued for personal gain is ultimately empty and self-serving. True righteousness flows from a transformed heart, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and is driven by gratitude and love for Christ.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the imagery of thorns and briars in Isaiah 32. How does it connect to the theme of complacency and the need for the Holy Spirit's transformative power?
2. Compare and contrast the leadership described in Isaiah 32:1-8 with the leadership that Isaiah has been condemning throughout chapters 28-31. What makes these leaders different?
3. Explore the significance of waiting on the Lord as presented in Isaiah 32-33. What does this waiting entail, and how does it contrast with the people's previous reliance on human solutions?

4. Discuss the relationship between God's exaltation and human humility in Isaiah 33. How does exalting the Lord address the problems of human pride and self-reliance?
5. Explain the concept of the consuming fire in Isaiah 33:14. How does this image contribute to our understanding of God's holiness and the need for redemption?

Glossary

- **Complacency:** A state of self-satisfaction and lack of concern, especially regarding spiritual matters.
- **Righteousness:** Moral rightness and conformity to God's standards.
- **Justice:** Upholding fairness, equity, and right judgment.
- **Exaltation:** Elevating and honoring someone or something to a position of high regard.
- **Humility:** Recognizing one's dependence on God and submitting to His authority.
- **Sovereignty:** God's supreme power and absolute rule over all creation.
- **Consuming Fire:** A metaphor for God's holy presence, which is both purifying and destructive to sin.
- **Redemption:** The act of delivering from sin and its consequences through the work of Christ.
- **Holy Spirit:** The third person of the Trinity, who empowers and guides believers.
- **Fruit of the Spirit:** The evidence of the Holy Spirit's work in a believer's life, characterized by qualities such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

5. FAQs on Oswalt, Isaiah, Session 16, Isaiah 32-33, Biblealearning.org (BeL)

Isaiah Chapters 32 & 33 FAQ

1. What is the main theme of Isaiah chapters 32 and 33?

The main theme of these chapters is **waiting on the Lord** instead of relying on human solutions. Chapter 32 contrasts the nobility and righteousness of God's coming kingdom with the complacency of those who take God's promises for granted. Chapter 33 emphasizes God's exaltation and portrays Him as the ultimate judge, lawgiver, and king, who alone can provide true security and salvation.

2. How does Isaiah 32 differ from the preceding chapters in the "Woe" section?

Unlike chapters 28-31, Isaiah 32 **does not begin with a "Woe" pronouncement**. Instead, it starts with "Behold," signifying a shift in tone to a more positive message. While still addressing the people's complacency, chapter 32 focuses on the hope of God's future kingdom and the transformative power of the Holy Spirit.

3. What is the significance of the contrast between the promised kingdom and present complacency in Isaiah 32?

This contrast highlights the danger of **taking God's grace for granted**. It's easy to become complacent and neglect spiritual growth when we assume everything will "pan out" in the end. Isaiah warns against this passive attitude, urging the people to actively cultivate righteousness and justice in their lives.

4. What is the solution to the barrenness and desolation described in Isaiah 32:9-14?

The solution is the **outpouring of the Holy Spirit** (Isaiah 32:15). This outpouring will transform barren lives into fruitful fields, bringing about righteousness, justice, peace, and trust.

5. What is the primary work of the Holy Spirit, according to Isaiah 32?

The primary work of the Holy Spirit is to **produce fruit, which refers to character development**. While the Holy Spirit also bestows gifts, the emphasis here is on the transformation of the inner person to reflect God's righteousness.

6. Who is the "destroyer" mentioned in Isaiah 33:1, and what is the people's response to this threat?

The destroyer is likely a reference to **Egypt**, who ultimately betrayed Judah's trust. Unlike their previous rejection of God's help (Isaiah 30:15), the people in Isaiah 33:2 express a willingness to **wait on the Lord's grace** for deliverance.

7. How does exalting the Lord address the problems of life, as described in Isaiah 33?

Exalting the Lord acknowledges **His sovereignty and power**, reminding us that He holds the solutions to our problems. It fosters humility, trust, and a right perspective, shifting our focus from self-reliance to dependence on God.

8. How does Isaiah 33 describe the nature of God, and what implications does this have for humanity?

Isaiah 33 presents God as the **judge, lawgiver, and king**. As judge, He restores order and establishes justice. As lawgiver, He provides instructions for living in accordance with His design. As king, He reigns supreme over all creation. This portrayal highlights God's authority and the need for human submission and obedience to His will.