

The Book of Isaiah, Teacher's Guide

Lesson 8: Oracles Against the Nations

Isaiah 13:1–17:14

Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)

These five chapters can feel like a daunting wall of ancient place-names, so the teacher's first job is to lift the class above the details to the unifying theme: God is sovereign over all the nations, and human pride together with every false refuge will fall before Him. Do not try to map every geographic and historical detail of Babylon, Assyria, Philistia, Moab, and Damascus. Instead, use a few well-chosen specifics to illustrate the pattern, and keep returning to the heart issue. The Babylon material (especially the taunt-song of 14:4–23) is the centerpiece; spend the most time there. Help the class hear these oracles not as a museum tour of dead empires but as a mirror, since Romans 15:4 tells us they were written for our instruction.

On the famous 'Day Star, son of Dawn' passage (14:12–15), keep the primary meaning anchored where the text places it: this is a taunt over the king of Babylon, the proud human ruler brought down to the grave. Acknowledge honestly that many readers and some traditions apply the imagery to the fall of Satan, and there may be a secondary echo of that primordial pride, but do not let the class drift into speculation that leaves the text behind. The text addresses the king of Babylon, and its lesson is crystal clear: self-exalting pride leads to destruction. Drive that lesson home pastorally. The point is not to study an ancient king's downfall from a safe distance but to expose the same pride in our own hearts and call the class to the humility that looks to its Maker (17:7).

Question 1

Student Question:

In Isaiah 13:6–13, Isaiah describes 'the day of the LORD' coming against Babylon with cosmic upheaval, the sun darkened and the heavens shaken. What does this oracle teach about God's sovereignty over the great empires of the earth, and how does the phrase 'day of the LORD' point beyond Babylon to God's ultimate judgment (compare Joel 2:31; 2 Peter 3:10)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Chapters 13 through 23 form a distinct unit in Isaiah, a collection of oracles against the nations. The word translated 'oracle' (*massa*) literally means a 'burden,' a heavy load. These are weighty pronouncements of divine judgment, and the very form of them makes a theological claim: the God of Judah has authority to pronounce verdicts on Babylon, Assyria, Moab, Philistia, and the rest. He is not a tribal deity but the LORD of all the earth.

Babylon comes first and gets the most attention (13:1–14:23), which is striking because in Isaiah's own day Assyria, not Babylon, was the dominant threat. Babylon was still rising. By placing Babylon first, the book signals that it is looking ahead to the empire that would one day

destroy Jerusalem and carry Judah into exile. The God who announces Babylon's fall before it has even fully risen is the God who declares the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:10).

The opening oracle (13:2-5) summons an army from a distant land, 'the weapons of his indignation,' to destroy the whole land. God Himself musters this host. The terrifying truth here is that the very empire that will seem invincible is in fact a tool in the hand of the God it does not acknowledge. This sets the tone for the entire section: no nation is outside God's reach or beyond His control.

For a class today, the takeaway is steadying. We watch our own headlines full of powerful nations and shifting alliances, and it can feel as though God is absent from world affairs. These chapters insist otherwise. There is a throne above every throne.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Chapters 13-23 are oracles ('burdens') against the nations, asserting that the LORD has authority over every kingdom, not just Judah.
- Babylon is placed first though Assyria was the present threat, showing the book looks ahead to the empire that would exile Judah.
- God musters even pagan armies as instruments of His judgment; no empire is outside His control (Isaiah 46:10).
- This is steadying for believers anxious about world powers today: there is a throne above every earthly throne.
- Avoid getting lost in identifying every nation and date; keep the focus on God's universal sovereignty.

Discussion Prompts

- How does it change your view of world events to know God is sovereign even over nations that ignore Him?
- Why might God have placed the oracle against Babylon first, before it had even risen to power?
- Where do you feel as though God is absent from world affairs? How do these oracles speak to that fear?

Question 2

Student Question:

Babylon was the most dazzling, seemingly invincible power Judah could imagine, yet God promised its fall. What is the 'Babylon' in your own life, the thing that looks too big and too established to ever fail, that you are quietly counting on more than you count on God?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Isaiah 13:6-13 introduces a phrase that will echo through all the prophets: 'the day of the LORD.' 'Wail, for the day of the LORD is near; as destruction from the Almighty it will come' (13:6). The language is cosmic: the stars will not give light, the sun will be dark at its rising, the

heavens will tremble, the earth will be shaken out of its place. This is far bigger language than the fall of one city seems to require.

That is intentional. The day of the LORD against Babylon is real, a specific historical judgment, but it is described in terms that point beyond itself to the ultimate Day of the LORD, the final judgment. The prophets often telescope near and far judgments together, so that a coming historical catastrophe becomes a preview of the last day. Joel 2:31 and Acts 2:20 use similar cosmic imagery, and 2 Peter 3:10 describes the final day of the Lord when the heavens pass away with a roar.

The purpose of God in that day is stated plainly in 13:11: 'I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; I will put an end to the pomp of the arrogant, and lay low the haughtiness of the ruthless.' Again the theme is pride. The day of the LORD is, at its core, the day when human arrogance is finally and fully brought down before the majesty of God.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- 'The day of the LORD' (13:6) is a key prophetic phrase: a day of decisive divine judgment, near in history and pointing to the final judgment.
- The cosmic imagery (darkened sun, shaken heavens) telescopes Babylon's fall together with the ultimate Day of the LORD (Joel 2:31; 2 Peter 3:10).
- The stated purpose is to punish evil and 'put an end to the pomp of the arrogant' (13:11); pride is the target.
- Historical judgments serve as previews of the final judgment all will face (Acts 17:31).
- Do not collapse the near and far meanings into only one; the text holds both the historical fall and the ultimate Day.

Discussion Prompts

- What does the cosmic 'day of the LORD' imagery teach us about the seriousness of God's judgment?
- How does a coming historical judgment serve as a preview of the final day all people will face?
- If God's day will 'lay low the haughtiness of the ruthless,' how should that shape our own humility now?

Question 3

Student Question:

In Isaiah 14:1-2, before describing Babylon's fall, God promises compassion on Jacob and a restored people. How does this show that God's judgment on the nations and His mercy toward His people work together, and how is this pattern fulfilled in the gospel (compare Romans 11:30-32)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Just before the great taunt-song, 14:1-2 offers a word of comfort that we must not skip past. 'For the LORD will have compassion on Jacob and will again choose Israel, and will set them in their own land.' Right in the middle of judgment on the nations, God reaffirms mercy toward His people. The fall of Babylon is, from another angle, the deliverance of God's people. Judgment and mercy are two sides of the same divine action.

This is a pattern that runs all through Scripture and reaches its climax in the gospel. God's judgment on sin and His mercy toward sinners are not at war; they meet at the cross, where judgment falls and mercy flows from the same place. Paul reflects on this rhythm in Romans 11:30-32, where God's dealings with Jew and Gentile show that He 'has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.'

Notice too the reversal in 14:2: those who had been captors will be served by their former captives, and the oppressed will rule over their oppressors. This great reversal, the lifting up of the lowly and the casting down of the proud, is the very pattern Mary sings in the Magnificat (Luke 1:51-53). The God of these oracles is the God who scatters the proud and exalts the humble. Be careful here to read the restoration of Israel through its gospel fulfillment, the gathering of God's people into Christ, rather than as a prediction about modern political nationhood.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- God's judgment on the nations and His mercy toward His people are two sides of one action; Babylon's fall is His people's deliverance.
- Judgment and mercy meet supremely at the cross, where God is both just and the justifier (Romans 3:26).
- The great reversal (the lowly lifted, the proud cast down) anticipates Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1:51-53).
- Romans 11:30-32 shows God's pattern of consigning all to disobedience to have mercy on all.
- Read the restoration of Israel through its gospel fulfillment in Christ and the church, not as modern political nationhood.

Discussion Prompts

- How do God's judgment and His mercy work together rather than against each other?
- Where have you seen God's 'great reversal,' the lowly lifted and the proud brought down, in your own experience?
- Why is it good news that the same God who judges the proud has compassion on His people?

Question 4

Student Question:

Read the taunt-song over the king of Babylon in Isaiah 14:4–11. The mighty oppressor who terrified the earth is brought down to the grave, greeted by the dead. When you imagine the proudest, most powerful people you know being leveled by death like everyone else, how does that reshape what you actually fear and admire?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Isaiah 14:4–11 is a taunt-song, a poem of mockery the redeemed will sing over the fallen king of Babylon. ‘How the oppressor has ceased, the insolent fury ceased!’ (14:4). The tyrant who ‘struck the peoples in wrath’ and ruled the nations in anger is now silent. The whole earth, which once trembled, is now at rest and breaks forth into singing (14:7). Even the cypress trees and cedars rejoice: now that you are laid low, ‘no woodcutter comes up against us’ (14:8).

Then the scene shifts to the grave, Sheol, which stirs to meet the arriving king. The shades of dead rulers rise from their thrones to greet him with grim irony: ‘You too have become as weak as we! You have become like us!’ (14:10). The man who exalted himself to the heavens is welcomed into the dust by the worms and maggots (14:11). The pomp is gone. The music of his harps has been brought down to the grave.

This is one of Scripture’s most vivid meditations on the leveling power of death. The proudest oppressor in the world ends exactly where the weakest beggar ends, in the grave. Psalm 49 makes the same point: the wise die just as the fool, and ‘man in his pomp will not remain’ (Psalm 49:12). For a class, this is a sobering and clarifying truth. We spend our lives admiring and fearing the powerful, but death levels them all, and what remains is the judgment of God.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The taunt-song (14:4–11) mocks the fallen oppressor; the tyrant who terrified the earth is now silent and powerless.
- Death is the great leveler: the proudest king ends in the same grave as the weakest, greeted by the dead as their equal (14:10).
- Psalm 49 makes the same point: ‘man in his pomp will not remain’; wealth and power cannot ransom from death.
- What remains after death is not earthly glory but the judgment of God (Hebrews 9:27).
- This reorders our fears and admirations; do not be overawed by powerful people who, like all, must die.

Discussion Prompts

- How does meditating on death as the great leveler reorder what you fear and what you admire?
- Why do we so easily overestimate the powerful and underestimate the God who outlasts them all?
- What do you want to remain after your death, when ‘pomp’ is gone? How does that shape today?

Question 5

Student Question:

Isaiah 14:12–15 records the king of Babylon's fall: 'How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star... You said in your heart, I will ascend.' Working from what the text actually says about the king of Babylon, what is the precise sin that brings him down, and how does Scripture warn that this same self-exalting pride leads to destruction (Proverbs 16:18; 1 Peter 5:5–6)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

We arrive at the most famous and most debated lines in the chapter: 'How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low!' (14:12). The Latin Vulgate rendered 'Day Star' as 'Lucifer,' and from this single verse grew a long tradition of reading the passage as the fall of Satan. We must handle this carefully and stay anchored to the text.

What the text plainly says is that this is a taunt 'against the king of Babylon' (14:4). The primary, intended meaning is the downfall of a proud human ruler who exalted himself to god-like heights and is brought crashing down to the grave. The 'Day Star, son of Dawn' is imagery drawn from the morning star that climbs high in the dawn sky only to be swallowed up by the rising sun, a perfect picture of a king who rose dazzlingly high and then vanished. We should teach this primary meaning clearly and confidently.

It is fair to acknowledge that many Christians have heard in these words an echo of the pride and fall of Satan himself, and that the self-exalting ambition described here is the very essence of satanic pride. There may be a secondary echo. But we must not let speculation about Satan pull us away from what God actually wrote, which is a judgment on the king of Babylon and, through him, on all human pride that tries to climb God's throne. Keep the class anchored: whatever shadowy echoes some hear, the text addresses the king of Babylon, and the lesson is the destruction that follows self-exaltation.

The heart of the passage is the five 'I will' statements of 14:13–14: 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high... I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' Here is the original sin of pride in its purest form, the determination to be God. And the answer comes swift and total in 14:15: 'But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit.' The climb ends in the grave.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The primary, text-anchored meaning of 14:12–15 is a taunt over the proud king of Babylon (14:4), brought down to the grave for exalting himself.
- 'Day Star, son of Dawn' is morning-star imagery: a ruler who rose dazzlingly high only to be swallowed up; 'Lucifer' is the Vulgate's translation of this word.
- Acknowledge honestly that many apply the imagery to Satan's fall, and the self-exalting pride described is satanic in character, but the text addresses the king of Babylon.

- Do not let speculation about Satan replace the plain meaning; teach the primary sense and keep the class anchored to what the text says.
- The five 'I will' boasts (14:13–14) are the essence of pride, the desire to be God; the answer is the pit (14:15).
- The timeless lesson is universal: self-exalting pride leads to destruction (Proverbs 16:18; Matthew 23:12).

Discussion Prompts

- What does the text itself say this taunt is about (read 14:4), and why does that matter for how we interpret it?
- What is the precise sin captured in the five 'I will' statements, and where do you hear echoes of it in your own heart?
- How does keeping the primary meaning (the king of Babylon) actually sharpen, rather than weaken, the lesson about pride?

Question 6

Student Question:

The five 'I will' boasts of 14:13–14 reveal a heart determined to climb above God. Where do your own quiet 'I will' statements reveal a plan for your life that has crowded God out? What would it look like to replace them with 'if the Lord wills' (James 4:13–16)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

After the taunt-song, 14:22–27 broadens out. God declares He will cut off from Babylon 'name and remnant, descendants and posterity' (14:22), turning the proud city into 'a possession of the hedgehog, and pools of water' (14:23), a desolate swamp. Then, abruptly, the oracle turns to Assyria, the present-day threat: 'I will break the Assyrian in my land' (14:25).

The key verses are 14:24 and 14:27. 'The LORD of hosts has sworn: As I have planned, so shall it be, and as I have purposed, so shall it stand.' And again: 'For the LORD of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?' These are among the strongest statements of God's sovereign purpose in all of Scripture. What God plans, He performs. No empire, no coalition, no human scheme can overturn it.

For believers, this is bedrock comfort. The same sovereign purpose that toppled Babylon and broke Assyria stands behind God's promises to His people. If His hand cannot be turned back in judgment, neither can it be turned back in salvation. The God who keeps His word against the nations keeps His word for His church. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ, and no power can annul His saving purpose (Romans 8:38–39).

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- God declares Babylon's total desolation and then turns to break Assyria 'in my land' (14:25), the present threat.

- 14:24, 27 are among Scripture's strongest statements of God's sovereign purpose: what He plans, He performs, and none can annul it.
- If God's hand cannot be turned back in judgment, neither can it be turned back in salvation; this is bedrock comfort.
- The same sovereign purpose stands behind God's promises to His church (Romans 8:28–39).
- God's sovereignty does not cancel human accountability; the nations are judged for real sin freely committed.

Discussion Prompts

- What comfort do you draw from knowing God's purposes cannot be annulled by any earthly power?
- How does God's faithfulness in judgment give you confidence in His faithfulness to save?
- Where do you need to rest in the truth that God's plan 'shall stand,' even when circumstances look uncertain?

Question 7

Student Question:

In Isaiah 14:24–27, after the oracle against Babylon, God declares His purpose against Assyria: 'As I have planned, so shall it be... For the LORD of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it?' How does this assure us that God's purposes for history and for His people cannot be thwarted by any earthly power?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Chapters 15 and 16 contain the oracle against Moab, Judah's neighbor and frequent enemy across the Dead Sea. What is remarkable is not the judgment itself but the tone. Isaiah does not gloat. He weeps. 'My heart cries out for Moab' (15:5). 'Therefore my inner parts moan like a lyre for Moab' (16:11). The prophet of God grieves over the destruction of a proud and hostile nation.

This tells us something profound about the heart of God behind the judgment. God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 18:23, 33:11). When judgment falls, it falls from a God who would far rather see repentance. Isaiah's tears are a window into the compassion of the very God who pronounces the burden. The judgment is just, and it is also genuinely grieved.

The reason for Moab's fall is named directly in 16:6: 'We have heard of the pride of Moab, how proud he is, of his arrogance, his pride, and his insolence.' The word 'pride' lands like a hammer, repeated for emphasis. Moab's arrogance is its undoing. Yet even here, in 16:5, there is a flash of gospel light: a throne 'established in steadfast love,' on which one will sit 'who judges and seeks justice,' a glimpse of the righteous reign of the Branch from chapter 11. Even in the oracle against an enemy, hope in the coming King breaks through.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Isaiah weeps over Moab's destruction (15:5; 16:11); the prophet does not gloat over a fallen enemy but grieves.
- This reveals God's heart: He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked but desires repentance (Ezekiel 18:23; 33:11).
- Moab falls because of its pride, emphatically named in 16:6; arrogance is again the root sin.
- Even in this oracle, gospel hope appears (16:5): a throne established in steadfast love, a glimpse of the righteous King of chapter 11.
- Our posture toward the lost should be grief and longing for their salvation, not satisfaction at their downfall.

Discussion Prompts

- What does it mean that the prophet weeps over a proud enemy nation under judgment?
- How does Isaiah's grief reflect God's own heart, that He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked?
- Where is God calling you to grieve over the lost rather than gloat over those you consider enemies?

Question 8

Student Question:

Isaiah weeps over Moab's destruction (15:5; 16:11), grieving even over a proud enemy nation. What does the prophet's tears teach you about how God feels toward people under judgment, and where might God be calling you to grieve over the lost rather than gloat over them?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Chapter 17 turns to Damascus, capital of Syria, and links it with the northern kingdom of Israel (Ephraim), since the two had allied together against Judah. Their fall is pictured vividly: the glory of Jacob will be brought low, fat flesh grown lean (17:4), and only gleanings left, like the few olives remaining after the harvest beating (17:5-6). A once-proud kingdom reduced to leftovers.

But at the heart of the chapter is a turning point, the verse to which the whole sweep of these oracles has been driving: 'In that day man will look to his Maker, and his eyes will look on the Holy One of Israel' (17:7). When the false refuges have been stripped away, when the proud kingdoms have fallen and the idols have failed, then at last people look up. Judgment, painful as it is, can become the very thing that turns a heart back to its Maker.

Verse 8 makes the contrast explicit: 'He will not look to the altars, the work of his hands, and he will not look on what his own fingers have made, either the Asherim or the altars of incense.' The tragedy named in 17:10 is the root of it all: 'For you have forgotten the God of your salvation and have not remembered the Rock of your refuge.' This is the diagnosis under every oracle in these chapters. People forget the God of their salvation and build refuges with their own hands, and those refuges always fail. The cure is to look again to the Maker.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Chapter 17 judges Damascus and allied Ephraim, reducing a proud kingdom to mere gleanings (17:5–6).
- 17:7 is the turning point of the whole section: 'In that day man will look to his Maker'; judgment can drive people back to God.
- False refuges are 'the work of his hands' (17:8), the altars and idols people make; these always fail.
- The root sin is forgetting 'the God of your salvation' and the 'Rock of your refuge' (17:10).
- The cure is to redirect our gaze from what we have made to the Maker who alone can save.

Discussion Prompts

- Why does it often take the failure of our false refuges before we finally 'look to our Maker'?
- What 'works of your hands' are you tempted to look to instead of God?
- How can we look to our Maker before our refuges fail, rather than only after?

Question 9

Student Question:

Across these oracles, the unifying problem is pride and false refuge (Babylon's self-exaltation, Moab's arrogance in 16:6, the forgotten 'God of your salvation' in 17:10), and the turning point is 17:7, 'In that day man will look to his Maker.' How do these chapters together display God's universal sovereignty over every nation and expose the folly of every pride and false security, and what does this demand of how we, and the nations, ought to live before Him (compare Acts 17:24–31)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Step back and see the unifying message of all five chapters. Babylon, Assyria, Philistia (14:28–32), Moab, Damascus, and Israel, each in turn, are weighed and found wanting. The specific sins differ, but the root is one: pride and false refuge. Babylon says 'I will make myself like the Most High.' Moab is steeped in arrogance. Damascus and Ephraim have forgotten the God of their salvation. And over them all stands the LORD of hosts, who has purposed and will perform.

This is the great theological claim of these oracles: God is sovereign over all nations, not just His own people. He is not a local deity competing with Marduk of Babylon or the gods of Moab. He is the Maker of all the earth, who holds every kingdom in His hand and calls every nation to account. Paul preaches exactly this to the philosophers at Athens: God 'made from one man every nation,' determining their times and boundaries, so that they should seek Him, and He commands all people everywhere to repent because He has fixed a day of judgment (Acts 17:24–31).

For the nations of our own day, and for the proud heart in each of us, the demand is the same: humble yourself and look to your Maker. The kingdoms that exalt themselves will fall as surely as Babylon. The God who topples the proud gives grace to the humble (James 4:6–10; 1 Peter

5:5–6). The whole sweep of these oracles is finally an invitation, to step down from the throne we were never meant to occupy and to bow before the One who rightly reigns.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The unifying theme of chapters 13–17 is God’s universal sovereignty over every nation and the certain fall of all pride and false refuge.
- The LORD is not a local deity but the Maker of all the earth who calls every nation to account (Acts 17:24–31).
- The varied sins of the nations share one root: self-exaltation and trust in something other than God.
- The demand on nations and individuals alike is to humble themselves and look to their Maker (17:7).
- God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5–6); this is the heart-application of the whole section.
- Avoid moralizing only about ancient empires; press the timeless truth onto our own culture and our own pride.

Discussion Prompts

- How do these chapters together display God as sovereign over every nation, not just His own people?
- What is the common root sin beneath all these different nations’ downfalls?
- If God ‘opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble,’ what would humbling yourself before your Maker look like this week?

Question 10

Student Question:

Isaiah 17:7–8 promises a day when ‘man will look to his Maker’ and ‘will not look to the altars, the work of his hands.’ Name one ‘work of your hands,’ something you have built or achieved or accumulated, that you are tempted to look to for security instead of looking to your Maker. What is one specific way Christ is teaching you to redirect that gaze to Him this week?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

It is worth pausing on how the New Testament picks up the imagery of these oracles, especially Babylon. In Revelation 17 and 18, the proud, idolatrous, seemingly invincible world-power opposed to God is called ‘Babylon the great.’ John deliberately reaches back to Isaiah and Jeremiah’s oracles against literal Babylon and uses them to portray every age’s arrogant, God-defying empire. ‘Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great’ (Revelation 18:2) echoes Isaiah 21:9.

This shows us how to read these ancient oracles for our own instruction (Romans 15:4). ‘Babylon’ becomes a symbol of all proud human power that sets itself against God and seduces the world with its wealth and glamour. Its fall is certain. The same God who brought down the

historical Babylon will bring down every Babylon, and the call to His people in every age is the same: 'Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins' (Revelation 18:4).

So these chapters are not a dusty list of dead kingdoms. They are a sustained revelation of how God deals with proud, idolatrous power across all of history, climaxing in the final fall of the great Babylon and the vindication of the Lamb. For the believer, the practical word is twofold: do not fear the Babylons of your day, for they will fall, and do not love them, for their glamour is passing away. Look instead to your Maker, and to the Lamb who reigns forever (1 John 2:15–17).

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Revelation 17–18 takes up Isaiah's Babylon imagery to portray every proud, God-defying world power; 'Fallen is Babylon' (Revelation 18:2) echoes Isaiah 21:9.
- 'Babylon' becomes a symbol of all arrogant human power that seduces the world with wealth and glamour and will surely fall.
- Romans 15:4 directs us to read these oracles for our instruction, not as mere ancient history.
- God's people are called to 'come out of' Babylon, refusing to share its sins and its love of the world (Revelation 18:4; 1 John 2:15–17).
- The believer's twofold response: do not fear the Babylons of our day (they will fall) and do not love them (their glamour is passing).

Discussion Prompts

- How does Revelation's use of 'Babylon' help us read Isaiah's oracles for our own day?
- What does it mean for Christians to 'come out of Babylon' while still living in the world?
- How do you guard your heart against both fearing and loving the proud, glamorous powers of our culture?