



# *Suggested Responses*

# Book of Isaiah



## Lesson 1: Isaiah 1–2

### Suggested Responses

1. Deuteronomy 18:18–22 states that God will raise up for them a prophet from among their brethren and put his words in that prophet’s mouth, and that prophet shall speak to the people all that God commands him. God goes on to say that whoever will not give heed to that prophet’s words which he shall speak in God’s name, that God himself will require it of him. In verse 20, God says, “But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.” God continues to say that if we wonder how we might know the words which the Lord has not spoken, that we can know by the fact that when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord and that prophecy does not come to pass or come true, then we will know that the Lord did not speak those words and that the prophet has spoken presumptuously.
2. The Lord commands the people not to bring “vain offerings”; celebrate assemblies on Sabbath, new moon, and feasts; or even stretch out their hands in simple prayer and supplication because these weary him as abominations. He will not listen or see their religious practices. The Lord makes his reasons clear: “iniquity and solemn assembly” are incompatible with each other, as is indicated by the very structure of the Law of Moses. The commandments begin with faith in God, only one God, and then move to duties to fellow humans.
3. Woe was expressed in particular to someone who was about to die or suffer greatly, and it assumed that the object of the woe was already doomed. Apart from its use at a burial (1 Kgs 13:30), in the Old Testament it is found only in prophetic books, most frequently in Isaiah, to indicate the inevitability of the doom and devastation that the person or nation was about to receive.
4. This is not the first time God has given his people instruction on how they should live. God communicated to the chosen people multiple times in the Old Testament, in particular in the giving of the Law that we find in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. We find reference to this in the Catechism, especially in paragraphs 60 and 122. CCC 60 states: “The people descended from Abraham would be the trustees of the promise made to the patriarchs, the chosen people, called to prepare for that day when God would gather all his children into the unity of the Church. They would be the root onto which the Gentiles would be grafted, once they came to believe.” Again we read in CCC 122: “Indeed, the economy of the Old Testament was deliberately so oriented that it should prepare for



and declare in prophecy the coming of Christ, redeemer of all men.” “Even though they contain matters imperfect and provisional,” the books of the Old Testament bear witness to the whole divine pedagogy of God’s saving love: these writings “are a storehouse of sublime teaching on God and of sound wisdom on human life, as well as a wonderful treasury of prayers; in them, too, the mystery of our salvation is present in a hidden way.”

5. God gives them two choices: to repent, receive forgiveness, and be saved or to continue their evil ways and experience violent destruction.
6. In CCC 2113, we learn that idolatry not only refers to worship of false gods but is a constant temptation to our faith. We are guilty of idolatry when we divinize anything that is not of God, such as revering or honoring gods, demons, power, pleasure, race, ancestors, the state, money, and so on. Idolatry is a constant temptation to faith. As Jesus tells us in Matthew 6:24, “No one can serve two masters because they will hate one and love the other or will be devoted to one and despise the other. Man cannot serve both God and mammon.”
7. In Isaiah 1:2–4, the Israelites are accused of being brought up like sons but rebelling against God. In Jeremiah 2:31–32, they are accused of forgetting God for days without number. In the Catechism, paragraph 762 points to the prophets accusing Israel of breaking the covenant and behaving like a prostitute. They announce a new and eternal covenant that will be instituted by Christ.