

#17 - Promise of the Messiah - Isaiah 6:1-8; Tell: Isaiah 53

Engage:

- Congratulations! We are at the half way point in our journey through the heart of the Bible as we examine the theme “God’s Redemption Story. This is our last story from the Old Testament.

In this story we will consider the following. 1) We are going to look at a life changing experience in the life of the prophet Isaiah. Almost half of the of the Old Testament books are named after different prophets. Isaiah is one of the most noted. 2) We will examine one of the most profound prophetic statements of any Old Testament prophet that was fulfilled when Jesus went to the cross.

Isaiah lived during a time when Judah had prospered but was in terrible condition spiritually. Her spiritual condition included the sins of idolatry, hypocrisy and injustice.

Note: “The economic growth and temporary peace were a veneer that covered a nation with a wicked heart” (Wiersbe)

Thoughts about the story:

1) A Special Life Changing Experience For Isaiah (Isaiah 6:1-8)

▸ The upward look - Isaiah saw the Lord (6:1-4)

“Seeing God for who He is will open your eyes to who you are” (DW, July 2003)

▸ The inward look - Isaiah saw himself (6:5-7)

After Isaiah saw the Lord, he became a different person. He was not alone in this experience.

- When Job saw God he repented (Job 42:6)
- Peter recognized his sinfulness when he saw the power of Christ (Luke 5:8)
- Saul saw his own righteousness was like “garbage” when next to the glory of Christ (Acts 9 and Philippians 3).
- Point: When believers really see the Lord, they are humbled and broken before God.

Unclean lips come from an unclean heart (see Matthew 12:34-35) . Only when Isaiah was cleansed was he prepared to serve! God longs to equip people for service, but this is not possible until there is repentance.

Isaiah’s conviction came from his view of himself in relation to God. This conviction led to confession, which led to cleansing!

“You cannot *impart* what you do not *possess*. In Isaiah’s case, before he could be used by God to call the people back to holy *living*, he himself had to be cleansed and prepared for holy *service*. . . . Cleansing . . . calling . . . commitment (or) Woe . . . Lo . . . Go . . .” (DW, July 1982)

► The outward look - Isaiah saw the need (6:8)

Note: Everything up to this point was only in preparation for the call of God and the acceptance of Isaiah to go and tell!

Instead of being all wrapped up in his own self, Isaiah became committed to do only God's will.

Note: For God to call Isaiah, or any human being, is a sign of God's grace!

When people are rich and satisfied, they tend to not believe that judgment is coming. Yet just as Isaiah had been made to realize his sin and then experience the cleansing power of God, he knew that the rest of the nation needed the same awareness of God. Therefore, he willingly responded with "Here am I. Send me!"

- Here (Isaiah 6), Isaiah "describes his call to ministry—a dramatic encounter with God during a time of national lament. Caught up in a vision of God's presence, Isaiah's "Woe" ("I am sinful") is met by God's "Lo" ("I am holy") resulting in the prophet's "Here am I; send me" ("I am available") and God's "Go" ("I want to use you"). Cleansed of his iniquity, Isaiah enters eagerly into the unenviable task of declaring God's judgment upon a people plagued with fat hearts and heavy ears." (DW, July 1981)

Note: Never underestimate what God can do with one willing worker.

Note: "God does not comfort us to make us comfortable but to make us comforters."
(Unknown)

2) A Profound Prophetic Statement Fulfilled Only By Jesus (Isaiah 53)

As you read and think about the verses of Isaiah 53, reflect on everything you know about the life of Jesus as revealed in the gospels.

► His rejection (53:1-3) (A Wiersbe outline)

See Mark 6:1-3; John 1:11; 12:37-40. Compare this with Isaiah 53:1-3 and 6:9-10.

There was nothing about the physical appearance of Jesus that revealed that He was God in the flesh.

He was:

- despised (not wanted and looked down upon).
- rejected (forsaken by His disciples, His people Israel and the rest of the world)
- lightly esteemed (not respected or valued highly)

Yet this did not stop Jesus from doing good for others and then going to the cross for our sins.

► His redemption (53:4-6)

These verses tell why the innocent Son of God had to die such a horrific death by taking what we deserved as sinners upon Himself.

See 1 Peter 2:24; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:12.

► His resignation (53:7-9)

He was to be treated unjustly, yet He would not complain. There was nothing “fair” about His trial, yet He would be silent like a lamb being sacrificed. Why? Because this was the reason for His coming - to die for the sins of people.

See John 1:29; Matthew 27:22-31; Acts 8:33.

Even in His death we see this prophetic message fulfilled. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea stepped up to claim His body so that He was not buried in a poor man’s grave (“potter’s field”). Christ would be the perfect example of being submissive to the will of God. Point: Even when men treat us unjustly (and they will from time to time because we follow Christ), we must remain faithful.

See John 19:38-42; 1 Peter 2:18-25.

► His reward (53:10-12)

These words were first written about 700 years before Jesus fulfilled them. Thus this is a picture of God’s plan which was successfully fulfilled by Jesus.

See Acts 2:22-24; Hebrews 2:5-18; Matthew 27:38; Luke 23:34, 43.

Even though Jesus was “silent” as He willingly went to the cross, He is now interceding for His own (Romans 8:34).

Note: “That these verses apply to Jesus Christ is proved by John 12:28; Matthew 8:17; Acts 8:32-35; Mark 15:28; Luke 22:37; Romans 10:16 and 1 Peter 2:24. Isaiah 53 is quoted or referred to at least 85 times in the New Testament.” (Wiersbe)

Point: You cannot fully understand the New Testament without a working knowledge of the Old Testament! It is said that 1/4 to 1/3 of the New Testament is the Old Testament either directly quoted or alluded to.

Question:

- What is the most significant point(s) you have gleaned from our study of God’s Redemptive Plan up to this point (the Old Testament portion)?