

Adult Sunday Bible Study Lesson

Isaiah 6

October 18, 2020

Appointed to Declare Gods' Word

Situational Context: The Lord has rendered judgment upon Israel who is at this point a fruitless vine, Isaiah 5:1-2 (NIV2011) ¹ I will sing for the one I love a song about his vineyard: My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. ² He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit. So the Lord has a message for Israel to be delivered by a faithful messenger.

Lesson Theme: The Lord invited Isaiah to listen in on the sessions of the royal, heavenly court. From this moment on Isaiah is a servant of God's court and proclaims God's message to kings and people alike. Isaiah's mission will be paradoxical in its effect, as is the proclamation of the word of God. The prophetic word closes the way of God to those who are rebellious, proud and hypocritical but opens it to the deaf, the blind, the humble, and the poor.

Isaiah 6:8-10 (NIV2011) ⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" ⁹ He said, "Go and tell this people: " 'Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.' ¹⁰ Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."

1. The Lord Summons: Isaiah 6:1-4 (NIV2011) ¹ In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³ And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy

is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

Interpretation: Uzziah died in 740 B.C., having suffered from leprosy (2Ch 26:16-21). Isaiah describes a "theophany," a visible manifestation of God. God's coming is often attended by such phenomena as earthquakes, smoke, fire, and lightning. The Lord rules heaven and earth from His throne. The choir of seraphim and the splendor of God's holiness inspired the prophet throughout his ministry. In his vision he saw not the temple in Jerusalem, but the heavenly temple.

Supporting Texts:

Revelation 4:8 (NIV2011)⁸ Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying: “ ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,’ who was, and is, and is to come.”

Luke 5:8 (NIV2011)⁸ When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!”

Discussion Starters:

What Does God accomplish by showing himself to Isaiah?

What is the message of the scene around the Throne?

What is the message of the Seraph's response to the Lord?

True worship has what characteristic?

2. The Lord Prepares His Spokesman: Isaiah 6:5-7 (NIV2011)⁵ “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.”⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar.⁷ With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”

Interpretation: Isaiah was astonished by the glory of God; like Peter he became afraid. He pronounces an oracular curse upon himself. The altar from which the live coal was taken is not described. The stress is on the purification necessary for approaching God. The altar symbolizes purification by blood, and the fire, purification by the Spirit. The blood of Christ and the ministry of the Holy Spirit sanctify believers today. The purification makes the prophet acceptable as a minister of God's words.

Supporting Texts:

Jeremiah 1:9 (NIV2011) ⁹ Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "I have put my words in your mouth.

Ezekiel 3:1-2 (NIV2011) ¹ And he said to me, "Son of man, eat what is before you, eat this scroll; then go and speak to the people of Israel." ² So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat.

Leviticus 16:12 (NIV2011) ¹² He is to take a censer full of burning coals from the altar before the LORD and two handfuls of finely ground fragrant incense and take them behind the curtain.

Discussion Starters:

What did Isaiah realize when he saw the Lord?

What did Isaiah realize about God's people?

Why is it important to have God's perspective on circumstances?

How do we get God's perspective?

What does this teach us about atonement?

3. Commissioned for the Lord's Purpose: Isaiah 6:8-10 (NIV2011) ⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" ⁹ He said, "Go and tell this people: " 'Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.' ¹⁰ Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."

Interpretation: Isaiah responds to the matter before the court by volunteering, having been overcome by the Glory of God. The Lord invited Isaiah to listen in on the sessions of the royal, heavenly court. From this moment on Isaiah is a servant of God's court and proclaims God's message to kings and people alike. Isaiah's mission is paradoxical in its effect, as is the proclamation of the word of God. The prophetic word closes the way of God to those who are rebellious, proud and hypocritical, but opens it to the deaf, the blind, the humble, and the poor (Isa 29:18, Isa 29:19). Isaiah 6:8-9

Supporting Texts:

Matthew 13:13-15 (NIV2011) ¹³ This is why I speak to them in parables: "Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. ¹⁴ In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: " 'You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. ¹⁵ For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.'

Romans 11:7-8 (NIV2011) ⁷ What then? What the people of Israel sought so earnestly they did not obtain. The elect among them did, but the others were hardened, ⁸ as it is written: "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that could not see and ears that could not hear, to this very day."

Romans 11:25 (NIV2011) ²⁵ I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in,

Isaiah 29:18-19 (NIV2011) ¹⁸ In that day the deaf will hear the words of the scroll, and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind will see. ¹⁹ Once more the humble will rejoice in the LORD; the needy will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

Discussion Starters:

Isaiah accepted God's assignment without knowing the details, why, what does this say to us?

What effects does the word of the Lord have on people?

Why does God's word harden?

Why did Jesus teach in parables?

4. The Stump Decreed: Isaiah 6:11-13 (NIV2011) ¹¹ Then I said, "For how long, Lord?" And he answered: "Until the cities lie ruined and without inhabitant, until the houses are left deserted and the fields ruined and ravaged, ¹² until the LORD has sent everyone far away and the land is utterly forsaken. ¹³ And though a tenth remains in the land, it will again be laid waste. But as the terebinth and oak leave stumps when they are cut down, so the holy seed will be the stump in the land."

Interpretation: The land will be laid waste, but a remnant will be saved and purified. This is a revelation of the coming exile. Just as it appears that there is no life left in the unfruitful vine, the stump remains and will survive. Jesus is called the Stump of Jesse.

Supporting Texts:

Job 14:8-9 (NIV2011) ⁸ Its roots may grow old in the ground and its stump die in the soil, ⁹ yet at the scent of water it will bud and put forth shoots like a plant.

Isaiah 11:1 (NIV2011) ¹ A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

Romans 15:12 (NIV2011) ¹² And again, Isaiah says, “The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will hope.”

Discussion Starters:

What was God’s purpose in calling Isaiah?

Who is responsible for the response to the Lord’s message?

How should the Lord’s messenger handle the spiritual hard of hearing?