**The Book of Isaiah II**

**Here Am I, Send Me**

The themes of Isaiah are the themes of the Bible.

1. The sinfulness of Judah and Jerusalem

2. Appeal of God to turn to him—to repent.

3. Judgment if they do not.

4. The Messiah—the Suffering Servant—is coming to save.

5. Restoration of a Remnant

Isaiah is about faith in God’s promises. Ahaz (not faithful) vs Hezekiah (faithful).

Isaiah 1 Introduction to Isaiah. God: I have raised you and loved you like a parent does a child. I have always maintained *hesed*—covenant-love, loyal-love

“The ox knows his master” Even dumb animals are smart enough to know who is master.

Our equivalent: A dog knows where the food comes from.

Do you know your master? Do you hear his voice?

Implication: We are easily deceived about who our master is.

Isaiah 1:10-13 Why is God so angry? (He is, after all, calling us Sodom and Gomorrah)

Didn’t he ask them to bring these offerings? (yes!). So what is the problem?

Being religious but not practicing *hesed* makes me sick!

v. 13 Might our worship be “worthless assemblies”?

So, what do we learn, then? What should we do?

Isaiah 1:16-17 Repent! How? God says: Start behaving rightly toward the poor, the oppressed the orphan and the widow. Practice social justice. Do justice. Love me and act like me.

Isaiah 1:18-20. Come, let us reason together. Let’s have a conversation about this. God is willing to appeal to our reason.

Q: What does God offer? God offers salvation. Scarlet → white as snow.

What is required? That we are willing (ie choose freely) to obey

Two choices: Willingly obey or Resist and rebel. What do you chose?

**Isaiah 2 The Mountain of the Lord**

Isaiah 2:1-3 A kingdom prophecy. The mountain of the Lord is Mt. Zion, it is Jerusalem, it is the Kingdom of God. It is the Church.

v. 3 The Law will go out from Zion. From Jerusalem. From the Church.

v. 3 Many peoples…

A parallel kingdom passage: Isaiah 11:1-16. 11:6-9 A kingdom prophecy. A beautiful image of the kingdom. Already but not yet.

v. 8 Look at this metaphor!!! The infant will play near the cobra’s den. This is God’s vision for his Church, for his people, for his Kingdom.

11:10-11 The kingdom of God is a banner, a resting place, a gathered remnant, a highway to heaven.

v. 16 Picture the highway for God’s remnant.

Isaiah 4:2-6 The return of the glory of the Lord to the kingdom.

v. 2 In that day (again 2:2) the Branch of the Lord will be beautiful.

v. 3-4 The remnant will be cleansed.

Is 4:5 The Shekinah—the glory of the Lord, the cloud of smoke by day and the pillar of fire by night—will be with the people.

**This week: Isaiah II 5-7 Here Am I, Send Me!**

Isaiah 5:1-30 “The Song of the Vineyard” An Old Testament Parable

Isaiah 5:1-7 God’s vineyard

Is 5:1-2 God created a vineyard and he loved the vineyard.

Isaiah says: My loved (ie. God) one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. (The hills of Canaan, the Promised Land)

The vineyard was Israel and Judah (v. 7) in context, but for us it is the church.

v. 2 He cleared the land, took out the stones and added the choicest vines. That is what God has done for his church and even in your life. He created a life for us and gave us work to do.

v. 2 He set up a watchtower. God protects the church.

v. 2 He created a winepress. God gives us work to do, but expects a crop.

v. 4 What more could I have done for you, O church/O Israel and Judah?

God says to you: What more could I have done for you. I sent my son. He died for you. I offered forgiveness of sins. I gave you the Holy Spirit as a stream of living water. I gave you the church as an outpost of the Kingdom.

But I want you to produce fruit!

v. 4 When I came to pick grapes, there were only bad grapes. How does God feel about this?

Maybe they spent more time arguing over doctrines and sitting on committees, discussing style of songs, church budget, than sharing their faith and helping the poor.

v. 5 A strong warning! So it will be destroyed, its wall broken down and it will be a wasteland

v. 7 In case there were any doubt about the meaning.

Isaiah 5:8-30 God calls them out for their sin.

Isaiah 5:8-13 They were seeking wealth at the expense of the poor—driving the poor off their land.

Their houses got bigger and bigger.

Average American home in 1950: 950 sq. ft. Did they have less children?

1960: 1100 sq. ft.

1970: 1500

1980: 1740

1990: 2080

2000: 2266

2010: 2392

2014: 2657

Yet, one of the fastest-growing industries is the self-storage. Derrell’s is huge in Bakersfield!

v. 9 But their great houses will become desolate.

v. 11 They run after their drinks, and are inflamed with wine.

v. 13 Therefore, they will go into exile. They will not be part of God’s church. They will not be part of God’s people. They will forfeit the blessing.

Well, that is exactly what happened in 722 and 586 BC.

Isaiah 5:20-23 for example

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil.

We need to keep calling sin sin. It is not “making love.” It is adultery.

Like Jesus, we love the adulterer. We love the homosexual, but these things are sin!

It is not “boys will be boys.” It is pornography, orgies.

Believe in yourself. We call that pride.

Take care of #1. We call that selfishness.

v. 21 -wise in their own eyes. Are you wise in your own eyes? I don’t need advice. I do not need to listen to those who are older.

Thanks to Jeremy Newfield for giving our campus students great wise advice on finances.

 -drunkards “heroes at drinking wine” = calling evil good

 -injustice in the courts acquit the guilty and convict the innocent

He has entrusted us with his vineyard, so that we can produce the fruit of the kingdom, or we will be removed from his vineyard.

Isaiah 6 Isaiah’s commission. The year is 739 BC (the year Uzziah died)

Isaiah 6:1-4 Isaiah has a vision of God, similar to Ezekiel 1, Ezekiel 10 and Rev 4 and the cherubim. The seraphim here are the cherubim of Ezekiel.

The chief quality of God here is holiness! Holy! Holy! Holy! Revelation 4:8

God is wholly holy. He is separate. He is other. He is pure and unadulterated. He is without sin or blemish. Moral majesty.

What do I learn here? The first requirement for a prophet is to have a personal vision of God in heaven. Suggestion: Read Revelation 4, Ezekiel 1.

v. 3 The whole earth is full of his glory. This can only be seen through the eyes of faith.

Isaiah 6:5-7 As we would react in God’s presence. Woe is me!!! I am a sinner. Like Peter in the boat when Jesus calmed the story.

How would you like to meet God face-to-face?

What would it feel like in the waiting room for this meeting? What would you be thinking about?

Again, what is your picture of God? Get a mental picture right now!

v. 5 The unclean “lips” are particularly important for Isaiah the prophet.

6:7 A live coal. From the altar of sacrifice? Lips symbolic of his being a spokesperson for God. Isaiah is forgiven. He is holy so he can speak for God.

To be God’s prophet:

1. We have to see God.

2. We have to be cleansed.

6:8-13 Whom shall I send. I imaging Isaiah looking around, but he is the only one in the room.

God says to any of us: Whom shall I send?

God called Jan and I to Bakersfield.

Whom can God send to East Bakersfield?

Whom can God send to BC, CSUB?

Who can God send to Tehachapi?

Who can God send to Merced?

 Here am I, send me. A great attitude. Do you have this attitude? If you say this, where might God send you? (into your neighborhood, to the hospital,…)

You want to be God’s prophet?

1. You have to see God.

2. You have to be cleansed.

3. You have to accept his mission to the lost wholeheartedly.

v. 9 You have to GO!

Isaiah 6:9-10 Isaiah’s commission. God says it will be easy NOT!!

God says I am sending you to stubborn Israel and Judah. It will not be easy, folks!

v. 9 They hear but not listen. They see but do not grasp.

v. 10 Calloused hearts. Stubborn. Say yeah, yeah…

Quoted in Matthew 13:14-15

Isaiah’s commission: Preach about repentance to a people for whom, other than a remnant, it is already too late. His message, simple as it is, will result in doom, not salvation for man of his hearers.

Isaiah 6:11-13 OK. Send me, but for how long?

Answer: Until the cities lie ruined… Until the job is done. Where is God sending you and for how long?

v. 11-13 is exactly what happened, both to the North in 722 and to Judah in 701. It also happened, most fully and finally, in 586 BC under Nebuchadnezzar.

Our job is not to bring God’s judgment to the people. Our job is to bring the truth to them and if judgment falls on them that is on them, as they say.

v. 13b. A tiny ray of hope. Judah will be a stump, from which a branch will sprout.

Isaiah 7 Do not ally yourself with the world. Unfaithful Ahaz.

Isaiah 7:1-9 Ephraim and king Pekah (the Northern Kingdom) is allying with Aram and king Rezin (Syria) to attack Judah. They are rebelling against Assyria. This is the Syro/Ephraimite war of 734 BC.

v. 2 A scary situation for Judah. What should they do? Who should they turn to?

v. 3 God had Isaiah name his son Shear-Jashub? (a remnant will return)?

God days I will protect you and a remnant will return.

[Isaiah 8:1-4 Write on the scroll Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz (quick to the plunder, swift to the spoil).

He says this before his wife conceives.

How would you like to have a son named Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz? V. 4 This is what happened.

v. 4 This is how we should react when things look really bad—when it feels like our enemies will overpower us.

 -be careful.

 -keep calm.

 -do not be afraid or lose heart. Trust in God.

v. 7 Rezin and Remaliah’s son (Pekah of Samaria. Is there sarcasm here? Old what’s-his-name…) are mere humans. [If you trust God] it will not happen.

v.9 A great quote. But… If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.

Like we said, the key message to humans of Isaiah is that we need to maintain faith and reliance on God.

So, who will you rely on? Assyria or God?

Isaiah 7:10-12. Ahaz refuses to ask for a sign—a miracle from God. Is this a good thing? Should we ask for a sign? Ahaz does not turn to God.

Isaiah 7:13-17 God says, “I will give you a sign,” alright… But you, Ahaz, will not see that sign.

v. 14 The sign? The virgin (young maiden) will give birth to a son who will be God-with-us. Jesus is called God-with-us in Matthew 1:22 and Matthew 28:20.

Aside: The Hebrew word young maiden, *alma* is ambiguous. It is not the word virgin, but it is never used of a married person in the Bible and the Septuagint has virgin, as only this would be a sign. So, yes! This is a prophecy that the successor to Ahaz/David will be born of a virgin.

Jesus is God-with-us. Ahaz should have recognized this, but he did not look for the sign. Instead, he trusted in Assyria.

v. 16 This is a double-prophecy. The prophecy was fulfilled in Ahaz’ day, but not in a good way. The son of Ahaz is Hezekiah. 722 BC (12 years later) The land of Rezin (Aram) and Pekah (Samaria/Ephraim/Israel/Northern Kingdom) were laid waste v. 17 The Lord… will bring the king of Assyria.

Isaiah 7:18-25 This is exactly what happened! The Lord whistled for bees from Assyria. Assyria will come, will destroy Samaria and nearly destroy Judah.