

Through the Bible - Isaiah - Part 1

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon on Isaiah emphasizes God's holiness, the need for repentance, and the importance of righteous leadership amidst a backslidden nation.

Duration: 57:22

Scripture: Isaiah 12:2-3, Isaiah 12:6, Isaiah 26:3, Isaiah 26:13, Isaiah 26:19-21, Isaiah 32:3

Topics: "Spiritual Renewal", "Gods Judgment"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of delivering a strong message to people whose hearts are insensitive and ears are dull. He references Jesus quoting from Isaiah to explain why he spoke in parables. The sermon emphasizes the need for a vision of God, self, grace, and service, as well as the importance of separating good from evil. The preacher also highlights the central chapter of Isaiah, which speaks about the millennium and the promise of washing away the filth of the daughters of Zion.

Transcript

Let's turn to the book of Isaiah. Now we come to the prophetic section of the Old Testament. We finished the historical section and the poetical section, which was Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon.

Now we come to the prophetic section, on from Isaiah to Malachi. And Isaiah and Jeremiah are the longest prophecies, then Ezekiel. So therefore, some of these are put first, and they call them major prophets, up to Daniel.

But in terms of time, I think it's good for us to know, the details are mentioned here, usually at the beginning of each prophecy, during which kings' time, like here in chapter one verse one, when they prophesied. So first of all, I'd like to give you a brief overview of the time at which these different prophets that we're going to study, up to Malachi, prophesied in terms of time, so that you have an idea as to who all were living at the same time, and who all prophesied at the same time. Then you compare their prophecies when you get time, and maybe you'll learn something spiritually from that.

Now we know the two great prophets that we studied in kings, one kings and two kings were Elijah and Elisha. And they prophesied, these dates are approximate, about 875 years before Christ, and up to about 800 years before Christ, a period of about 75 years, Elijah and Elisha prophesied. And then, from about 800 years before Christ, till about 400 years before Christ, there was this period of 400 years, 800 BC to

400 BC, when all these prophets that we're going to study prophesied.

That is after the death of Elisha, and the first three prophets were prophets to Israel. You know, Elijah and Elisha were both to Israel. I told you there are two kingdoms, the northern kingdom of ten tribes, the southern kingdom called Judah of two tribes.

Elijah and Elisha prophesied in the northern kingdom, and three prophets prophesied also in the northern kingdom of Israel, from about 790 BC till about 715 BC. The first was Jonah, then Amos, and then Hosea. So that's the chronological order.

Okay, that's all, there are no more prophets to Israel, then because Israel went into captivity around that time to Assyria. Then the remaining prophets are all to Judah. And the first of these were Micah and Isaiah, who prophesied around the same time, which was the same time as Hosea was prophesying in Israel, Micah and Isaiah were prophesying in Judah.

They were contemporaries. So it's good to read Isaiah and Micah together, because they were preaching at the same time. Then the next prophet after that was Nahum, he was alone.

And then there was another prophet after that, who was also alone, which was Zephaniah. There was a little bit of overlap Zephaniah had with Jeremiah, who was the next prophet. Now five of these, the next five prophets, these are all to Judah, remember, we finished with Israel.

The next five prophets all prophesied around the same time with a little overlap. Some lived longer than the others. And some prophesied maybe 20-30 years after one began.

The first was Jeremiah, then Habakkuk, Obadiah, and Daniel and Ezekiel were in Babylon, but around the same time. So all these five were around the same time, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Obadiah, Daniel and Ezekiel, with Daniel and Ezekiel being in Babylon. Then we have a gap of about 50 years, and from about 520 BC onwards to about 480, where Haggai and Zechariah, they prophesied together.

And then the last one, just about 430 BC, was Malachi. So that gives you a rough idea of where these people prophesied. Isaiah was around 740 BC, Jeremiah was around 627 BC.

So if you keep that before you when you study these prophets, you'll see which all prophecies you can read together to understand what God was saying through different people. I mean, it's very interesting to see Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and Obadiah were all preaching at the same time to Judah, and Daniel and Ezekiel were prophesying at the same time to the Jews in Babylon. So it's good to have that in mind.

Okay, now we go to Isaiah in chapter 1. The book of Isaiah, we could say is neatly divided, perhaps more than any other book of the Bible, certainly more than any other book of the Old Testament, into two divisions. And even though these chapter divisions were not inspired, you know, chapter divisions, verse divisions, Isaiah did not divide it up into chapters. Isaiah just wrote continuously.

It was only a few centuries ago that people divided up into chapters and verses for us to access it and to refer to it more easily. So there's nothing inspired about chapter divisions. But having said that, for ease for us to remember, Isaiah has 66 books, sorry, 66 chapters like the Bible has 66 books.

And like the Old Testament of the Bible has got 39 books and the New Testament has 27 books, Isaiah also is divided into a first section of 39 chapters and a second section of 27 chapters. And the first section

of 39 chapters deals mostly with Old Testament prophecies. And the second section of 27 chapters deals with New Testament prophecies.

So that's a remarkable coincidence that it's a little like the whole Bible itself. And having said that, you got that now, it's first 39 chapters and the next 27 chapters. One of the most important chapters, or perhaps the most important in the first section, I would say, is chapter 6, where Isaiah sees the throne of the Lord and is commissioned to serve Him.

So the throne of the Lord is a very important topic in Isaiah. God is sovereign. And he sees Him there as holy, holy, holy, God's holiness.

God hates sin. God has to judge sin. Everything is based on that.

And if we are to serve God, we need to have a vision of that. And chapters 40 to 66, the second half, the most important chapter is definitely Isaiah 53, where we see the Lamb, the Lamb that is led before the Shearers, sheared, slaughtered, the prophecy of the cross. So in chapter 6, we have the throne.

In chapter 53, we have the Lamb. And in Revelation, you see them both together, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, in Revelation chapter 5. But before we get to Revelation, Jesus lived on earth as a man, as a servant of all people, and as a servant of God. So Isaiah shows us Jesus, particularly in the latter chapters, as the servant of Jehovah.

And since it shows Jesus as the servant of Jehovah, we see in Him an example for us as we also become servants of the same Lord. And He becomes an example for us to follow as to how we should serve the Lord. In looking through a concordance, I looked this up myself, and it's very useful to have a concordance, to refer to words that are repeated frequently.

You get the emphasis, particularly in a chapter, as you're reading a book, you find one phrase occurring quite often, like Ecclesiastes, under the sun. You look up a concordance and see how many times it comes, and you say, hey, that's interesting. So the phrase, the Lord of hosts, Jehovah Sebeoth, comes 62 times in Isaiah.

The Lord of the armies of heaven. That gives us a vision of what Isaiah has at the back of his mind when he expresses something so frequently. You know that if somebody speaks about something very often in his conversation or his message, you know that's a very important thing in his mind.

So when Isaiah expresses in 66 chapters, 62 times, the Lord of hosts, Lord of the armies of heaven, a God of war against sin, that's a big thing in his mind. The other expression that comes 30 times is the Holy One. The Holy One of Israel sometimes, but the Holy One, that's another thing that comes very often.

So when we look at these words that come frequently, we get an understanding of what Isaiah is trying to emphasize. These things are hidden. It's the glory of God to conceal a matter, and it's the glory of kings to search it out.

Now as I said, for word by word study of scripture, I personally prefer the New American Standard Bible. For quick reading through, to get a bird's eye view of the whole thing, I like the Living Bible or the New Living Translation. I would sometimes encourage you to take a Living Bible and read through Isaiah in one sitting.

Sometimes King James Version and NASB can be a little heavy. Read it through there, but when you want to go verse by verse, go to a translation and not a paraphrase. So it's good to have both to study the scriptures.

That's what I've found through these years. So Isaiah prophesied, as we look at the names of the kings, for a period of about 50 years. And tradition says that when he was hiding in a hollow log, that evil king sawed the log into two and sawed him into two.

Referred to in Hebrews 11.37, of some who were sawn asunder. Tradition says that was Isaiah. Because Isaiah was a fearless prophet.

He spoke very strong things. When he was speaking to Jerusalem, for example, he spoke like this. Chapter 1, verse 10.

Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom. Are you surprised that they sawed him asunder? Imagine if you called Jerusalem the holy city Sodom. He was not a person who was a diplomat, trying to please everybody like a lot of preachers today.

He was a prophet who spoke what God wanted him to speak. Whether people got offended or hurt or upset, didn't bother him. That was God's word.

They could saw him asunder, they could kill him, they could reject the word, it didn't make a difference. Finally, that word would judge the people in the day of judgment. So the prophets were like that.

And Isaiah, we want to look at chapter 1. Here, Isaiah is describing the condition of Israel in a very backslidden state. As I told you, they had all revived under the preaching of Elijah. They had all fallen down and acknowledged that he was Lord.

But about 130 years later, when Isaiah comes on the scene, they are back into that backslidden state again. It's just like Christendom. God raises up a prophet in some generation, in some city or country.

And he stirs people and brings them back to the Lord. He dies, Elijah dies or is taken up, Elisha dies. And Christendom sinks back until another prophet arises.

And with most prophets, they just get upset and call them heretics and false prophets and throw them away. And they like to listen to the false prophets. All these true prophets always had clashes with the false prophets.

Every one of them. So, what the Lord tells these people through Isaiah is, Verse 3, an ox knows its owner, a donkey knows its master's manager, but Israel does not know. I'm supposed to be their master, I'm supposed to be their owner, I'm supposed to be their manager, but they don't understand me.

Even the animals are better than my people. What a tragedy. When God's people come to the place where animals recognize their master and obey them, but God's people don't know their master.

And the Lord says about these people, I have brought them up, verse 2, but they revolted against me. A sinful nation, verse 4, stricken down with iniquity. And it says in verse 6, it's a picture of man in sin.

From the sole of his foot to the top of his head, there's nothing good in the whole of man. Holy sin. That's why he calls them, verse 10, rulers of Sodom.

And the Lord says, what are the use of all your prayer meetings? If I were to paraphrase it, verse 11, 12, I'm not interested in your offerings, your tithes, your prayer meetings. Your offerings, verse 13, are worthless. Your special meetings, new moons and Sabbaths, verse 13, and verse 14, your appointed feasts, they've all become a burden to me because they're sin in your life.

I'm not interested in these external rituals. I'm not interested in your Bible studies. I'm not interested in your all night prayer meetings.

I'm not interested in your fasting and prayer. There is sin in your life. Therefore, the Lord says in the last part of verse 15, your hands are covered with blood.

So verse 15, when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will not listen to them because with those very hands, you go and sin. And then you come here and he'll hold up those hands before me. Look at those hands.

There's sin in those hands. And you're holding it up to me in prayer. The Lord says, I'm not going to listen.

A lot of prayer meetings are a waste of time if you don't have a clear conscience. It's true. You might as well go to sleep instead of praying.

If your conscience is clear, then a prayer meeting is valuable and powerful. But if your conscience is not clear, either set your conscience right or if you have no intention of getting your conscience right, go and get some sleep. It's far better.

It's true. And the Lord says, wash yourself, verse 16. Make yourself clean.

Remove the evil of your deeds. Stop doing evil. Learn to do good.

Seek justice. Defend the orphans. Plead for the widow.

Don't exploit poor people. Do you know the number of Christian leaders who exploit widows and orphans? Who take money tithes from poor widows and orphans and live in grand style themselves? So many, even in our country. Some poor widows in the United States send money for Christian leaders to live in grand style here.

This is what I mean. Exploiting widows. Be careful that you don't do that.

Be careful that you don't exploit poor people and take their money to live in grand style yourself. If you take money from a person, make sure you live at a lower standard than that person. Then it's alright to receive from anybody.

Not otherwise. Come now, the Lord says, let us reason together, verse 18. Even if your sins are a scarlet, first of all you got to acknowledge your sin.

Confess it. They will be as white as snow. The Lord promises cleansing.

Even if they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If you consent and obey, you'll eat the best of the land. But if you rebel, you'll be devoured by the sword.

Verse 21. The faithful city has become a harlot. This is like James.

James says, my brethren, you adulterers and adulteresses. It's quite interesting. He calls them brethren in one verse and then says you adulterers and adulteresses in James 4. James was another prophet.

I really believe we need more prophets in the church in India. Who will speak the truth, not in hatred, not in bitterness, in deep love and compassion. But who will speak the truth like Isaiah.

And there are a number of verses here. He goes on to describe their state and he tells them to repent. We go to chapter 2. In chapter 2 we read about the day of the Lord.

The day when the Lord's kingdom will be established on earth. The mountain of the house of the Lord will be established, verse 2. And people will say, verse 3, let's go to the mountain of the house of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. And the law, verse 2, 3, last part, will go forth from Zion.

And the Lord will judge between nations, verse 4. And further down it says about the day of judgment. Verse 10. Enter into the rock and hide in the dust from the terror of the Lord.

This we read in Revelation 6 is going to be fulfilled. The proud look of man will be abased, verse 11. The loftiness of man will be humbled.

And the Lord alone will be exalted that day. The great conflict is with proud people. God is against proud people 24 hours of the day.

And He is going to humble all the proud people, proud believers, proud unbelievers. They are all going to be humbled on the day Jesus comes again. If you want to live a wise life on earth, let me give you my advice.

Humble yourself before God and man always. Always think of yourself as a nobody, a servant, a nothing. Don't ever get into your head that I've become experienced or I'm senior and I know so much and I'm anointed and I'm used.

No, no, no. That's the way for the Lord to become your enemy. The Lord will bring down the proud looks of man.

Verse 12. He'll have a day of reckoning against everyone who is proud, lofty, lifted up. So if the Lord is going to have that, we might as well be ready for that right now.

Again, verse 17. Look at the emphasis on verse 11. Proud, lofty, exalted people.

Verse 12. Proud, lofty, lifted up people. And verse 17.

The pride of man will be humbled. Loftiness of man will be abased. The Lord alone will be exalted.

See, the emphasis is on proud people, proud people, proud people. God is going to humble them. And therefore, verse 22.

It says stop bothering about man whose breath is in his nostrils. I remember many years ago how this verse helped me tremendously. As a young man, when I started preaching and standing in the pulpits.

I was very nervous. Shy, reserved. And I was afraid of people who are all much older than me sitting up there.

And I had to preach to them. And I would try to impress them just like you all. You know, we're all the same.

Made of the same flesh. Tempted in the same way. And then the Lord showed me something from this verse that really helped me.

And I want to share it with you. The Lord said to me, do you know all these people sitting here? Their breath is in their nostrils. If I take away that breath, do you know what happens to them? They become dust.

Just like the dust outside. So, just look at these people like a pile of dust. A big mountain of dust.

Their only life is because I've given them breath. Stop regarding them. And speak the truth.

Don't seek to impress any of them. I mean, if I were standing in front of a mound of dust outside, I wouldn't try to impress it. I hope all of you are impressed with me.

So, you know, it changed my thinking. That I don't have to seek to impress people, whoever they are. Whether it's white dust or brown dust or black dust or any type of dust.

Okay, we go to chapter 3. There's a lovely verse in verse 10. Say to the righteous. This is a word I would say to all righteous people.

It will go well with you. And it will go badly. Verse 11.

With the wicked. Verse 12 speaks of the pathetic state of many of God's people. He says, Oh my people, you are ruled by children.

That means you are ruled by immature leaders. You are ruled by women. Because men are not there to take the lead.

Effeminate people, immature people. That's the meaning of verse 12. Immature means they are not grown up.

They don't think of mature things. They don't think of eternity. You know how a child is occupied with toys and silver paper and various things like that.

He says a lot of your leaders are like that. Occupied with the petty things of earth instead of the most important things of eternity. They are effeminate people.

Effeminate people means they are not warriors. They are not bold. They don't stand up.

Don't ever be immature or effeminate if you want to lead God's people. Steer clear of those two things. Then verse 13.

He says the Lord is going to enter into judgment. Verse 14. With the elders and princes of His people.

See, always you find throughout the prophets, they always started with judgment on the leaders. The leaders are the ones who are going to be judged first. Because it's because of the leaders that the people go astray.

He says why do you crush my people and grind the face of the poor? Verse 15. That means you care for rich people in your congregation but you don't care for the poor. The prophets were always concerned about leaders who always buttered the rich and were hard on the poor.

We see so much of that in Christendom today. They say nice things to all the rich influential people in their church. And they speak strongly and hard to the poor people who sit there.

And God is concerned about that. A true prophet will never be like that. And then the Lord has to say a lot to the women in Zion.

Not the unbelievers. The daughters of Zion. Verse 16 to 26.

And first of all again for their pride. The daughters of Zion are so proud. And just look at the things which the Lord is looking at in young girls and young women.

First their pride. The way they keep their heads when they walk. Their eyes.

Their flirtatious eyes with which they try to catch men. See this is. And their mincing steps.

And the tinkling of the bangles on their feet. And verse 18. Their anklets and their headbands and their ornaments and their dangling earrings and bracelets.

Verse 19. And headdresses and ankle chains and sashes and perfume boxes and finger rings. Verse 21.

And nose rings and tunics and cloaks and money handbags. It's all here. Verse 22.

I'm not imagining things. It's all here in verse 22. Handbags.

Verse 23. The hand mirrors which are inside those handbags. And the turbans and the veils.

You think this prophet has only got time to talk about all these type of things. Is God interested in the way a young sister dresses? He certainly is. He certainly is.

That it must be modest. And you know not showing off their body. And they must be simple.

And not with the purpose of attracting men. That's the most important thing. Daughters of Zion.

New Testament also speaks about that. Paul says he was another prophet. He says I want the women to be dressed with sobriety.

Modestly and decently. So I just mentioned this. You can imagine how all the women got so mad.

That's why they finally saw Isaiah and said get rid of this man. He's talking about all this type of stuff. Don't think that the prophets speak what all the other preachers preach.

The other preachers are diplomatic. They don't want to offend the men. Don't want to offend the rich men.

Don't want to offend the sisters. But prophets speak what God wants them to speak. And that's why they're not popular.

It's good to study these prophets because you see what type of men they were. And as I said I want to give you a little foretaste. I mean a little appetizer for you to go through Isaiah yourself.

Chapter 4 speaks of the millennium where Jesus is called in verse 2 the branch of the Lord. And one day here's a wonderful promise for these daughters of Zion. These very daughters of Zion who are like this.

Verse 4. The time will come when the Lord will wash away the filth of these daughters of Zion. He says this is all filth. It's the spirit of the world.

It may look like perfume but it's filth. Because it's the spirit of the world that's got into the dressing habits of these sisters. And when the Lord cleanses it all away by the spirit of judgment.

Verse 4. And the spirit of burning. If there is one thing that's required in the church of Jesus Christ in India today is this. The spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning.

And then verse 3. Everyone that's left in Zion will be called holy. Everyone that's recorded for life whose name is written in the book of life in Jerusalem. And then the Lord will create over the whole area of Mount Zion.

Over all the churches. Assemblies means churches. A cloud like the pillar of cloud.

And the pillar of fire. And over all the glory. This is what I like to see.

Verse 5. Over all the glory will be a covering. You know just like the tabernacle. There was a glory inside.

But the whole thing was covered with this dirty ugly covering. So the Lord says the church also there'll be a glory. But the glory will be covered so people won't see it.

The glory will be inside. And there will be a shelter. Verse 6. Protection.

Inside the church there's a protection from the heat of the world. In chapter 5. He speaks six woes. Woes is like a curse.

Like Jesus used to say. Woe unto you. Woe unto you.

Woe unto you. We read six woes from verse 8 to verse 22 of chapter 5. I'll just tell you briefly what they are. First of all a woe against those who are keeping on buying property in covetousness.

Exploiting poor people. Verse 8. And then there is a woe on those who indulge in sensual pleasure. Verse 11.

You know. Feasting all the time. No fasting.

Etc. And then there is a woe on those who defy God openly. Verse 18.

Who drag iniquity with cords of falsehood. Verse 20. Those who don't separate evil from good.

Verse 21. Those who feel that we are very intelligent. We know everything.

Verse 21. Clever in their own sight. And six.

A woe on those who drink and take bribes. Verse 23. To justify a rich wicked person against someone who doesn't give him a bribe.

It's against unrighteousness. Against indiscipled eating and drinking. And covetousness and possessiveness.

Exploiting the poor. And mixing up evil and good and saying it doesn't matter. Who don't separate the evil from the good.

What a need there is for us today. When you read a book. When you watch a television program.

Separating the evil from the good. Don't lump it all together. Prophets spoke about these things very clearly.

Now we come to chapter 6. Which I said is the central chapter of this section. In the year that King Uzziah died. I saw the Lord sitting on a throne high and lifted up.

And there were six seraphs. Seraphim is just the plural of seraph. There were six seraphs.

Sorry. Seraphs. There were a number of seraphs.

But each seraph had six wings. And it's very interesting for us to see. What they used these six wings for.

We saw in Deuteronomy. That verse with Jesus quoted to Satan. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God.

And then thou shalt serve him. There are seraphs also. Worship.

And serve. But the interesting thing is. They used four wings to worship.

And two wings to serve. This is the balance. It's not 3-3.

It's not 50%-50%. We must be more worshippers. Than servers.

And the more effective our worship is. The better our service will be. Worship means devotion to Christ.

It's not just singing. It's more than singing praise and thanksgiving. Worship.

Recognizing his holiness. Recognizing his greatness. Bowing down before him.

Acknowledging that he is Lord of Lords. And King of Kings. That Satan is being defeated.

Etc. And the more we worship. The better we can serve.

And it's very interesting to see. That they covered their faces. These seraphs who have never sinned in their life.

Cannot see the holiness of God. Don't think lightly of the holiness of God. And that's why we should think of it as a tremendous privilege.

That we can come before him. Cleansed in the blood of Jesus Christ. And when Isaiah saw this.

The holiness of heaven. The greatness of heaven. This man.

Who said. Woe unto this person. Suddenly says.

Verse 5. Woe unto me. See this is always what happens. When we see the glory of God.

We see the wrongs in other people. And that's right. Isaiah did not say one wrong thing in chapter 5. It is all scripture.

But it was necessary for him. As a prophet. Who prophesied about the sins of other people.

Also to get before God. And see the sin in himself. It's necessary for every prophet and preacher.

Who stands in the pulpit. And points out the sin of the congregation. After that to go home.

And get before God. And see the sin in his own self. Otherwise he'll be a backslider himself.

Many preachers don't do that. They find great delight in pointing out. Woe unto this.

Woe unto this group. Woe unto that group. Woe unto the group.

And then go home. And they don't go before the God. They don't go before the Lord.

They don't see his holiness. They never say. Woe is unto me.

They never say like Paul said in Romans 7. Oh wretched man that I am. Oh wretched man that I am. Romans 7.24. In my flesh.

Romans 7.18. There dwells no good thing. That's what Paul said. So a true servant of God.

Is one who pronounces judgment. On the sin of others. But then goes and sees.

The corruption in his own nature. Verse 5. And he's particularly concerned about his tongue. Lord I'm a man of unclean lips.

So he has here a vision of the throne. And then of the altar. We need to be.

Struck down to the dust. With a vision of God's holiness. And then we need to be lifted up.

Because the blood from the altar has cleansed us. Here it was a coal. Verse 6. Here's the altar.

You need to see the throne and the altar. All the time in your life. Throughout the end of your life.

You need to see the throne of God. And the altar on Calvary. Never lose a vision of both of these.

And that burning coal from the altar. It says came and touched his lips. And cleansed.

Your sin is forgiven. You need to hear that voice. You need to hear that this.

This sin that you have discovered. In the holiness of God. Is cleansed.

Completely and forgiven. Only then can you go out to serve. Then the Lord says.

Verse 8. Whom shall I send? Who will go for us? And he said. Here am I. Verse 8. Send me. You know.

You can't go. If God doesn't send you. If you go without God sending you.

Then you're going to have a lot of problems. A lot of people have gone out to serve the Lord in India. Without God sending them.

Some man has sent them. Some organization has sent them. Yeah.

That's second best. You can do a lot. But it's nothing like God sending you.

A deep conviction. That God has sent me here. The confirmation may come through men.

God called Saul and Barnabas. The confirmation came through other prophets. We read in Acts 13.

But God must call us. It's God saying. I want to send someone.

You say Lord. Here am I. And then the Lord must say. Verse 9. Go.

Go. Tell these people. Here is your commission.

This is your message. Is God still the same living God today as he was in Isaiah's time? This is old covenant. We are in the new covenant.

The Holy Spirit is poured out. Can dwell in our hearts. We don't have to hear him with our ears.

But we can hear him in our hearts. I've never heard the Lord speaking physically. You know audibly in my ear.

I've never seen. With my eyes an angel or the Lord or anything. But I see him so clearly in my heart.

And I've heard him so clearly in my heart in the last 40 years. And then the Lord gave him a very difficult commission. Go and tell these people.

Strong message. Their hearts are insensitive. Their ears are dull.

This is the verse that Jesus quoted. When he was explaining why he spoke in parables in Matthew 13 15. He quoted from Isaiah.

So what do we see here? A vision of God. A vision of self. A vision of grace that forgives us.

A vision of service. That we can do for the Lord. And finally a vision of fruit in verse 13.

There will be a holy seed that comes forth from this terribly corrupt nation. There will be a remnant as a result of your service. In chapter 7 we have this wonderful promise about the birth of Jesus.

And Mary giving birth to Jesus in verse 14. Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Verse 14.

Behold a virgin will be with child and bear a son. And she will call his name Emmanuel. This is the prophecy in the Old Testament.

That a virgin, an unmarried woman without having any relations with a man would have a son. Because the Holy Spirit would come upon her. And the name of that child would be Emmanuel meaning God with us.

And that verse is quoted in the New Testament as we know in Matthew 1 verse 23. And I don't want to go into details of all the other things here. There is much here which we can think about.

But I want to go on to chapter 8. In chapter 8 here is a wonderful verse. The last part of verse 12 and the first part of verse 13. It's talking to the remnant of God's people.

Who are terrified with the armies that are coming, joining up to fight against them. And I believe that's a very relevant word for us in India today. When we face the enemies of the Lord who are attacking God's people in different parts of this land.

The Lord says in verse 12 last part. You are not to fear what they fear. But He, verse 13, shall be your fear.

This is quoted in 1 Peter chapter 3 verse 14 and 15. Now, I really love the Living Bible paraphrase of this. Which says, putting these two verses together.

If you fear God, you need fear nothing else. For more than 25 years, I have this verse in my front room of my house. A huge wall text.

That has encouraged me for 25 years. It's there facing me every time I enter my house. If you fear God, you need fear nothing else.

And I thank God for the encouragement. We have it in our church. Right in front there.

In front of the pulpit. If you fear God, you need fear nothing else. It's encouraged me not to be afraid of men.

It's encouraged me not to be afraid of circumstances. And it's encouraged me to fear the one person I should fear. God.

Jesus said, I'll tell you whom you should fear. Fear the one who can cast both body and soul into hell. But don't fear the ones who can only touch your body.

But Jesus was saying the same thing, I believe, based on this verse. If you fear God, you don't need to fear anything else. And I believe that's a word that all of us will need to hear.

From the Lord speaking to us in the days to come. Verse 18. Which is also quoted in the New Testament in Hebrews 2.13. Referring to Jesus and us.

Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given me. Are for a sign and a wonder in Israel. I believe that should apply to us as a family.

That we bring up our children in such a way. That we are different. Our children are different from the other children in school.

They don't know how to talk about the latest movie. Because they don't watch the latest movie. They don't know anything about the film stars.

Because they don't know about the film stars. They are different. We are a sign and a wonder.

Unfortunately, that dividing line. Which is there between believers and unbelievers. Is gradually being broken down by the devil.

So, Isaiah said, I and my children are signs and wonders. Also our church. A leader and his church is like I and my children.

Should be like signs and wonders in the land. Different from all the others. We move on to chapter 9. There is a verse here in verse 2. Which is quoted in Matthew 4.16. The people who walk in darkness.

Referring to the time when Jesus went to Galilee. Will see a great light. It's God's will for us also.

That wherever we go. The people who sit in darkness will see a great light. Another important verse is verse 6 and 7. Referring to Jesus being given to us.

A child will be born to us. A son given. His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God.

Father of Eternity. It's not confused with God the Father. Eternal Father means Father of Eternity.

Prince of Peace. Now the interesting thing I want you to notice here. Which I believe has been a great help to me also.

Through the many years of my ministry. Is this expression in the middle of verse 6. The government will rest upon his shoulder. In the many years, in the many churches that we have planted through these years.

We have faced many, many problems in these churches. Like we have problems with growing children. And whenever there has been a problem.

And I don't know the answer. I don't know how to solve it. Particularly in the early years.

It's just the same today. Even though we have got more wisdom. We still say the same thing.

I fall on my face before God. And I say Lord. This is not my work.

This is your work. I'm only a servant. You tell me what to do.

I'll do it. This is not my church. It's your church.

These are not my churches. They are your churches. The government will be on your shoulder.

The responsibility is yours. I'm not the proprietor of this business. This is your business.

I'm only a servant of yours. You tell me what to do. How to solve this problem.

I'll do it. If you want to close down this church. Close it down.

It's your business. Proprietor has got every right to close down a shop. I'm not going to keep the doors open.

If the Lord wants to shut it. So many people are trying to keep something open. Which God wanted to shut down long ago.

Because the government is on their shoulder. They have to somehow run this organization forever and ever and ever. I say I'm ready to close down anything.

Once God says. Okay. The life has gone out of that.

Close it down. Work somewhere else. So remember.

The government will be upon his shoulder. That has brought great rest into my life. That the responsibility is not mine.

However much it is. God takes the responsibility. Please remember that verse.

In your ministry. Chapter 10. Speaks of the destruction of Assyria.

Which is a type of the Antichrist. And. Verse 12.

I will punish the fruit of the proud heart of the king of Assyria. There's one verse which I want to point out to you here. Verse 27.

The last part. In the King James Version. The translation is.

The yoke will be broken. By. Destroyed by the anointing.

The yoke will be destroyed by the anointing. Fatness means. Oil.

Oil. Fatness. Oil refers to anointing.

The yoke will be broken. Because of the anointing oil. Or the anointing.

And that's very true. That is the anointing of the Holy Spirit. That breaks the yoke of sin in our life.

And that breaks the yoke of the devil. That is put upon. Our home or our church.

In contrast to the Antichrist pictured in chapter 10. We have. The Christ.

In chapter 11. In chapter 11. We have the root that comes from the.

Stem of Jesse. The spirit of the Lord will rest upon him. The sevenfold Holy Spirit.

Mentioned in Revelation. Is seen here as spirit of wisdom. Understanding.

Counsel. Strength. Knowledge.

Fear of the Lord. And the spirit of the Lord. First of all.

The spirit of the Lord. Spirit of wisdom. Understanding.

Counsel. Strength. Knowledge.

And the fear of the Lord. Sevenfold Holy Spirit. Verse 3. The fear of the Lord makes him so sensitive.

That he will never judge by what his eyes see. Or his ears hear. Jesus is our example.

That we should never judge any person. Or any circumstance. By what our eyes see.

Or our ears hear. But we seek the Lord to give us discernment. Through the Holy Spirit.

To judge. In that situation. And.

Then the time comes in the millennium. Verse 6. Where the lion. And the wolf.

And the lamb. Verse 6. Will lie down together. When Christ comes again.

And the little child. Will lead them. It says here.

A little child. Is going to be the leader. Word.

Last part of verse 6. Now. I apply this also to the church. Verse 6 and 7. It's going to be literally true.

One day. When Christ comes to this earth. And sets up his millennial reign.

And we'll come back to God. And if he didn't conditions on this earth. But spiritually speaking.

It's already true in the church. The brother who's like a wolf. Can now.

Fellowship with the brother who's like a lamb. They don't eat. One doesn't try to eat the other up.

That's the way it should be. The leopard. Can lie down with a kid goat.

There's no fighting. And who's the leader of this church? Who? The one who is most like a little child. Like Jesus said.

The greatest in God's kingdom. Is a little child. Okay.

Then we. Move on to. Chapter 12.

It's a beautiful verse here. God is my salvation. Verse 2. Verse 3. With joy.

I will draw water from the springs of salvation. Here is a song of joy. And verse 6. Cry aloud and shout for joy.

For only one reason. Because the one in the midst of you. The holy one of Israel is great.

Now chapter 13. On to chapter. 23.

Three. Is burdens. Related to many many nations.

In fact it goes on to chapter 27. Basically up to chapter 23. And then.

After that up to chapter 35. Is prophecies of judgment and blessing. So chapter 13.

Is about Babylon. Fallen. Which is a picture of what's going to happen in Revelation.

Chapter. 17 and 18. And.

In chapter 14. It continues. With the fall of.

Babylon. And in chapter 14. We see who the king of Babylon is.

This whole religious system called Babylon. Isaiah speaks of Babylon and Jerusalem. We've seen that theme starting with Genesis.

Goes on and you see it here also. Isaiah speaks about Babylon. Isaiah speaks later on in the latter part about Jerusalem.

Who is the ruler of Babylon? The one who was once in heaven. Verse 12. Chapter 14.

12. Lucifer. Star of the morning.

Who said in his heart. Notice the five times he said. I will.

I will. I will. I will.

This is how he became the devil. Verse 13 and 14. I will.

I will. I will. I will.

I will. That's how sin came. Sin came.

When a created being said. I will. And salvation came.

When Jesus came to earth and said. Not as I will. But as thou wilt in the garden of Gethsemane.

Remember that all your life. Whenever you say I will. That's the beginning of sin.

Whenever you say to God. Not as I will. But as thou wilt.

That's the way of the cross. The cross is. To take up the cross everyday.

Means to cut out this. I will. Not as I will.

All through his life. Jesus said. In John 6.38. I came from heaven.

Not to do my own will. Because that's the opposite of Lucifer. All of us are following.

Either Lucifer or Christ. That is how Babylon is built. I will.

I'm gonna do this. So please remember that. That's how Babylon is built.

And then chapter 15 to 21. We have prophecies against Moab. Damascus.

Another country. Egypt. Ethiopia.

Edom. Arabia. Tyre.

And in chapter 19. Verse 24 and 25. We have a beautiful picture.

Of the day when the Jews and Gentiles. Will be united together. When people from Egypt.

And people from Assyria. Verse 25. And people from Israel.

Will all be one together. In one church. Is a prophecy about that future time.

When the church is built. And Isaiah 20. We read about the time.

When the Lord asked Isaiah. To walk in his shorts. Underwear.

Without any external cloak. And barefoot. To show how the people of Israel.

Would be taken captive. In chapter 22. We read of.

People. Verse 13. This is quoted also.

In the New Testament. Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die. People who don't think of eternity.

In verses 15. To 25. We read of two people.

One is. The finance minister of Hezekiah. Who was a man called Shebna.

Who is a picture of the antichrist. A greedy selfish man. And in contrast to that.

Verse 20 to 24. Eliakim. A godly man.

Who is a picture of Christ. Who is called in verse 25. A nail in a sure place.

A peg driven in a firm place. A picture of Christ. In chapter 23.

We have the destruction of Tyre. Another city. In chapter 21.

We read about the earth. Being destroyed. And the final destruction.

Verse 21 to 23. Of demons. The hosts of heaven will be punished.

24 to 21. In chapter 25. Verse 8 and 9. We see about how death itself will be swallowed up one day.

Speaking of the resurrection. Chapter 25. Verse 8. And in chapter 26.

There is a lovely verse. Verse 3. Which is a very good verse for all of us to take to heart. God will keep in perfect peace.

Those whose minds are stayed on him. And. A verse that we can say to the Lord.

Verse 13. Lord, other masters have ruled us before. But from now on.

Only you will rule us. In verse 19. There is a prophecy of resurrection.

Your dead will rise. And those who lie in the dust. Will come back to life.

And for a little time. There is going to be punishment. Verse 20 and 21.

A time of tribulation. But then the Lord will come from his place. The second coming of the Lord.

Verse 21. Chapter 27. Speaks of prophetically of the destruction of the fleeing serpent.

Satan. And the vineyard of the Lord being restored. Chapter 28.

Speaks. There are verses here that are quoted in the New Testament. For example.

Verse 11. Is quoted in 1 Corinthians 14. As a prophecy.

About the time when people will speak in tongues. Which is fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. It's quoted in 1 Corinthians 14.

It's from this passage. It speaks in verse 16. About the cornerstone.

Which is Jesus. Which is going to be laid. In the final.

For the church in the future. And a beautiful verse. End of verse 16.

Chapter 28. Those who believe in this cornerstone. Will never be shaken.

Or disturbed. They will be solidly founded. Chapter 29.

Speaks of Jerusalem. It's backslidden. But it says one day.

The Lord will. Still pour out his spirit on it. And.

When the spirit is poured out. The. It will become like a fertile field.

Verse 17. And then we move on to chapter 30. Where.

Verse 9 and 10. The people tell the prophets and seers. Don't prophesy the truth to us.

Speak pleasant words to us. Don't tell us about the Holy One of Israel. The same word we find today.

People telling preachers. But the Lord. Waits for these people.

To repent. Verse 15 to 18. Is a beautiful picture of how.

He invites them to repent. And verse 18 it says. The Lord is waiting to show grace to you.

If you will turn to him. And when you turn to him. Verse 20 and 21.

You will see your teacher. Jesus. You will hear the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 21. When you go astray. Leading you to the right path.

And then it speaks about the antichrist. Being cast in hell. In verse 33.

Tofet is another word for hell. Chapter 31. Refers to a curse on those who go to man for help.

Those who go to Egypt for help. Chapter 32. Speaks about the coming king.

About the coming reign of Christ. And many good verses there. That speak about Jesus.

Chapter 33. Is something very good here. In verse 14 to 16.

Who can dwell with God? Who can dwell with a consuming fire? Those who walk righteously. And speak with sincerity. But sinners are terrified.

And hypocrites tremble. In God's presence. Chapter 34.

Speaks of the Lord's vengeance. Against the nations. Chapter 35.

Verse 8. Speaks of the new covenant. And the highway. Verse 8. The highway of holiness.

Verse 10. The ransomed will walk. And then the next four chapters.

36 to 39. Is a historical section. Of a time when Hezekiah was sick.

And I told you about that. And he was. He made the mistake.

Of showing all his riches. To the Babylonians. And thus lost.

All his riches. We covered that in. When we looked in Chronicles and Kings.

So thus we finish the first section. Of the book of Isaiah. And now.

We will pray. Heavenly Father. As we.

Have looked through this wonderful book. That shows us about the throne of God. The holy one of Israel.

And the holy one in the church. Help us to. See that vision ourselves.

To be stirred by it. And to be your mouthpieces in this generation. We ask in Jesus name.

Amen.

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