

INTRODUCTION TO ISAIAH: Old Familiar Challenges, New Hopes and Dreams

“The one whom in their unfathomable audacity the prophets claimed to speak for was the Lord and Creator of the universe. There is no evidence to suggest that anyone ever asked a prophet home for supper more than once.” (F. Buechner)

OVERVIEW of ISAIAH STUDY:

Jan 4:	Introduction-Background-Call
Jan 11:	“First” <i>Isaiah</i>
Jan 18:	“Second” & “Third” <i>Isaiah</i>
Jan 25:	Messianic Themes in <i>Isaiah</i>
Feb 1:	<i>Isaiah</i> in the New Testament

TODAY’S CLASS:

1. *Isaiah’s Context in Ancient History*
2. *The (three part) Book of Isaiah*
3. *Isaiah’s Call (Isaiah 6)*
4. Small Groups – *Isaiah Verses for a New Year*

ISAIAH IN THREE VOICES:

- 1) “First Isaiah” (chapters 1-39)**
 - Judah at the time of Israel’s destruction (740-700 BC)
- 2) “Second Isaiah” (chapters 40-66)**
 - Judah 50 years after being destroyed by Babylon, in exile but now about to return to Jerusalem and be restored (540-520 BC)
- 3) “Third” Isaiah (chapters 55-66)**
 - Early days of exiles returned in Jerusalem -- still awaiting a *great* restoration

I KINGS 8: THE HOLY OF HOLIES

“Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, ...before King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David....⁶ Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the Lord to its place, in the inner sanctuary of the house, the most holy place, underneath the wings of the cherubim. ..so that the cherubim made a covering above the ark and its poles.

⁹ There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone that Moses had placed there at Horeb, where the Lord made a covenant with the Israelites when they came out of the land of Egypt. ¹⁰ **And when the priests came out of the holy place, a cloud filled the house of the Lord, ¹¹ so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord.”**

ISAIAH 6: ISAIAH’S CALL

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty, and the hem of his robe filled the temple. ² Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. ³ And one called to another and said,

**“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory.”**

The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. ⁵ And I said, “Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”

⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. ⁷ The seraph touched my mouth with it and said, **“Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.”**

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!”**