

Power Hour Lesson Summary for July 9, 2017

“Isaiah”

Lesson Text: Isaiah 6:1-8

Background Scripture: Isaiah 6

Devotional Reading: Isaiah 66:18-23

Isaiah 6:1-8 (NIV)

¹In 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. ²Above 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. ³And they were calling to one another:

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

⁴At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

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.”

⁶Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”

⁸Then 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!”

TODAY’S LESSON AIMS

Learning Facts: To list the circumstances of Isaiah’s call.

Biblical Principle: To explain Isaiah’s initial reaction to what he saw and heard at his call.

Daily Application: To live a life pleasing to God.

INTRODUCTION

Wash Up!

What do you expect of a cook at your favorite restaurant? Should the person have experience as a cook, know the basics of food preparation, and follow recipes? Of course. But there is an even more basic expectation you have of your chef: clean hands!

Any business that deals with preparing food must be extremely conscientious about maintaining high standards of cleanliness. For example, no one would want to eat at a restaurant if news surfaced that a customer there found evidence that such standards had in some way been violated. In restrooms at restaurants, one will see the omnipresent sign that reads, “Employees must wash hands before returning to work.”

Almost any job requires a person be qualified in some way to do it. But what qualifies a person to be a prophet of the Most High God? One might conclude that such a servant of God would need to meet a long list of qualifications. As we consider Isaiah’s call to be a prophet, we may be surprised to learn that

a standard that applied to him as a deliverer of spiritual food is similar to what we expect of those who prepare physical food: cleanliness. Let's review the call of this great prophet.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Time: about 739 B.C.

Place: Jerusalem

Isaiah received his call to be a prophet approximately 200 years after the nation of Israel separated into two kingdoms in 931 B.C.: Israel (the northern kingdom) and Judah (the southern kingdom). Isaiah was living when the northern kingdom fell to the Assyrians in 722 B.C., but his primary ministry was to the southern kingdom of Judah. (The kings mentioned in Isaiah 1:1 are all kings of Judah.)

The life of Isaiah illustrates the wide range of circumstances in which a prophet of the Lord could find himself as he carried out his mission. He served the Lord during the reign of one of Judah's most wicked kings (Ahaz) as well as during the reign of one of Judah's best (Ahaz's godly son, Hezekiah). In fact, Isaiah's counsel guided Hezekiah during an Assyrian invasion that threatened the southern kingdom in 701 B.C. (Isaiah 37:5-7, 21-35). Hezekiah prayed to the Lord in trusting faith (37:14-20), and Judah was spared the onslaught that had befallen the northern kingdom of Israel 21 years earlier.

The fact that the call of Isaiah is not found until Isaiah 6 causes some to wonder why it is not recorded closer to the book's beginning, as is the case with Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:4-19) and Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1:1-3:15). Some suggest that Isaiah's call actually did precede his messages, but the account of the call is placed in chapter 6 to make a specific and important point. The messages in the first five chapters explain why a prophet like Isaiah was so desperately needed to confront God's people. The fifth chapter in particular elaborates on what has happened to a people originally called by God to be "a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6). Isaiah 5 features a word picture of a vineyard to describe both the Lord's care for His people and His disappointment that they had not produced the desired crop (Isaiah 5:1-7).

What Do You Think?

- What are some ways to manifest personal holiness as befitting our holy God?
- What should others see in Christians who claim to be answering God's call?

POINTS TO PONDER

1. A great king may have left his throne on earth, but the greatest King was still seated on the throne of heaven. According to John 12:41, this was the Lord Jesus Christ. (Isaiah 6:1a)
2. All the glory belongs to God. (Isaiah 6:1b-4)
3. We must acknowledge our sin, and be cleansed so we can be an example to others. (Isaiah 6:5)
4. Only God can cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (Isaiah 6:6, 7)
5. Always be ready to answer God's call. (Isaiah 6:8b)

CONCLUSION

Surprised by Holiness

The edge that spiritual words are meant to possess can be dulled with misuse. Without thinking, we may utter insipid interjections such as “Holy mackerel!” We may refer to a misbehaving child as “a holy terror,” etc.

Isaiah’s vision of the holy God had an intensity that we will probably never experience in this earthly life. The intensity of his experience will be further diminished for us as we misuse the word holy. The holiness of God must be understood in an absolute sense. That understanding was what caused Isaiah to be utterly dismayed by his own lack of holiness.

To take a nonchalant view of one’s own unholiness probably indicates a failure to understand what it means to be holy. We know that “God is love” (1 John 4:8, 16). Do we also know that God is “holy, holy, holy”?

PRAYER

Father, help us each day to examine ourselves for unholiness that may interfere with saying, “Here am I; send me.” We pray this in the name of Jesus, the Lord of all holiness. Amen.

THOUGHT TO REMEMBER

May Isaiah’s vision of a holy God leave us wholly committed to Him.

ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON

Next week’s lesson is “**Jeremiah**” where we learn that God give us all we need to accomplish His purpose. Study Jeremiah 1:4-10.