

1. Isaiah - Man with a Mission

Introduction

As with all prophecy, the prophet is not the important thing, rather the message they bring, and what it reveals about God. However, having some understanding of the context, historical background and individuals involved give us helpful clues as we read. Much Old Testament prophecy is bewildering for us today if we don't understand the events they address, so this study is an introduction to the man Isaiah and the situation he found himself in to help us better understand what he saw, spoke and wrote.

To start with:

- Describe in one sentence your 'mission' for your life. (Try to be honest not just holy!) Share them in pairs. How did you find doing that? Why?

Isaiah - the Man

Isaiah's name means 'Yahweh will save' and ??? writers held that he was the cousin of King Uzziah.

1. From the following references what can you deduce about Isaiah? (You might want to divide them up around the group & feedback to save time)
 - Is 1.1
 - Is 6.1
 - Is 7.1-7
 - Is 8.3-4
 - Is 37.1-7
 - 2 Chronicles 26.22
2. How might some of these facts be pertinent in understanding his ministry & writings?

Isaiah - Historical Background

Isaiah's ministry began in 740BC and lasted for nearly 60 years through the reign of 3 kings of Judah. During that time the nation of Israel was conquered by the Assyrians and taken into exile (722BC).

3. What do the following episodes reveal about the political situation of the nation of Judah?
 - Isaiah 7.1-7
 - Isaiah 36.1-2 & 36.13-37.1
4. What does Isaiah 5 tell us about the social, moral and religious state of God's people at the time & God's attitude towards it? (You might want to divide it among the group for times sake)
5. How would you feel about being God's prophet in a time and place such as this?

Isaiah's Mission

6. Isaiah's 'calling' in Chapter 6 is one of the most well known passages in the whole book. What does it suggest to you about:
 - a. Isaiah's motives for his ministry?
 - b. How he faithfully brought difficult words from God for 60 years to a faithless society?

God often chooses people with backgrounds and experience that equips them to do something specific for him. (Isaiah, Moses, David, Peter, Paul etc.)

7. How do you think YOUR background, culture, and experiences might make you useful to God?
8. What do you need to ask God for / personally do to sustain your service for him?

Reflect and Pray

- Praise God that he doesn't ever give up on us - even when times are dark and we are faithless!
- Pray for each other as you try to work out and faithfully follow God's plans with your life
- Ask him for the things/ revelation you feel you need in order to do that.