

Lessons 14-17

The Constant Presence of our Greatest Problem

The best preparation for the study of the gospel is neither great intellectual ability nor much scholastic learning but a conscience impressed with a sense of our actual condition as sinners in the sight of God. A deep conviction of sin is the one thing needful in such an inquiry, a conviction of the fact of sin, as an awful reality in our personal experience of the power of sin as an inveterate evil cleaving to us continually, and having its root deep in the innermost recesses of our hearts. (19th cen Scottish Theologian James Buchanan)

As we now begin to transition in our study from **who God is** to **what God has done**, it is imperative for us to remind ourselves and grow deeper in our humble assessment of our wretched state (both past and present) as rebellious sinners. Therefore, this series of questions will further prepare you for a better understanding of the riches of God's all satisfying grace and the overwhelming nature of His undeserved mercy given through the gospel.

1. Read Isa 6:1-7 and consider the response of Isaiah in verse 5 where he says "Woe is me!" Why does he say this?

Is there anything in verses 1-4 that implicates Isaiah in any wrong doing?

Now consider what it was that Isaiah saw. Look at verses 1-2 and list out what he saw and explain what it meant. Example: He saw the Lord upon a throne! What did that mean and declare to Isaiah?

Also, as you consider this find out the significance of when this happened as being "In the year Uzziah died" and how that helps highlight some of what Isaiah saw.

Next consider what he heard in verse 3. Who was speaking and in what manner were they speaking and what were the implications of their declaration? Hint: What are the implications of "the whole earth is full of his glory!"?

Contemplate what he felt and subsequently saw and probably smelt in verse 4 as the "house filled with smoke." What house is he referring to here? Isaiah saw, heard, felt, and smelled something that moved him at the core of his being. What was it that did this to Isaiah?

Now, grapple with these most important questions...

~ What does Isaiah mean when he says "Woe is me!"? What does/did the word "woe" mean especially in that day and age?

Look back at chapter 5 and consider how many times he says “woe” in that chapter. Who is he speaking to and what is he saying?

Consider the clear description given in verse 24 and scary ramification deserved in verse 25. Is there a connection between Isaiah and his people in who they are?

Explain and consider what that says about Isaiah especially since he was a man of God and a man of affluence. Look up Jer 4:13 and consider the “woe” and how it is used. What is the cause of this “Woe” in Jeremiah 4:13 and what is the only solution as declared in verse 14? Any similarities to Isa 6?

~ What does Isaiah mean when he says he is a “lost” or “undone” man? You might want to look at Isa 15:1 and the Hebrew word for “lost/undone” is used in that verse.

Also look up Psalm 49:12,20 where the same verse is repeated using the Hebrew word for “lost” or “undone” though translated a little differently see if you can pick out what word it is? Also consider the applicability of this verse to what we are looking at in Isa 6!

~ Now, consider what Isaiah means by describing himself as a man of “unclean lips.” What does that word mean in biblical language? Think back to the Torah and ask yourself if anything unclean was ever allowed in the presence of God!

Remember what God said in Ex19-20 about the people “consecrating themselves” getting themselves ready to meet with him on the mountain! Read Leviticus 10:10 and then look at the context and see what happens when people enter God’s presence in an unclean manner!

Next read Leviticus 13:45-46 and consider what a “leprous person” would have to say to those who came near and where the leper was to live.

Have you ever wondered how Uzziah died? What did he have and how did he get it? See 2 Chronicles 26 especially verse 16-23! What did Uzziah fail to see?

Notice it was not what he did that was his demise but how responded when confronted with his sin!

Do you see the danger of failing to have humble view of self (Rom 12:3)?

Finally, read this most famous verse in Isa 64:6 where the same Hebrew word of “unclean” is used and consider the uncleanness of your life! If you have any doubts read further into verse 7! Sounds a lot like Rom 3:9-18! How does verse 18 of Romans 3 end?

All of this has provoked some people to see Isaiah here calling himself a “moral leper.” I think that about says it all for all of us! Have you ever saw yourself as a leper morally? That is when it comes to the things of God and His Word being a totally unclean person unworthy to be around God or His people...a moral leper!

Memory Verse: Jeremiah 17:9