



SESSION SNAPSHOT

A DIVINE ENCOUNTER

NARRATIVE PASSAGE:

Isaiah 6:1-13

GOSPEL FOCUS:

Matthew 13:11-15

TAKEAWAYS:

- Worship is the posture of the heart, not just the praise of your lips
- When was the last time you marveled over Jesus?

LAST WEEK'S READING:

- Isaiah 6; 9
- Isaiah 44-45
- Isaiah 52-53
- Isaiah 65-66
- Micah 1; 4:6-13; 5

KNOW THE WORD

PASSAGE OVERVIEW

Isaiah was one of the longest-working prophets in the Old Testament, with a ministry that spanned about sixty years. The things that He said usually succeeded only in making people mad, but that's the call of a prophet: speak God's Word no matter how it's received. The chapter we will explore today recounts how he came to respond to the call that would carry him the rest of his life.

COMMENTARY AND STUDY MATERIALS

- 1:1 "In the year that King Uzziah died" is a brief phrase, but one that carries enormous, poignant weight. King Uzziah is recorded in 2 Chronicles 26 and 2 Kings 15, and was known as a king who did what was right in the sight of the Lord. He was a good king, but his prosperity brought pride, as well. Because of his pride, he profaned the altar of the Lord and was struck with leprosy; he lived with leprosy for the rest of his life and died alone and broken. "In the year that King Uzziah died" is another way to say, "In the year a great and wise king who met a tragic end died..."
- v.2 Notice the ratio of the Seraphim's wings. They have six of them; 4 are used to express their humility before God and 2 are used to show their actions for Him. Spurgeon wrote, "they have four wings for adoration and two for active energy; four to conceal themselves, and two with which to occupy themselves in service; and we may learn from them that we shall serve God best when we are most deeply reverend and humbled in his presence."
- v.8 Isaiah did not say, "Here I am, I will go." He said, "send me." This is a crucial difference for two reasons. First, he understands that he can do nothing unless he is sent. Second, he does not have any excuse for inaction. He's not waiting around idly; he's already written the check and placed his "yes" on the table.
- vv.9-10 It is difficult to hear that the Word of God will fall on deaf ears, but this is a message consistent with God's Word throughout Scripture. Peter wrote in 1 Peter 2:8 that Christ is a stone to stumble over, and a rock to trip over. It goes on to explain that those who stumble will do so because they disobey the message. It's what they were destined for. The message of the Gospel will be pure foolishness to those who are perishing. That is okay, for it is not up to us to change the hearts of men. We are to simply deliver God's message to anyone who will hear it.

STUDY THE WORD

In your opinion, what does it mean to worship?

When have you experienced worship the most strongly before?

Worship is one of the things that believers are called to do, but it isn't relegated to one action or another. Worship happens when you ascribe ultimate worth to something: it is the object of your affection, the thing that motivates everything you do, whether it is singing praises or talking with a neighbor.

In Isaiah 6, Isaiah experienced some of the truest worship through a divine encounter that will change the way we see and experience God.

OUT LOUD, READ ISAIAH 6:1-4

This encounter includes one of the most detailed pictures of the throne room of Heaven that we have in Scripture, apart from Revelation 4. As you read, try to imagine what Isaiah was witnessing and feeling.

Most people don't have experiences like the one that Isaiah is describing. But this isn't the only kind of experience with God that someone can have. Tell about a time you feel you experienced the presence of the Lord.

What kinds of things were you feeling in that moment?

How do moments like that affect the way you see God? The way you see yourself?

When we encounter God, it changes us. It alters our perspective. When we experience the presence of the Lord, all other aims seem to grow, as the hymn "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus" tells us, strangely dim. Seeing God and being called by Him is the ultimate trajectory shift of our lives.

Isaiah was about to learn that firsthand.

OUT LOUD, READ ISAIAH 6:5-8

Notice what Isaiah's response to seeing the presence of the Lord was. It instantly brought him the realization of who he was in relation to God: nothing at all. But God was going to use him regardless.

What stuck out to you about Isaiah's response to seeing the Lord's throne room?

How do you think we should approach His throne today? What are some practical ways we can do that?

When Isaiah saw the throne of God, he was overwhelmed with his own inadequacy. We can have such a tendency to approach the throne of God flippantly or filled with selfish requests, but the truth is that the more we are exposed to God, the more He exposes the things in us that are wicked. We see similar responses to Isaiah's in Job (Job 42:5-6), Daniel (Daniel 10:15-17), Peter (Luke 5:8), and John (Revelation 1:7).

OUT LOUD, READ ISAIAH 6:9-13 AND 1 CORINTHIANS 2:15-16

Notice how what Paul writes in 1 Corinthians echoes many of the themes we see in God's instruction in Isaiah 6:9-13. Sometimes, our words will fall on deaf ears. Sometimes they'll be met with hostility. That doesn't change the task: to go and tell.

How does the 1 Corinthians passage help illustrate what Isaiah's task was going to be like?

How is our mission similar to this?

How can the Word of God be "life" to some and "death" to others?

When you've shared the Word of God, how has it been received?

For those who accept Christ, His Gospel is the most glorious thing, for He is their salvation. For those who don't, however, that same Gospel is what will send them to judgment before a Holy God.

Isaiah's task was to take the Word of God to a people who were going to reject it outright. Jesus tasked His disciples with something similar in Luke 10:16, when He encouraged them by reminding rejection wasn't rejection of them, it was rejection of Christ. God is the only one who can change a person's heart; all we can do is speak what He has told us to speak.

We aren't responsible for the response that people will give us. We are, however, responsible for deliver the message that we've received.

Look back at Isaiah's "undoing" in verse 5. What was the outcome of that?

Share about a time when you, like Isaiah, came to the end of yourself to completely surrender to the Lord.

APPLY THE WORD

The moment Isaiah encountered the Lord, his “yes” was on the table. He didn’t know what he was signing up for, he didn’t know what kind of outcome it would produce, he didn’t even know if he’d be successful in whatever it was. All he knew is that he was there, and he would go.

Do you have a similar attitude?

Before you close your time in prayer, encourage those in your group to take a few minutes when you are done to answer the following and share updates next week:

Is your “yes” on the table like Isaiah’s was? How does that affect how you’ll live tomorrow?

Pray about a specific person in your life who needs to know Jesus. Pray for a divine appointment with that person this week.

PREPARE FOR NEXT WEEK

Next Week’s Reading:

- ***2 Kings 17-18***
- ***2 Kings 19-21***
- ***2 Kings 22-23***
- ***Jeremiah 1-3:5***
- ***Jeremiah 25; 29***