Explore the Bible Lesson Preview
September 13, 2020
“God Sends”
Background: Isaiah 5:1-6:13
Lesson: Isaiah 6:1-13

Motivation: Worship is one of the “hot button” issues in churches today, and the passage we will study is one of the more graphic pictures of worship in the entire Bible.

I. Contemplating Production (5:1-30)

A. Song of the Vineyard (5:1-7) The parable (song) of the Vineyard (Isa. 5:1-30) is a masterpiece of rhetorical skill. There is a tradition that Isaiah came disguised as a wandering minstrel and sang this at festivals. The main theme of the song is that the Lord did everything expected of a successful farmer yet the vineyard (Judah) produced wild grapes. The expected response of the farmer would be to abandon the vineyard (5-6).

1. Introduction “I will sing about the one I love, a song about my loved one’s vineyard” (1) The hearer would understand “loved one’s” as a reference to God.

2. Description of the Vineyard

a. Choice location “on a very fertile hill” (1b).

b. Cultivated “He broke up the soil, cleared it of stones” (2a).
c. Chosen vines “planted it with the finest vines” (2b)

d. Concrete plan “He built a tower in the middle of it, and even dug out a winepress there.” (2b).

e. Clear expectations “He expected it to yield good grapes” (2b).

3. Disappointing Results “but it yielded worthless grapes.” (2b) This is a major contrast between expectations and results.

a. Hard work resulted in disappointment. (4)

b. Protection was removed “Now I will tell you what I’m about do to My vineyard: I will remove its hedge, and it will be consumed; I will tear down its wall, and it will be trampled.” (5) Some well-known preachers referred to this example in post – 9/11 preaching.

c. Abandonment was the final result “I will make it a wasteland. It will not be pruned or weeded; thorns and briers will grow up. I will also give orders to the clouds that rain should not fall on it.” (6) “He looked for justice but saw injustice.” (7)

HCSB, p.1134, 5:7 “The last verse of the poem makes explicit the identification of the vineyard as the people of God. It also gives the explanation for their punishment by means of a wordplay. In the land there was injustice (Hb mispach) and not justice (Hb
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mishpat
),
cries of wretchedness
(Hb
tse’aqah
) and not righteousness (Hb
tse’daqah
).

B. Judgment of the Worldly (5:8-30) Woes are pronounced on various groups:

1. Greedy – Those who join “house to house” and “join field to field” (8) only want their land and all that borders it. The judgment of massive land devaluation is chronicled in verses 9-10.

2. Drunken – Those who “rise early in the morning in pursuit of beer” (11) “do not see the work of His hands.” (12) They will be taken into exile because they lack knowledge;
“her dignitaries are starving, and her masses are parched with thirst.” (13) It’s an interesting contrast between their desire for intoxicating drink and their resulting thirst. (Proverbs 31:4)

3. Proud - Her “dignitaries, her masses, her crowds, and those who carouse with her” shall descend into Sheol (14),
(Prov. 16:18). The arrogance of God’s people prevented them from repenting. Their judgment is recorded in vs. 15 “…haughty eyes are humbled.” (cf vs. 21)

4. Mockers “Woe to those who draw wickedness with cords of deceit, and drag sin along with cart ropes, saying, ‘Let Him hurry up and do His work quickly, so that we can
see it! Let the plan of the Holy One of Israel take place so that we can know it!’” (18-19) Those who mock God’s power receive severe judgment as illustrated by Elisha and the bears (II Kings 2:23-24). Jude records “in the end time there will be scoffers walking according to their own ungodly desires.” (18) Peter writes “First be aware of this: Scoffers will come in the last days to scoff, living according to their own desires,” (II Peter 3:3; Heb. 10:35-39).

HCSB, p.1135, 5:18-19 “The third woe begins by picturing people whose sins were so heavy that they ended up pulling it along in a cart behind them. Their sin was one of cynicism. With a tone of disbelief, they challenged God to act. In particular they might be thinking of God’s work of judgment. They sinned and did not yet see God’s punishment.”

Believer’s Study Bible, p. 928: 5:20, 21 “These verses paint a perfect picture of the ‘modern morality’ with its glossing over of evil, and its re-dressing of wickedness to give it the appearance of righteousness. This insensitivity to moral decay is the sign of deepest corruption. ‘Light’ and ‘darkness’ are symbols for ‘good’ and ‘evil’ (cf. 1 Sam. 2:9; 2 Sam. 22:29; Job. 29:3; Ps. 112:4; Prov. 2:13; Acts 26:18; Rom. 13:12). ‘Bitter’ is sometimes used of wickedness (Jer. 2:19; 4:18) and ‘sweet’ of good (Ps. 103; 109). According to the ‘modern morality,’ which is based on the principle of self-gratification, cheating is a way to prosperity, adultery only a casual pleasure, lying merely a means to an end, and homosexuality simply the result of a difference in body chemistry. There can appear no ‘modern morality,’ however, until God’s law, as it is found in the Scriptures, is pushed aside and discarded.”

6. Dishonest “who acquit the guilty for a bribe and deprive the innocent of justice.” (23) One who will “bear false witness” for a bribe is especially disgusting to God.
7. **God’s Judgment:** The “Lord’s anger” (25) is depicted as an all-consuming fire that will devour the dry grass and rottenness of Judah’s rejection and derision (24). The instrument of God’s judgment will be “distant nations” (26).

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**HCSB, p.1135, 5:26** “God will call for foreign armies to descend on His people. Though these armies are not mentioned by name, we know from later history that these nations were Assyria and Babylon. Notice that God would signal them with a whistle, and they would immediately respond. This illustrates God’s sovereign rule over the nations.”

**II. God’s Glory (6:1-4)**

“In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a high and lofty throne, and His robe filled the temple.

2 Seraphim were standing above Him; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.

3 And one called to another: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts; His glory fills the whole earth.

4 The foundations of the doorways shook at the sound of their voices, and the temple was filled with smoke.

5 Then I said: Woe is me for I am ruined because I am a man of unclean lips and live among a people of unclean lips, and because my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.

6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me, and in his hand was a glowing coal that he had taken from the altar with tongs.

(6:1-4)

**Believer’s Study Bible, p. 929: 6:1** “Isaiah apparently chose first to record the heart of his message and then to present his call to the prophetic ministry. This occurred c. 740 B.C. Isaiah experienced a theophany, i.e., an appearance of God, which is a temporary yet physical manifestation. The chief importance of the theophany is its revelation of God or its unfolding of a divine message, while its physical aspects are merely to enhance and authenticate the revelation. Isaiah did not see the physical form of God (John 1:18; 1 Tim. 6:16), but he experienced a manifestation of His glory in human form. Unlike a theophany, the ‘incarnation’ was a permanent, visible manifestation of God in Jesus Christ. Other examples of theophanies
include the appearances of the Angel of the Lord (Ex. 32:34; 33:14, 15), Moses confrontations with the Lord (Ex. 3:2-6; 19:18, 19; 33:23; 34:6, 7), and the visions of Jacob (Gen. 28:12-14; 32:22-30) and Ezekiel (Ezek. 1:26-28).” John 1:14

A. The Position of God “seated on a high and lofty throne” (1) When we put God in the right position (sovereign) then it’s easier to understand our correct position (submissive, obedient).

HCSB, p.1136, 6:1 “King Uzziah (called “Azariah” in 2 Kg 15:3) died about 740 B.C. He had been a relatively good king and did “what was right in the LORD’S sight” (2 Kg 15:3), though he did not remove the high places. God also blessed Uzziah’s reign with prosperity and military success. His death, coupled with the rise of Assyria, created great uncertainty in Judah. Note that God is so great that His robe (the Hb suggests just the seam of His robe) filled the temple.”

B. The Purity of God “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts” (3a)

Believer’s Study Bible, p. 929: 6:2 “Seraphim (Heb.) is the plural of seraph (lit. ‘burning ones’). From Isaiah’s description of them, it may be deduced that their function is to serve God, to worship Him, to reflect His glory, and to execute His will (v. 3; cf. Ezek. 10:20).”

6:3 “Repetition is the Hebrew way of expressing the superlative degree (cf. Song 1:1). ‘Holy’ (qodosh, Heb.) signifies the separation of God from sin. Also included is an emphasis upon God’s righteousness as contrasted to man’s sinfulness and unworthiness (v. 5). God’s ‘glory’ is the revelation of His presence and attributes (cf. Ex. 33:18).”

C. The Purpose of God “His glory fills the whole earth.” (3b) I Cor. 10:31 records that whatever we do should be done to God’s glory. The understanding of God’s permeating glory and His abiding presence should be intertwined. In the movie “Chariots of Fire,” future missionary Eric Liddell says that when he runs, he feels God’s pleasure and wants to give Him glory. Our purpose should be constantly in line with His purpose and His glory.

III. God’s Forgiveness (6:5-7)
A. Despair “Then I said: ‘Woe is me, for I am ruined because I am a man of unclean lips and live among a people of unclean lips, and because my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.’” (6:5)

1. Our Sinfulness. In a human sense, we always want to focus on how good we are based on a comparison with others. However, when we compare ourselves to God’s standard, we understand our sinfulness (Rom. 3:23). Our sinfulness has both an individual (I am ruined) and a corporate (people of unclean lips) dimension. We are guilty of the sins we commit. But we also have a responsibility to point those around us in the right direction. Corporate sin is often the culmination of individuals making sinful decisions.

2. Our Dependency on God as Savior. Sin is a problem for which we have no answer. Its pollution causes “unclean lips” for which only God has a solution. We typically underestimate the scope of our sin (James 2:17). Sin is commonly defined as “something someone else does.” It’s easy to spot in others but difficult to admit personally. Not only do we minimize the scope of our sin, but we also gloss over its deadly effects. Paul cites the wages of sin as death (Rom. 6:23). Our “good” can never outweigh sin’s “bad.” Because there is no other remedy for sin, we must trust in Jesus (Acts 4:12).

B. Atonement “Then one of the Seraphim flew to me, and in his hand was a glowing coal that he had taken from the altar with tongs. He touched my mouth with it and said: “Now that this has touched your lips, your wickedness is removed, and your sin is atoned for.”” (6:6-7)

Believer’s Study Bible, p. 929: 6:6-7 “The ‘coal’ was a token of forgiveness since fire symbolized cleansing and purification, and the altar was the place where atonement was made. The seraph (Heb.) is merely the messenger; God is the One who forgives, and His forgiveness is complete and irrevocable (cf. Jer. 31:34) because it is based upon the atonement of Jesus Christ.”

1. The Contribution “a glowing coal…from the altar” – Atonement is a gift from God
completely apart from any human contribution. (Eph. 2:8-9)

2. **The Cost** “touched my mouth with it” – A live coal on one’s lips would cause horrible pain. This symbolizes the seriousness with which God views sin and the cost of atonement. When we sing “Jesus paid it all,” we’re reminded of the price of sin which He paid on the cross.

3. **The Consequence** “Your wickedness is removed, and your sin is atoned for.” (7) God is faithful to pardon repentant sinners. (Isa. 1:18; I John 1:8-10). 2 Pet. 3:9

IV. **God’s Call** (6:8-13)

A. **Answer** “Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: ‘Who should I send? Who will go for Us?’ I said, ‘Here am I. Send me.”’ (6:8)

_Believer’s Study Bible, p. 930: 6:8_ “Having received unconditional forgiveness, Isaiah responds affirmatively and without hesitation to the divine call. Only after his commitment to the call does the Lord reveal the challenge of a particular task (v. 9).” Jesus said, “…Listen to what I’m telling you. Open your eyes and look at the fields for they are ready for harvest.” (John 4:35) and “The harvest is abundant but the workers are few.” (Matt. 9:37). Moses said, “Not me.” Elijah said, “Who, me?” Jonah said, “Poor me.” But Isaiah said, “Send me.”

B. **Assignment** - And He said, “Go! Say to this people: ‘Keep listening, but do not understand; keep looking, but do not perceive. Dull the minds of these people; deafen their ear and blind their eyes; otherwise they might see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, understand with their minds, turn back and be healed.’ Then I said, “Until when Lord?” And He replied: “Until cities are lie in ruins without inhabitants, houses are without people, the land is ruined and desolate, and the Lord drives the people far away, leaving great emptiness in the land. Though a tenth will remain in the land....”” (6:9-13)
C. The Authority of God’s Call “Go!” (9) Verse 10 records that he will not have a receptive audience. However, the fruit produced is not necessarily the only valid measure of a legitimate call.

Believer’s Study Bible, p. 630: 6:10 “God in His omniscience knew in advance that the nation would not respond but would remain indifferent and unrepentant, and thus would become hardened. The judgment on the nation Israel did not preclude the repentance of a remnant (cf. 11:11, 12).”

D. The Assurance of God’s Call “the holy seed is the stump” (13)

Believer’s Study Bible, p. 630: 6:13 “This verse describes the extent of the destruction as nearly complete. But God is promising that just as a tree may sprout again from a stump, so there will be a remnant of the nation that will survive.” Hosea 5:15 – 6:2; Rom. 11:5, 25-26.

Application:

1. God goes to great lengths to make us fruitful. John 15:1-5

2. Sin separates us from God’s blessings and brings judgment. Rom. 8:1, 38-39

3. Revival occurs when we see God as He is, ourselves as we are, and allow Him to cleanse, call and commission us to His service. Rom. 8:30-34

Leader Pack - Item 7: Handout: Isaiah Timeline
Isaiah Lesson 2: “God Sends”

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Notes: **You may access David’s Lesson Preview in MP3 format at: www.hfcbiblestudy.org

Dates: **In the midst of COVID, calendared events continue to be under review. Please check with your specific ministry or the website for updated information**