



## Isaiah: God Who Sends

**Memory Verse:** Isaiah 6:8 “Then 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!’ ”

### Background

Isaiah is the 23<sup>d</sup> book of the Bible and the first book of the Major Prophets. As is the case with nearly all the books of “the prophets” the book of Isaiah takes its name from the author. Isaiah prophesied from 739–681 BC to a nation that had turned a deaf ear to the Lord. Instead of serving Him with humility and offering love to their neighbors, the nation of Judah offered meaningless sacrifices in God’s temple at Jerusalem and committed injustices throughout the nation. The people of Judah turned their backs on God and alienated themselves from Him, which created the need for Isaiah’s pronouncements of judgment—declarations made in the hope that God’s chosen people would return to Him. Isaiah often referred to as “The Prince of the Prophets,” prophesied under the reign of four Judean Kings- Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah and likely met his death under a fifth, the evil King Manasseh.

Though Judah had escaped the Assyrian captivity that befell the northern kingdom of Israel, Isaiah foretold that Judah would be plundered by Babylon, who would overthrow Assyria as the world power. Even amid such announcements of coming judgment, Isaiah gave a comforting message of God’s loving care and redemption.

### The Short Story

Isaiah announces the coming judgment against Israel and the surrounding nations, and then focuses on God’s deliverance, comfort and care of His people. He also introduces the ultimate Deliverer, Jesus Christ.

### What’s the Big Idea?

Isaiah’s overall theme receives its clearest statement in chapter 12: “Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid” (Isaiah 12:2). This echoes the meaning of Isaiah’s name, which means the “salvation of Yahweh.” Having read the book, one might wonder about the strong presence of judgment that runs through the first thirty-nine chapters when the theme is salvation. How can the two coexist? The presence of judgment indicates its necessity for salvation to occur. Before we can have salvation, we must have a need for it! So the bulk of the early chapters in Isaiah detail judgments against the people who have turned their backs on the Lord, showing us that those who persist in their rebellion will receive judgment. On the other hand, we also see God’s faithfulness to His promise. He will preserve a small remnant of faithful believers, those who will continue on into the glorious renewed world He has prepared for His children in the end times (Isaiah 65:17–66:24).

### So What? Why is this book so important? What was God’s purpose for the book?

The book of Isaiah provides us with the most comprehensive prophetic picture of Jesus Christ in the entire Old Testament. It includes the full scope of His life: the announcement of His coming (Isaiah 40:3–5), His virgin birth (7:14), His proclamation of the good news (61:1), His sacrificial death (52:13–53:12), and His return to claim His own (60:2–3). Because of these and numerous other christological texts in Isaiah, the book stands as a testament of hope in the Lord, the One who saves His people from themselves. Because of its scope, Isaiah contains one of the clearest expressions of the gospel in all the Old Testament. Even from the first chapter, it is clear that the people have turned away from God and failed in their responsibilities as His children (Isaiah 1:2–17). Yet God miraculously holds out hope to this unrepentant people, offering cleansing of sins and the blessing that comes with faith and obedience in Him (1:18–20). Salvation lies only in God—the only question is whether or not we will accept His offer.

## Teaching Text

Isaiah 6:8-11 "Then 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!" He said, "Go and tell this people: "Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.' Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed." Then I said, "For how long, Lord?" And he answered: "Until the cities lie ruined and without inhabitant, until the houses are left deserted and the fields, ruined and ravaged."

## Sermon-Based Discussion Questions

- What really shook Isaiah to the very core of His being? Why? How would you feel in that situation?
- What was his response to experiencing the fullness of God's presence? How often did it happen?
- Why did he need to be touched by God? What happen to him?
- What was God asking of Isaiah? What was Isaiah suppose to do on his mission from God?
- Rather than asking how will I accomplished the mission, he asked "how long?". Why?

## Practical Application

- What encounter or event have you had with God that has shaken or shaped your world?
- Why is it so important to experience cleansing and healing before going on a mission for God?
- God often gives direction by the questions He asks. What questions has He been asking you lately?
- Where do you need to say "Here am I; send me?" What are your concerns doing so?
- What is a specific task or mission that God is asking you to do? Has He given you a time frame?

## Hitting the Highpoints

- 2:3-5 "He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths."
- 6:1-3 "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory."
- 7:14 "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son.."
- 9:6 "For to us a child is born to us a son is given, And he will be called Wonderful Counselor...."
- 61:1-2 "The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor...."

## Bonus Features

Where is Jesus? The book of Isaiah provides us with the most comprehensive prophetic picture of Jesus Christ in the entire Old Testament. It includes the full scope of His life: the announcement of His coming (Isaiah 40:3-5). His virgin birth (7:14). His proclamation of the good news (61:1). His sacrificial death (52:13-53:12) and His return to claim His own (60:2-3). Because of these and numerous other Christological texts in Isaiah, the book stands as a testament of hope in the Lord, the One who saves His people from themselves. Because of its scope, Isaiah contains one of the clearest expressions of the gospel in all the Old Testament. Even from the first chapter, it is clear that the people have turned away from God and failed in their responsibilities as His children (Isaiah 1:2-17). Yet God miraculously holds out hope to this unrepentant people, offering cleansing of sins and the blessing that comes with faith and obedience in Him (1:18-20). Salvation lies only in God – the only question is whether or not we will accept His offer.

## Personal Takeaways and Notes