

Agents of Hope God's Great Missionaries Lesson 13 3Q 2008

Here I am! Send Me: The Prophet Isaiah

WEDNESDAY

How did the people respond to Isaiah's message?

What are the major points in the book of Isaiah? Or what do we learn from Isaiah?

1. God does not want worship from rote, rituals without understanding but invites us to understand and reason and by doing this with God we are cleansed from sin.
 - a. Isaiah chapter 1
2. God is coming to earth to save the earth and Christ is God's thoughts made audible
 - a. Isaiah 9:6
3. The Great controversy began in heaven with Lucifer over believing lies about God which led to pride and self exaltation and resulting in the minds of man being darkened
 - a. Isaiah 14
 - b. Isaiah 60:2 See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you.
4. The truth about hell, and the punishment for sin
 - a. Isaiah 33:14,15
5. Christ when he comes will take our condition upon himself in order to heal it but we would misunderstand that God punished Christ and thus must punish sin:
 - a. ISA 53:4 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.
 - b. ISA 61:1 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the

captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, ISA 61:2 to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor

6. The Sabbath as God intended and for eternity
 - a. ISA 58:13 "If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the LORD's holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, ISA 58:14 then you will find your joy in the LORD, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob." The mouth of the LORD has spoken.
 - b. ISA 66:22 "As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me," declares the LORD, "so will your name and descendants endure. ²³ From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me," says the LORD.
7. That God wants to save all people not just descendents of Abraham
 - a. ISA 25:6 On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine-- the best of meats and the finest of wines. ISA 25:7 On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations;
 - b. ISA 56:7 these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations."
8. All will be restored and there will be no more death
 - a. Isaiah 62, 65

- i. ISA 65:17 "Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.
- b. ISA 25:8 he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken.

SABBATH

Read first paragraph "A central part..." thoughts?

Who was Isaiah speaking to? Was his mission to go and speak out against sin in the world or in the nation of Israel? Today, what happens if someone speaks out against sin in the church, how are they received?

What is sin? What is the root to all sin? What is the sin from which all other sin has arisen? Lies about God! What happens when someone speaks out in the church when God is being misrepresented?

Notice Judah was to represent God to the world – who is to do that today?

Revelation 14:7 He said in a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water."

What is this referring to? What is God's glory? How do we give God glory? God's glory is His character of love and we glorify Him by cooperating with Him for our healing so that we reveal His character in our lives! Notice this is not a work we do but one God does in us:

EZE 36:22 "Therefore say to the house of Israel, `This is what the Sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake, O

house of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. ²³ I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. **Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when I show myself holy through you** before their eyes.

EZE 36:24 " For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. ²⁵ I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. ²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

SUNDAY

Read third paragraph "In response to his..." Then read the green section at the bottom – thoughts?

Why did Jesus come in human flesh rather than with unveiled glory?

Does this give us insight into why the wicked will die in the end? Is it an imposed penalty or a natural consequence?

How do we know? What evidence do we have?

ISA 33:14 The sinners in Zion are terrified;
trembling grips the godless:
"Who of us can dwell with the consuming fire?
Who of us can dwell with everlasting burning?"

ISA 33:15 He who walks righteously
 and speaks what is right,
 who rejects gain from extortion
 and keeps his hand from accepting bribes,
 who stops his ears against plots of murder
 and shuts his eyes against contemplating evil--

Exodus 3:2-4 God speaks to Moses at the bush – and what did the bush do? Burned – but did it get consumed? Stephen in Acts 7:30-36 confirms this same account

Ex 24:17 God came to Mt Sinai and His presence was described as a “consuming fire” did the elements melt like a nuclear explosion?

2 Chron 5:14 & 2 Chron 7:1-3 Tell us that when Solomon’s Temple was dedicated the Priests couldn’t enter because the brightness of God’s fiery glory was too great – but did the Temple burn down? So was it heat that was keeping the priests out?

Daniel 7:9,10 God’s throne was “flaming with fire, the wheels were ablaze and rivers of fire came out from him” and millions of beings were living in this fire without being harmed

Ezekiel 28:14,16 tells us that Lucifer used to walk among the “fiery stones” of God’s presence

Matthew 17:2, mount of Transfiguration Jesus, in His human body that was still subject to death – His face shown like the sun and his clothes were bright white – but did His clothes burn off or did He receive 3rd degree burns?

DT 4:24 and Hebrews 12:29 Says, “our God is a consuming fire.”

Revelation 22:5 tells us that in the new earth there will be no need for the sun and moon to light the earth for God's presence will be its light!

What is the lie that Satan has foisted upon us? The place you don't want to go, the place you don't want to be is the place of eternal burnings and consuming fire and that place is God's very presence!

The righteous will be transformed by this life giving glory – as Moses was after 40 days with God –

Ex 34:29-35 Moses would speak to God face to face and His face would radiate the fiery, life giving glory of God – Did Moses have 3rd degree burns? No, it was not harmful – but what about the children of Israel, when they saw Moses what did they do?

During that long time spent in communion with God, the face of Moses had reflected the glory of the divine Presence; unknown to himself **his face shown with a dazzling light when he descended from the mountain...** Aaron as well as the people **shrank away from Moses**, and "they were afraid to come nigh him." Seeing their confusion and terror, but ignorant of the cause, he urged them to come near. **He held out to them the pledge of God's reconciliation, and assured them of His restored favor. They perceived in his voice nothing but love and entreaty**, and at last one ventured to approach him. Too awed to speak, he silently pointed to the countenance of Moses, and then toward heaven. The great leader understood his meaning. **In their conscious guilt, feeling themselves still under the divine displeasure, they could not endure the heavenly light**, which, had they been obedient to God, would have filled them with joy. There is fear in guilt. The soul that is free from sin will not wish to hide from the light of heaven. {PP 329.5}

Notice the evidence – Moses face radiated the glory but caused no injury to Moses, demonstrating the fire is not harmful. Moses also came down as their friend on their side, communicating God’s favor and love NOT anger, yet because of their condition of heart they experienced suffering from the reflected fire of God’s glory. They felt under divine displeasure, but they weren’t, thus we see the deceitfulness and destructiveness of sin, not destructiveness coming from God. They begged Moses to cover His face, i.e. hiding themselves from Moses face, just like the wicked will do to Christ in the end.

At the second coming of Christ this same fire that transforms the righteous, as we are changed in a twinkling of an eye, as this mortal puts on immortality, as we are invigorated by this life giving fire, this same fire is described in 2 Thessalonians 2:8 as destroying the man of sin,

But what kind of fire is this? How can fire not burn up bushes, buildings and faces and actually transform and heal the righteous but at the same time cause anguish, discomfort, pain and destruction to the wicked?

What kind of fire is this?

This is a fire that is to cleanse the earth of sin, a fire that consumes wickedness – so let me ask you a couple of questions:

What is a book made out of?

What is a table or chair made out of?

What is sin made out of?

Sin is an idea, attitude, thought, method, principle and at its root there are two elements that sin is based upon:

Lies and selfishness

Now what is it that consumes and destroys a lie?

The truth and the HS is called the Spirit of truth.

What is it that consumes and destroys selfishness?

Love and God is Love – so when God’s Spirit comes it is the Spirit of Truth and Love

And at Pentecost, when the Spirit came they saw “tongues of fire” – did the house burn down or anyone get injured?

Then why will the wicked suffer when the fires of truth and love burn freely, when these fires of truth and love transform and ennoble and invigorate the righteous, when the fires of God’s presence are revealed?

They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 2 Thes 2:10

What happens in the mind of those who have reject truth and cling to falsehood when the truth of God comes shining through? Torment of mind, anguish of heart – suffering of psyche

And what happens to those whose hearts are filled with selfishness when pure, undiluted, love of God comes shining through?

Proverbs 25:21,22 and Romans 12:20 tells us that:

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."

And what will those who have solidified their minds in lies who have hardened their hearts in selfishness do when Christ appears? When they come face to face with undiluted, infinite truth and love?

REV 6:16 They called to the mountains and the rocks,
 "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on
 the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!

Why will they do this? Is God inflicting an external penalty upon them or is their very condition the cause of their suffering when they come into God's loving and holy presence?

God has actually given us evidence (not claims evidence but action evidence) that the fire of His presence consumes sin, not material substances. In Leviticus we read about Aaron's sons who, as priests, brought unauthorized fire before the Lord. Notice what happens:

- Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense; and they offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, contrary to his command. So **fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them**, and they died before the LORD... Moses summoned Mishael and Elzaphan, sons of Aaron's uncle Uzziel, and said to them, "Come here; carry your cousins outside the camp, away from the front of the sanctuary." So they came and **carried them, still in their tunics**, outside the camp, as Moses ordered. Leviticus 10:1-5
 - Notice that "fire of the Lord" "CONSUMED" them yet their bodies weren't burnt and their tunics were still intact. The fire is the fire of truth and love which totally overwhelms those living in lies and selfishness, those who haven't been healed in heart and mind to be like Jesus.

Now notice what God says about how Lucifer dies:

EZE 28:18 By your many sins and dishonest trade
 you have desecrated your sanctuaries.
**So I made a fire come out from you,
 and it consumed you,**

and I reduced you to ashes on the ground
in the sight of all who were watching.

In the Bible we have the claim/proclamation texts and we have the historical facts texts. For instance:

1 John 4:8 God is love – is a proclamation, a claim, and in isolation it is meaningless for we would not know who God is or what love is. What gives 1 John 4:8 power is the historical evidence of Jesus Christ who revealed God to us and what love actually is. The evidence of Christ's life informs the claims text of 1John 4:8

Many theologians and pastors don't understand this and they read proclamation texts and fail to have those text informed by the evidence and thus make up theories. Classic is the idea that God will punish because of proclamation texts which appear to say such things but they fail to use the actual historic evidence of what transpired to inform their conclusions. Thus they end up perpetuating Satan's misconceptions about God.

Do we have more evidence to demonstrate this point?

The Law of Liberty is a law which states that love cannot exist in an atmosphere without freedom. There are three predictable consequences which occur when freedoms are violated:

1. love is destroyed
2. rebellion is instilled
3. individuality is destroyed

This is a law, it is testable, it is constant, it is evidence. This is not a claim, you can check it out and when you are convinced we have a standard against which we can test theories that are floated about God. God will never violate our freedoms for to do so would be a violation of His own character of love!

Those who claim that God will inflict an external punishment upon the wicked have no direct evidence for this. They only have speculation, which actually misrepresents God!

One of the founders of our church agrees with me on this:

We are **not** to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death. {1SM 235.2}

In the opening of the great controversy, Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed, that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that, should the law be broken, it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned. **Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan; and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth and justice.** DA 761

God could have destroyed Satan and his sympathizers as easily as one can cast a pebble to the earth; but He did not do this. **Rebellion was not to be overcome by force. Compelling power is found only under Satan's government.** The Lord's principles are not of this order. His authority rests upon goodness, mercy, and love; and the presentation of these principles is the means to be used. God's government is moral, and **truth and love are to be the prevailing power.** {DA 759.1}

The kingdom of Christ does not and cannot bear any resemblance to the kingdoms of the world. **In the kingdom of Christ there is no instrument of coercion.** In it force has no place. The gospel of Him who gave His

life for the life of the world is a gospel of peace. It is the Saviour's grace, His love, His tender compassion, that breaks every barrier down. The gospel is a power of itself, above all and encompassing all. It is a divine, immutable principle, as well-spring fed by the stream that flows from the throne of God. {21MR 152.4}

Satan has ascribed to God all the evils to which flesh is heir. He has represented Him as a God who delights in the sufferings of His creatures, who is revengeful and implacable. It was Satan who originated the doctrine of eternal torment as a punishment for sin, because in this way he could lead men into infidelity and rebellion, distract souls, and **dethrone human reason.**
{CT 27.2}

I put much of this together in the GNT talk last week at LLU church which is available on our website under the title God's Standard – Freedom.

MONDAY

Read fifth paragraph “In and of himself...” thoughts? which do you like better “purged” or “covered”? Why?

In the vision of Isaiah 6 it says:

I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple.

Could this have any symbolic significance? What does the robe of Christ represent? What does the temple represent? Could filling the temple with the train of the Lord's robe symbolize filling the spirit temple with the righteousness of God? purging from sin? Recreating in righteousness?

TUESDAY

Read top section “When Isaiah hears...” thoughts? Could Isaiah have responded simply because he loves God and God asked for help?

Read second paragraph “The ‘therefore’...” – thoughts? When Jesus was given all power and authority in John 13 what did He do? He washed dirty feet. Does this give us some insight into how we are to take this message to the world?

THURSDAY

First question, How do we as Adventists, understand our role in the out reach to the world?

ISA 49:6 he says:

"It is too small a thing for you to be my servant
to restore the tribes of Jacob
and bring back those of Israel I have kept.

I will also make you a light for the Gentiles,
that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the
earth."

FRIDAY

Read question 1 and discuss – what would Isaiah say to our church?

- Stop accusing God of killing His Son on the Cross?
- Stop accusing God of being the source of death?
- Stop accusing God of inflict punishment?
- Realize Satan’s war is a political war, a war of ideas, methods which attack God, His character of love and government of love.
- Realize Jesus, the child born is the “everlasting Father.”
- Realize Jesus came to heal our condition not pay a legal penalty but restore the law of love into our hearts!