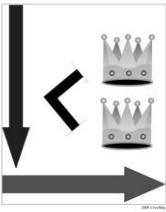


Week Thirty: A Prophet Sees the King - Isaiah 6; 7:14; 9:6-7; 52:13-53:12



Overview

Adam and Eve's decision to eat the forbidden fruit is a decision to cast off God's authority—a decision to live independently of God. Cain, too, chooses to rebel and lives the remainder of his life outside of God's presence. Ten generations after the flood, rebellion characterizes the whole world, and God destroys every living thing except for Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their wives. Ten generations after the flood,

God

speaks to Abram, an idol worshiper, and promises him a land and a nation, through whom He will bless all the peoples of the world. When Abraham's grandson Jacob blesses his own sons before his death, he identifies Judah as the one whose lineage will produce a king (Gen. 49:10).

Israel moves to Egypt and grows into a mighty nation. After God delivers them from Egypt they struggle to trust and submit to Him. Hundreds of years later they request a king like the nations around them. God permits their request for a king to teach them the difference between His rule and man's rule. Though Saul is outwardly all that a king should be (tall, wealthy, and authoritative), he is a weak, fearful, man-pleaser. David lives in glad submission to God's authority, and all Israel benefits. Solomon begins well, but the people rebel at his death against the tax burden of sustaining his kingdom. The kingdom divides. After a succession of 20 wicked kings, the northern kingdom of Israel is taken into captivity by the Assyrians. The southern kingdom of Judah lasts longer; four of their 19 kings submit to God's authority. God reveals Himself to a number of Judah's prophets as the one who sits upon the heavenly throne. Isaiah, during the final year of King Uzziah, Judah's tenth king, sees this King of heaven.

Isaiah records his vision of the exalted and glorified king in Isaiah 6. Much later in his ministry, he records another description of the same king in his message of hope in Isaiah 53. This description, however, differs from the first; this king is seen in his humanity and humility. He records the uniting of these two visions in two promises of the birth of this King.

This lesson concentrates on both visions: the High King of Heaven and the Humble King on earth.

Lesson Objective:

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will appreciate the humility of the King of the universe and His sacrifice for those who submit to His rule.

Key Truths

A heavenly king with a heavenly kingdom reigns unseen by those bound by natural sight.

Those who refuse to bow the knee to the King Eternal will not acknowledge Christ in His humanity, repent of their sin, understand Christ and His cross, or yield their lives to Him in glad surrender. Those who refuse to bow the knee to Christ and acknowledge their sin cannot know the King Eternal.

Lesson Outline

Isaiah sees the LORD as the High King of Heaven and Humble King on earth.

1. His Exaltation in Heaven - Isaiah 6:1-8

Isaiah's vision of the exalted King on His heavenly throne precedes his call to the ministry.

- Isaiah sees the Majesty of God. The Lord appears as the Eternal King on a throne that shows His dominion. Isaiah hears the angels worship the LORD, crying, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts" (6:3).
- Isaiah feels the Misery of Sin. He understands his own uncleanness ("I am undone," 5), as well as Israel's ("I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips," 5).
- Isaiah experiences the Ministry of Forgiveness. He receives cleansing from the altar: "Your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is purged" (7).
- Isaiah hears the Missional call. He submits himself to the King and gladly embraces service to the King, calling, "Here am I Send me" (8).

2. His Entrance to Earth - Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7

Isaiah utters two glorious prophecies concerning the birth of this exalted King. Both prophecies come during a period when Uzziah's grandson Ahaz, the human king of David's line, is weak and faithless. Isaiah predicts a King whose entrance will wed His majesty with meekness.

- This King will be born of a virgin (7:14—"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel"). How can such a thing be? God will cause the virgin to conceive miraculously as a sign for Israel.
- The King shall be born a King (9:6-7—"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."). He will not become a King, but will be born as Prince and King of David's line, bearing royal and Divine titles. He will rule on David's throne forever, establishing one kingdom that rules over all. From the time of Isaiah's prophecy, Israel looked with anticipation to the day of His birth. They did not anticipate, however, the time of His humility.

3. His Humility on Earth - Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Isaiah presents another view of the Eternal King as he prophesies a series of messages that offer hope to those who have experienced the bitterness of judgment.

- His complete exaltation - “He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high” (52:13)
 - His stunning appearance - “Just as many were astonished at you, so His visage was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of man” (52:14)
 - His lack of appeal - “He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him” (53:2)
 - His rejection by man - “He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised and we did not esteem Him” (53:3)
- His shameful assignment - The Innocent One took on the guilt of man’s sin and shame.
 - His substitutionary suffering - He did not bear not his own griefs, sorrows, transgressions, and iniquities, but those of others (53:4-6, 8, 10-12)
 - His affliction by God (53:4, 10)
- His quiet submission - As a servant He:
 - Embraces the path of slaughter (53:7)
 - Refuses to protest (53:7)
 - Surrenders to death itself (53:8b,9)
- His resurrection from the dead - “He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities” (53:10b, 11).

The writer of Hebrews confirms the identity of the exalted King in Isaiah 6 and the humbled man in Isaiah 53 as one and the same. Jesus is the one “who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3), and “the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (12:2).

Application - What does this lesson teach about God? Man? Sin? Redemption?
One cannot remain the same after encountering the King. Confession of sin and surrender of life follow that confrontation. Anything less is not the gospel.

There is no message of hope for a people in captivity until they see the King who bears the sins of the world in His own body.

The glory of the gospel is its suffering and substitution. The gospel does not give new rules; rather, it gives freedom from sin's penalty and power over sin's hold in our lives.

Summary

God speaks hope to people by promising them redemption and by becoming their sinbearing Redeemer.

God acts by taking on human flesh, that He may die in man's place and rise again to demonstrate His defeat of sin, death, and the grave. *God reveals* both His eternal majesty and His temporal humanity.

Discussion Questions

What changes does the Bible ensure will occur in the lives of those who've encountered the King of Heaven in His humility?

Why do many not respond to the call of God? Could it be that they've never seen the King in His majesty? Why do people not experience the Lord's presence?

How does the gospel of Christ differ from all other world religions and their messages?