CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
MAY18 2024

are you available?

Scripture Story: Isaiah 6.
Commentary: *Prophets and Kings* (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapter 25.



Photo by Bill Wolf

flashlight

"Suddenly the gate and the inner veil of the temple seemed to be uplifted or withdrawn, and he was permitted to gaze within, upon the holy of holies, where even the prophet's feet might not enter. There rose up before him a vision of Jehovah sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, while the train of His glory filled the temple" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 307).

keytext

"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!' "

(Isaiah 6:8, NIV)

what do you think?

Are you connected? What I mean is, do you have a cell phone? Are you on Facebook? Twitter? Instagram?

Write down all the different ways that you are connected to people—be it through school, church, or your electronic devices. You can even write down how many people you are connected to by going through your address books and seeing how many people you are available to be connected with. After all that, ask yourself this question: "With all these people vying for my time, can I hear the call of God on my life?"

INTO THE STORY

"In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another:

" 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.'

"At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

" 'Woe to me!' I cried. 'I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.'

"Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, 'See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.'

"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, until the LORD has sent everyone far away and the land is utterly forsaken. And though a tenth remains in the land, it will again be laid waste. But as the terebinth and oak leave stumps when they are cut down, so the holy seed will be the stump in the land.' "

(Isaiah 6, NIV)

did you know?

Looking at the Internet usage statistics from www.internetworldstats.com, it is estimated (as of June 2022) that of almost 372 and a half million people in North America, 93 percent are connected to the Internet. When you look at the statistics for Asia, there are almost 3 billion people connected. All together, there are more than 5 billion people connected to the Internet worldwide. What a powerful communication tool. Just think of the people we can be available to by just plugging in!*

OUT OF THE STORY

What are some key things that happened in the story to show how God gives us grace?

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What did Isaiah realize that made it possible for God to use him?

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Underline the verse that you think is the most important in the whole chapter.

Have you ever read this chapter before? What are a couple of interesting points you learned about Isaiah's calling?

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Why do you think it is important to understand who you are and what you are called to do?

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For purely personal reflection, what do you think God is calling you to do in this life?

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punch lines

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" **(Romans 8:28, NIV).**

"I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, my immediate response was not to consult any human being" **(Galatians 1:14-16, NIV).**

"His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness" **(2 Peter 1:3, NIV).**

"No one takes this honor on himself, but he receives it when called by God, just as Aaron was" **(Hebrews 5:4, NIV).**

"And you will be called priests of the LORD, you will be named ministers of our God. You will feed on the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast" **(Isaiah 61:6, NIV).**

further insight

"Every follower of Jesus has a work to do as a missionary for Christ, in the family, in the neighborhood, in the town or city where he lives."—Ellen G. White, *Christian Service*, p. 18

Sabbath

Read John 15:5.

In the *What Do You Think?* section, you are asked the question, "Are you connected?" This question is obviously about whether or not you are connected to Christ.

Maybe a better question is, "When are you NOT connected, or available?" It seems that in this day and age someone can get hold of us at anytime—and it's probably a good thing that they can! However, perhaps it should make us think about whether or not we are available to God in that same way. This has always been a question for us humans. In Isaiah 6 God asks a question: "Whom shall I send?" Isaiah answers, "Here am I, send me." Is this the answer that we have for God today?

What are three different ways you know how to connect with God?

For some additional resources, check out www.adventistbookcenter.com/steps-to-christ-youth-edition.html.

Sunday

Read Romans 8:28.

After having read the text and the story of the call of Isaiah, what do you think is the most important lesson?

Two words are pretty important in conjunction with this story: repentance and forgiveness. Repentance is the act of acknowledging our sin and recognizing that we are in need of a Savior from that same sin. Forgiveness is God's act of justification and making us right with Him again. As well, we see that God Himself is willing to forgive us of our sins so that we might be able to go out and do the work He has for us. The text is clear that forgiveness and justification come directly from God, just like the angel taking the coal and placing it on Isaiah's lips.

Monday

Read Isaiah 6:8.

Be sure to read the *Key Text* for this week. This week's memory text is Isaiah's response to God when God asks the question of who will go and be His representative to the world. Isaiah was ready for a couple reasons: (1) he could hear the voice of the Lord, and (2) he had been cleansed by God of his sins.

How do you hear the voice of God in your life? Is it through parents or pastors? Friends or family? Quiet time or study? Delving into the Word of God or into prayer?

All of these things help us hear the Word of God. If we seek His voice, He is more than willing to let us hear what He has for us.

Tuesday

Read John 3:16, 17; Revelation 21:4.

This week's *Flashlight* section gives us a glimpse into the vision that Isaiah had into the Holy of Holies in heaven. What do you think the throne of God looks like? What do you think you might do if you saw that vision? Would you fall on your knees and sing the same song as the seraphs who sing constantly of God's praises? Would that vision do to you what it did to Isaiah, and show you just how unworthy you are of the grace given to us by God? Would you be afraid, or would you desire that God come closer to you and your life?

It's difficult to tell what such a clear vision of God would do to us. But it's awesome to think that we seek a God who is this majestic and powerful! A God who is powerful enough to wipe our sins away.

Wednesday

The *Punch Lines* this week had to do with *calling*, and how that is different from a job or a profession. Calling has to do with what God is calling you to do and what He will give you a passion for in this life. When we decide to do what God is calling us to do, it is amazing how excited and energetic we become in the completion of the tasks He has for us. Can a job become a calling? Do you have any idea what God is calling you to do?

The one thing we can be sure is that God has a plan and that plan involves some sort of responsibility. Are you ready to hear the call of God in your life?

Thursday

Read 2 Peter 1:3.

How can you be right with God? How can you know what He is asking you to do? Sometimes it is those things that we find hardest to do that lead us to a better understanding of God's will.

Friday

Read Hebrews 5:4.

Are you available to God? Is He in your address book? Would you be surprised if you received an e-mail from Him about what He would love to have you do?

* www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm

this week's reading*

Prophets and Kings (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapter 25.

**Royalty in Ruins* is a special adaptation of *Prophets and Kings*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.