

ISAIAH

Key Chapters of the Prophet

God's Words Are Not Empty

Lesson 8



Isaiah's Ministry
739-698 BC

Return to
Jerusalem
538 BC

Abraham 2000 BC	Moses 1500 BC	King David 1000 BC	Israel Destroyed 701 BC	Jerusalem Destroyed 586 BC
--------------------	------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------------	----------------------------------

Introduction

Words can be empty if not backed up by action. Talk is cheap if there's no follow through. An empty threat doesn't make a difference. An empty promise doesn't give any hope. But God's Words are not empty. He has perfect follow through. He warned and threatened destruction of Judah because of his people's sins. It wasn't an empty threat; about a century after Isaiah, the Lord followed through as he sent Babylon to destroy the once holy city in 586 B.C. The Lord made many promises through Isaiah's prophecy—promises of forgiveness and redemption and life everlasting. Those weren't empty promises—about 700 years after Isaiah, the Messiah, whom Isaiah foretold with such great detail, came to earth and came through on those ancient promises. Take heart, God's words are not empty!

God's Word Nourishes

Read **Isaiah 55**

What gracious invitation does the Lord make in the opening verses? (See also **Matthew 11:28-30**)

Ponder the phrase, "Why spend...your labor on what does not satisfy?"

Why do we have a tendency to do just that?

How does the Lord help us overcome that?

Isaiah switches persons in this chapter: verses 1-3 address the people (you plural); verse 4 refers to David (3rd person singular) and the promise made to him; verse 5 address Zion (you singular).

Zion =

What draws nations to Zion?

Explain verse 6.

Verses 8 and 9 provide a beautiful reminder about the way God thinks and works!

Give examples of times when you've needed this reminder.

Normally when something is beyond our understanding, it can be frustrating. How is it comforting to know that God is beyond our complete understanding?

God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts, yet what does he do for us according to verse 11?

For what different purposes does God send out his words? What purpose seems to fit this context?

The Lord Bestows His Blessings

Read **Isaiah 61**

Who is speaking in verses 1-3? (See **Luke 4:18-21**)

How is the Messiah's work described in verses 1-3?

Verse 2 might sound strange because both God's favor and vengeance are proclaimed. What does this mean?

Who is speaking in verses 10-11?

Note the references to oak trees and flourishing gardens in verses 3 and 11. Earlier in this study we considered the imagery of trees chopped down. What is God communicating to us here?

Final Chapters

Take a few minutes to peruse the final chapters of Isaiah and note any recurring themes.

Reflect on the past lessons. What have you learned or relearned about God through the Prophet Isaiah?