

Dr. Marv Wilson, Prophets, Session 26, Isaiah, Selected Passages, Part 1 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Wilson, Prophets, Session 26, Isaiah, Selected Passages, Part 1, Biblicalearning.org, BeL

Dr. Marv Wilson's Session 26 lecture focuses on selected passages from the Book of Isaiah, specifically exploring Isaiah's commissioning in chapter 6. The discussion begins with prayer and an overview of Isaiah's significance as a prophet of hope, highlighting his role in shaping perspectives on history and offering a reality check through scripture. Wilson then examines the historical context of Isaiah's call, linking it to the death of King Uzziah and the ensuing period of transition. The lecture analyzes Isaiah's vision of God, the symbolism of the seraphim, and Isaiah's subsequent recognition of his own sinfulness in contrast to God's holiness. The session concludes with an examination of Isaiah's purification and preparation for his prophetic mission, as well as a discussion of how fire in the Bible is often symbolic of purification.

2. 10 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Wilson, Prophets, Session 26 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Major Prophets → Prophetic Literature).



**Wilson_Prophets_S
ession26.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Wilson, Prophets, Session 26, Isaiah, Selected Passages, Part 1

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided source, "Wilson_Prophets_EN_Session26.pdf":

Briefing Document: Isaiah 6 - The Commissioning of Isaiah

Source: Excerpts from "Wilson_Prophets_EN_Session26.pdf," a lecture by Dr. Marv Wilson on the book of Isaiah.

Date: 2024

Subject: Analysis of Isaiah's commissioning in Isaiah Chapter 6, with related theological and historical contexts.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. **The Importance of Scripture and Hope:**

- Dr. Wilson emphasizes that scripture provides a reality check during difficult times. He states, "life cannot permanently be lived in the slough of despond and despair."
- Isaiah is presented as a prophet of hope, with the Messiah and hope being "synonymous." The prophet's message offers the assurance that current struggles won't last forever because "God is working out a plan in history."

1. **The Prophetic Call:**

- A key distinction is made between priests (hereditary) and prophets (called by God). Wilson states, "you could not be a prophet without that sense that God had called you to that awesome task."
- Prophetic calls were often met with resistance. Moses, for example, argued with God against his calling.
- Isaiah was commissioned with the disheartening knowledge that his message would be largely rejected. Wilson notes, "those hearts are going to be calloused, the eyes are going to be dim, the ears will be dull, and the response will be nil." This difficult reality highlights the prophets' faithfulness, despite resistance.

1. **Historical Context: The Reign of Uzziah:**

- Isaiah's ministry begins in "the year that King Uzziah died" (740 BCE). Dr. Wilson suggests Isaiah's ministry extended from 740-680 BCE.
- Uzziah's reign is described as a "golden age" characterized by economic prosperity, military strength, and initial spiritual vigor. "He set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah who instructed him in the fear of God. And as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper."
- Uzziah's successes included agricultural and commercial growth, military modernization, and victories over enemies.
- Uzziah's later lapse in accountability is described, where he became proud and tried to usurp the priestly role by burning incense in the temple. This resulted in him contracting leprosy and being removed from leadership. "He grew proud. And he entered the temple and he was accosted by the priests."
- Other positive kings are noted to be Hezekiah, Josiah, and Joash.
- **Isaiah's Vision of God (Chapter 6):** Isaiah has an "inaugural vision" of God in a temple setting. It's unclear whether it's the earthly or heavenly temple.
- The vision presents interpretive challenges: While John 1:18 states "no man has seen the Lord at any time", Matthew 5:8 says, "the pure in heart shall see God." The concept of seeing God is discussed and interpreted as a symbolic or temporary form rather than seeing God in His full essence. Wilson explains: "whatever people see, we do know his eternal essence is veiled, and whatever anyone may claim to see in scripture of God is really only a temporary, visible view of God."
- God is seen sitting on a throne, "high and lifted up" and referred to as Adonai, meaning "Lord" or "master," indicating sovereignty and authority. This is contrasted with the servant role of Isaiah. "The title, Adonai, indicates the fact that God is the owner of each member of the human family, including the prophet, and claims the unrestricted obedience of him."
- The train of God's robe symbolizes power and authority, like the long robe with sleeves worn by Joseph.
- Seraphim are described as winged, burning creatures surrounding God's throne, continuously praising God. Their six wings show reverence (two covering their faces, two covering their feet (euphemism for genitals), and two for flying). Wilson points out that "the root seraph in Hebrew means to burn."

1. The Trisagion and God's Holiness:

- The repeated phrase “Holy, holy, holy” is a form of Trisagion, emphasizing God's infinite holiness, not as a reference to the Trinity. Wilson notes: "In ancient hymnology, this was known as the Trisagion. Hagios means holy, and thrice holy, Trisagion."
- The triple repetition of "holy" emphasizes God's perfection, His separation from sin, and His distinctiveness from creation. This concept is also related to nature worship. Wilson notes that "holiness is a reminder that someone is distinct from, separate from, creation".

1. Divine Names: Yahweh and Lord of Hosts:

- The lecture explains that “Lord of Hosts” means the “Lord Almighty,” surrounded by angels in the vision, ruling the universe.
- The difference between *Adonai* and the Tetragrammaton (YHWH, translated as "the LORD" in most English Bibles) is described: *Adonai* can refer to human relationships, while the Tetragrammaton is God's unique covenant name. Wilson states the Tetragrammaton is “God's covenantal name, the one who is the eternal God of covenant faithfulness”.

1. The Shaking of the Temple and Isaiah's Response:

- The shaking of the temple and the smoke filling it allude to the theophany at Mount Sinai and the Day of Atonement.
- After seeing the Lord, Isaiah sees his own sinfulness and says "Woe to me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" Isaiah sees a contrast between himself and God's holiness.
- Dr. Wilson states that "the history of Israel is described as the story of the kingship of the God of Israel"
- Isaiah's calling emphasizes the kingly nature of God. "My eyes have seen the King. The King of Kings."
- **Purification and Commission:** A seraph touches Isaiah's lips with a hot coal from the altar. This symbolizes purification and the impartation of prophetic speech. It is compared with Jeremiah 1:9 where God touches Jeremiah's mouth.

- The fire from the altar is a symbol of purification, atonement, and the Holy Spirit. "The fire also could refer to the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost like tongues of fire."
- God asks, "Who will go for us?". This is interpreted as either a reference to the heavenly court or a plural of majesty, not the Trinity. Wilson states "the plural sometimes can just simply be used for something that's to be standing out."
- Isaiah is now ready to do God's will after being cleansed and called.

Key Quotes:

- "life cannot permanently be lived in the slough of despond and despair."
- "you could not be a prophet without that sense that God had called you to that awesome task."
- "those hearts are going to be calloused, the eyes are going to be dim, the ears will be dull, and the response will be nil."
- "He set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah who instructed him in the fear of God. And as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper."
- "He grew proud. And he entered the temple and he was accosted by the priests."
- "whatever people see, we do know his eternal essence is veiled, and whatever anyone may claim to see in scripture of God is really only a temporary, visible view of God."
- "The title, Adonai, indicates the fact that God is the owner of each member of the human family, including the prophet, and claims the unrestricted obedience of him."
- "the root seraph in Hebrew means to burn."
- "In ancient hymnology, this was known as the Trisagion. Hagios means holy, and thrice holy, Trisagion."
- "holiness is a reminder that someone is distinct from, separate from, creation".
- "God's covenantal name, the one who is the eternal God of covenant faithfulness".
- "the fire also could refer to the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost like tongues of fire."

- "the plural sometimes can just simply be used for something that's to be standing out."
- "My eyes have seen the King. The King of Kings."
- "the history of Israel is described as the story of the kingship of the God of Israel."

Conclusion:

This lecture provides a detailed analysis of Isaiah 6, emphasizing the divine call, the prophet's unworthiness, God's holiness and sovereignty, and the importance of purification before service. The historical context, especially the reign of Uzziah, adds depth to the understanding of Isaiah's ministry and the significance of this commissioning. The lecture provides a solid foundation for further study of Isaiah's prophetic message and its implications for God's people.

4. Study Guide: Wilson, Prophets, Session 26, Isaiah, Selected Passages, Part 1

Isaiah: Select Passages, Part 1 - Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What is the significance of Isaiah's commissioning taking place in the year King Uzziah died?
2. How did King Uzziah contribute to the prosperity and strength of the Southern Kingdom of Judah?
3. Why did King Uzziah contract leprosy, and what was the consequence of his disease?
4. What is the significance of the seraphs covering their faces and feet in Isaiah's vision?
5. What does the repetition of "holy, holy, holy" emphasize in the context of Isaiah's vision?
6. What is the difference between the names "Adonai" and "YHWH" (Tetragrammaton) as they are used in the Old Testament?
7. How does Isaiah describe his reaction upon seeing the Lord in his vision, and why does he feel that way?
8. What are some of the interpretations of the fiery coal that touched Isaiah's lips?
9. Who is the "us" in God's question, "Who will go for us?", and why is this significant?
10. How does the vision of God in Isaiah chapter 6 relate to the concept of God's holiness, and the separation between the divine and the human?

Quiz Answer Key

1. King Uzziah's death marked the end of a prosperous era in Judah, both spiritually and materially, setting the stage for Isaiah's prophetic call and message of hope amidst national mourning. The death served as a backdrop for Isaiah's vision, emphasizing the need for true leadership beyond earthly power.

2. King Uzziah promoted economic growth through agriculture and commerce, expanded the kingdom's infrastructure by building wells, and significantly modernized the military, making it the most formidable in Israel's history. He also had a period of spiritual vitality that set the stage for his eventual fall.
3. Uzziah contracted leprosy after becoming prideful and attempting to burn incense in the temple, a priestly duty. As a result, he was removed from public life, isolated, and no longer able to effectively conduct state affairs, showcasing the consequences of overstepping divine boundaries.
4. The seraphs covering their faces signifies reverence and the inability to directly gaze upon God's glory. Covering their feet was a euphemism for modesty, representing reverence for God's holiness.
5. The repetition of "holy, holy, holy" emphasizes the absolute, infinite holiness of God, setting Him apart from creation and highlighting His divine perfection. It is not a reference to the Trinity, but a device to show the immeasurable nature of God's holiness.
6. "Adonai," often translated as "Lord," is a title indicating divine sovereignty and is used in human relationships. The Tetragrammaton (YHWH) is God's unique covenantal name, specifically referring to the God of Israel, emphasizing his faithfulness and eternal nature.
7. Isaiah feels "lost" and "ruined" due to his awareness of his own uncleanness, particularly his "unclean lips," after seeing the King, highlighting the contrast between human imperfection and divine holiness. His response underscores the immense gap between the human and the divine.
8. The fiery coal represents purification and cleansing, symbolizing prophetic inspiration. Additionally, it suggests God's forgiveness and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, and prepares Isaiah to speak God's word.
9. The "us" likely refers to the heavenly court of seraphim surrounding God's throne, rather than the Trinity. This underscores the collaboration within the divine realm in carrying out God's will and demonstrates that God works with heavenly beings.
10. The vision underscores God's absolute holiness, sovereignty, and the separation between divine perfection and human imperfection. Isaiah's reaction and purification by fire further emphasize the need for divine grace to bridge the gap between the human and the divine.

Essay Questions

Instructions: Develop a comprehensive essay response for each question, drawing on the provided source material.

1. Analyze the significance of the historical context surrounding Isaiah's commissioning, particularly the reign and death of King Uzziah, and how this shapes the prophet's message.
2. Compare and contrast the roles and significance of the seraphim and cherubim in the biblical narrative, drawing specifically from the text and broader scriptural allusions.
3. Discuss the different ways in which the concept of "seeing God" is presented in scripture, and how Isaiah's vision fits into this broader theological understanding.
4. Explore the theological implications of Isaiah's encounter with the holy God, specifically focusing on his response and the themes of sinfulness, purification, and divine grace.
5. Analyze the symbolic use of fire, smoke, and robes in Isaiah's vision, and discuss their relationship to biblical themes of divine presence, authority, and purification.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Adonai:** A Hebrew title often translated as "Lord," used to denote divine sovereignty and mastery. Also, used in human relationships to convey dependence or a superior relationship.
- **Seraphim:** Winged, fiery angelic beings whose name means "to burn". They surround God's throne in Isaiah's vision, praising God and attending to his glory.
- **Tetragrammaton:** The four Hebrew letters (YHWH) representing God's personal covenantal name, which is typically not pronounced out of reverence. It is unique to the God of Israel and emphasizes his eternal nature and faithfulness.
- **Kedushah:** A Jewish prayer recited during the Amidah that uses the phrase, "Holy, Holy, Holy," emphasizing God's holiness and separation from all creation.
- **Trisagion:** A term referring to the threefold repetition of "holy" (Holy, Holy, Holy) in ancient hymnology and worship. It emphasizes the absolute nature of God's holiness.
- **Uzziah (Azariah):** The King of Judah whose long and prosperous reign marked a golden age for the kingdom. His pride led to leprosy, symbolizing the consequences of overstepping divine boundaries.
- **Zebaot:** A Hebrew term meaning "hosts" or "armies," often used in the name "Lord of Hosts," denoting God's power and sovereignty over all creation and angelic beings.
- **Antiphonal:** A style of responsive singing or chanting, where a phrase is sung or spoken by one group and answered by another. This style is used in Isaiah's vision to emphasize the angels' praise.
- **Euphemism:** A mild or indirect word or expression substituted for one considered to be too harsh or blunt. For example, covering the feet to symbolize urination.
- **Commissioning:** The act of being called and authorized to carry out a specific task or mission, often by a higher authority. This is the term used for Isaiah's prophetic calling in chapter 6.

5. FAQs on Wilson, Prophets, Session 26, Isaiah, Selected Passages, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on Isaiah's Commissioning in Isaiah 6

- What is the significance of the year King Uzziah died in the context of Isaiah's prophetic calling?** The death of King Uzziah, around 740 BC, marked the end of a period of relative spiritual and national prosperity for Judah, often referred to as a "golden age." His reign was characterized by military success, economic growth, and initially, a dependence on God. However, Uzziah's later lapse into pride, attempting to usurp priestly duties and contracting leprosy as a result, created a transition time. This transition coincides with Isaiah's commissioning, highlighting the contrast between earthly kingship and God's ultimate sovereignty and marks the beginning of the classical age of prophetic writing. It sets the stage for Isaiah's ministry, which would address the challenges the nation faced post-Uzziah.
- What kind of vision does Isaiah experience, and what does this vision tell us about God?** Isaiah's commissioning takes place through a powerful inaugural vision. He sees God seated on a high and exalted throne in a heavenly temple, surrounded by seraphim. This vision emphasizes God's absolute sovereignty and authority as the divine ruler, the one to whom all are subject. The train of God's robe also symbolizes his power and majesty. While scripture states "no one has seen the Lord and lived," Isaiah's vision is a symbolic representation of the divine, where a human form is used to convey divine essence, demonstrating that it is not a literal seeing of God's full essence, but a manifestation of His glory.
- Who are the seraphim, and what is their function in Isaiah's vision?** Seraphim, whose name comes from the Hebrew word meaning "to burn," are winged angelic beings depicted in Isaiah's vision as having six wings. They are characterized by their ceaseless ministry of praising God, revealing His divine glory, and possibly serving as guardians of the divine presence. They use two wings to cover their faces out of reverence, two to cover their feet (a euphemism for modesty), and two for flying. They engage in antiphonal praise, declaring "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts." They emphasize God's transcendence and holiness.

- **What does the repetition of "Holy, holy, holy" signify in this context?** The repetition of "holy" three times (Trisagion), a practice found in both the Old and New Testaments, is not necessarily a reference to the Trinity, but instead an ancient emphasis used to underscore the infinite nature of God's holiness, emphasizing divine perfection and separation from all creation. It highlights that God is completely separate from the sinful and imperfect nature of human beings, thus setting up a moral contrast.
- **What are the different ways that the "Lord" (Adonai and YHWH) is understood in this vision, and what does it mean that the whole earth is full of His glory?** In this passage, God is referred to as both Adonai and YHWH. Adonai is used in the sense of divine ruler or master to whom all are subject. YHWH, the Tetragrammaton, is God's unique covenant name, the God of Israel who is eternally faithful. God's glory filling the earth signifies his presence throughout creation; everything in nature and in human experience can point to His existence. This presence is revealed both through nature and through Israel's historical experience of God.
- **How does Isaiah react to seeing God, and why does he feel ruined?** Upon seeing God, Isaiah immediately feels a sense of his own sinfulness and unworthiness. He declares, "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!". This reaction emphasizes the moral contrast between the holiness of God and the imperfection of humanity. Isaiah's feelings of being ruined stem from the recognition of his own sinfulness and the impurity of his speech, particularly in the presence of the holy God. This highlights the chasm that separates God and humanity.
- **What is the symbolic significance of the coal that touches Isaiah's lips?** The seraph touching Isaiah's lips with a hot coal from the altar is symbolic of purification and prophetic inspiration. Just as fire purifies metal and removes dross, this act is a cleansing of his unclean lips, preparing him to speak God's words. The coal may also be a reference to God's presence and the Holy Spirit, which empowers the prophet and equips him to serve as a spokesperson of God. It's analogous to other instances in the Bible where divine touch is associated with prophetic commissioning.

- **What is the meaning of "Who will go for us?", and how does this tie into the mission given to Isaiah?** The phrase "Who will go for us?" is not necessarily a reference to the Trinity. It is likely an invitation to the heavenly court to go on a mission or can be interpreted as the plural of majesty, where God is using the plural to emphasize his greatness. Isaiah responds, "Here I am! Send me," willingly accepting his call. The commissioning is not simply a vision but the start of a mission, highlighting the prophet's task to carry God's message to the people and thus emphasizing the relationship between divine commission and human response to that calling.