

## The Book of Isaiah Trust God's Character #1

The outline is taken from Melissa Spoelstra's book, *Isaiah: Striving Less and Trusting More*,

Objective: To understand following God isn't about striving; it's about trusting God more.

Most of us say with our mouths, "We trust God," but we allow stress, worry and a lack of peace to hinder us from trusting God fully. Isaiah calls on the people to learn to rely on God! Prayerfully, when we end our last lesson, you will find yourself trusting God more!

Introduction to the Book of Isaiah:

- Isaiah is often referred to "as the Bible in a book" or "a Bible in miniature." ● Isaiah has sixty-six chapters, and the Bible has sixty-six books.
- Isaiah is comprised of all the genres of the Bible such as the entire Bible.
- Isaiah's has thirty-nine chapters that emphasize God's judgement towards sin. The Bible has thirty-nine books of the Old Testament.
  - Isaiah's remaining twenty-seven books parallel to the New Testament's focus on God's grace.
- Isaiah's words are quoted more in the New Testament than any other book in the Bible. ● The entire book points to Jesus in every chapter!

Lesson 1. Scripture focus: Isaiah chapter 1- Trust God's Character

Discussion: Have you had a nice garment that was stained? Most of the time we conclude the item is ruined. We can either keep it or throw it away.

Read Isaiah 1:1-5. What do we learn about the people in those introductory verses? You could have said they were rebellious, corrupt, sinful, or more. Things were so bad God called heaven and earth to witness against Judah. Is there any resemblance between then and now?

Discussion: Describe how God compared the people of Judah to an ox. His words were harsh. He implied they were dumber than the dumb animals. The ox is aware of its owner. The people of Judah didn't know who owned them nor did they know who cared for them.

Read 6-9. We hear God's concern for Israel despite their evil ways. How do you think they felt in verses 10-15 when God shared, He no longer wanted their offerings and sacrifices?

Read Isaiah 1:16-20. After all we have heard about the people of Judah, God invites them to come reason with Him? Listen to the verse again (18). "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

The "scarlet or "crimson" mentioned in Isaiah 1:18 referenced a dye made from an insect that permanently marked garments such as the clothing for the high priest and the hangings in the

tabernacle. The hearers would have understood it to be something like the stains I mentioned. There would have been no way to remove it. The good news is through the blood of Jesus Christ, the stain of sin can be removed permanently.

This means God's plan to send Jesus was already in motion.

Did you hear the urgency of "come now?" Why now? Read 2 Cor 6:1. How do you feel about the Lord offering a sinful Judah cleansing? How do you feel about the cleansing He has offered you or us?

Though they were stained, God chose to cleanse them from their unrighteousness.

How do you feel about God releasing them from their past? How do you feel about God's willingness to pardon them?

What does this say to you about God's character?

Here God offered a rebellious and disobedient people of Judah a choice. Read 1:19-20. They could eat the good of the land, or they could refuse and rebel. God said, "You shall be devoured by the sword."

What was God's part? What was Israel's part? What were the consequences of either choice?

God promises to redeem (21-23).

Wow! Jerusalem had become the harlot. The city was filled with murderers, thieves and the politically corrupt. Yet, in 24-31, God makes it clear as to who He is. He is the Lord of hosts. He is the Mighty one of Israel. The people were wicked.

God promised to refine and redeem Judah.

What do you think He plans to do with us?

If God had hope for the rebellious people of Israel, we know there is hope for us. No matter how far we have sunk in sin, God remains committed to us. We can trust His character.

Our next lesson will be, Trust God's Calendar, beginning with Isaiah chapter 6.