

# Explore the Bible: September 6

*By Don Hicks*

**God Confronts • Isaiah 1:10-20**



Hicks

**“The vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem that Isaiah son of Amoz saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Hear me, you heavens! Listen, earth! For the Lord has spoken:”** Isaiah 1:1-2a (NIV). This is the opening of Isaiah’s lengthy book of prophecy written in the last half of eighth century BC. Isaiah’s name means “the Lord saves” according to the “introduction to Isaiah” in LifeWay’s Explore the Bible, Personal Study Guide for fall 2020. Isaiah prophesied approximately 740-700 B.C.

H.I. Hester author of classic Old Testament textbook, *The Heart of Hebrew History* wrote that “Isaiah belongs at the head of all lists of the prophets. In him prophecy reaches its perfection. He has come to be the standard by which all the others are measured.” Also, Hester tells us “He (Isaiah) was of an aristocratic family, son of Amoz, who is said to have been the brother of king Amaziah.”

A major question as we begin our study of the prophecies and ministry of Isaiah is why was he so bold as to say, **“Hear me, you heavens! Listen, earth! For the Lord has spoken:”** Isaiah 1:2a (NIV). A major part of the answer about his boldness in

found in Isaiah's call in Isaiah 6:

**"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,'" Isaiah 6:1-9 (NIV). □□□□□□**

Biblical prophets are authoritative because of God's call. The words of the Bible are God inspired and inerrant because the Holy Spirit inspires the words of all scripture. Next week's lesson will have us looking much closer at Isaiah's call. Of note is the number of times the book of Isaiah is quoted in the New Testament. Terry J. Betts author of our study in Sunday School says: "Isaiah is quoted in the New Testament more than any other Old Testament book."

God is always reaching out to us in both the Old and New Testament. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

Isaiah 53:6 (KJV□□). Isaiah writes in the focal passage for

this Sunday School, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," Isaiah 1:18 (KJV).

The way, the only way, that scarlet sins shall be as white as snow and crimson red sins shall become as wool is explained in Isaiah 53:6 when God promises to lay our iniquities [sins] on him [Jesus, God's one and only son].

Isaiah often sounds like the New Testament. "And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" from Isaiah 53:6 stresses Jesus' unique power to forgive our sins. Same message as Jesus' answer in John 14:6 "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Now read Isaiah 1:9, "Unless the LORD Almighty had left us some survivors, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah." (NIV) The detail of the reference to Sodom and Gomorrah are found in Genesis 18 & 19.

*Hicks is associational missions director for Jasper Association in Bay Springs.*