

The Story: Chapter 16 **Good News and Bad News**

History of where we are:

930 BC – The Kingdom of Israel split into Northern and Southern Kingdoms

We see multiple Kings and Prophets in the next 400 years

793 BC – We're introduced to Jonah. We only remember Jonah because he was swallowed by a big fish but he was a prophet that went to Nineveh and told them to repent. Nineveh, however, was where the king came from that eventually took the Northern Kingdom of Israel into captivity.

Some kings would do what God wanted them to do but the majority of kings would worship the pagan gods of the other nations around them

722 BC – We see the fall of the Northern Kingdom.

They were taken into captivity by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria

586 BC – The Southern Kingdom is taken into captivity by King Nebuchadnezzar

If you remember, this is the same King Nebuchadnezzar that we see with Daniel a few years later. Daniel had to interpret a dream for him before the King had all the wise men killed.

Today: We're looking at a timeframe between 722 BC and about 680 BC. This time will include the fall of the Northern Kingdom and the introduction of Isaiah the Prophet and of King Hezekiah.

Isaiah:

740 BC he comes along

Ahaz is the King of Judah, the Southern Kingdom at this point.

- This guy is a terrible king. He's the one that actually nailed the temple doors shut!

Isaiah 6:1-8

6 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³ And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." ⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. ⁵ "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.”⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷ With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”⁸ 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!”

This is a picture of Isaiah being cleansed before the Lord.

- He sees God
- Then he recognizes that he’s in trouble because he is unclean and has seen God.
- God cleanses him and then commissions him to go tell the Israelites the message God has for them.

US:

Through the fasting and prayer, you know what we found out...

- God really does want to talk to us when we are willing to give Him the space to work.
- We really are dirty before Him and need to be cleansed.
- Through the fasting process God has cleaned us up and forgiven us of our sins.
- He’s freed us from some bitterness, anger, addiction, and other patterns that have had us in bondage for a long time.

And, NOW He’s commissioning us to go!

He’s asking you today if you’ll be the one to go to your workplace tomorrow and share with them the message that He has for them.

- He’s wondering if you’ll take the love of Christ into your classroom with you tomorrow and allow Him to touch the lives of those children around you.

Here’s the best news for you today: You’ve been with Jesus; He has cleaned you up; and now it’s time to go.

Matthew 28:19-20

¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

You’ve been through the fast.

Last week we told God we were burning the plow and moving forward.

Forward is exactly this: Going and telling the world Who He is and what He's done for you!!!

What was Isaiah's message?

Isaiah 49:6

⁵ And now the Lord says— he who formed me in the womb to be his servant to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself, for I am honored in the eyes of the Lord and my God has been my strength—

⁶ he says: “It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.”

“Isaiah is a book that unveils the full dimensions of God's judgment and salvation.” NIV Study Bible

Here's the simple form: Isaiah basically says, **“Ok boys, I've got some good news and some bad news!”**

His message was that the Israelites were actually going to be taken into captivity in Babylon.

BUT, the good news is that they will not be there forever. And the God of Israel WILL COME and free them again.

One commentator said, **“Their restoration was like a new exodus!”**

He also shares in chapter 53 a beautiful picture of Jesus Christ and the story of Him coming to this earth to save us from our sins!

What is our message to our friends?

Good news and bad news.

Truth: We must start calling out the truth in lives around us. And that's not the good news.

- Your friends need to know that they need Jesus.
- They need to know that the direction they're headed will not get them where they want to go.

- They need to know that they can't afford to put their hope in the things of this world.
- And that Jesus is the only way for them to be satisfied in this life.

But there's a reason we call the Gospel the GOOD NEWS!

Because we don't just come to the world with bad news...
We come with GOOD NEWS!
We come with the best news ever told.

Jesus Christ came to this earth, lived a sin free life, was crucified for our sins, and was raised from the grave 3 days later to offer us LIFE to the FULL!!!!

Now that's GOOD NEWS!!

Look how Isaiah put it:

Isaiah 40:1-5

40 Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. ³ A voice of one calling: "In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. ⁵ And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Look how we get to put it:

Matthew 3:1-3

3 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea ² and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." ³ This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"

Isaiah again...

Isaiah 55:1-2

55 “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. ² Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.

And our message again...

Matthew 11:28

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

This is the message our world needs to hear more than anything else we can say.

If you need to be fired up to go and do that...

King Hezekiah's prayer

II Kings 19:14-19

¹⁴ Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers and read it. Then he went up to the temple of the Lord and spread it out before the Lord. ¹⁵ And Hezekiah prayed to the Lord: “O Lord, God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. ¹⁶ Give ear, O Lord, and hear; open your eyes, O Lord, and see; listen to the words Sennacherib has sent to insult the living God. ¹⁷ “It is true, O Lord, that the Assyrian kings have laid waste these nations and their lands. ¹⁸ They have thrown their gods into the fire and destroyed them, for they were not gods but only wood and stone, fashioned by men's hands. ¹⁹ Now, O Lord our God, deliver us from his hand, so that all kingdoms on earth may know that you alone, O Lord, are God.”

That night the Angel of the Lord went through the Assyrian camp and killed 185,000 men.

- The next morning King Sennacherib decided to break camp and go home!

Do you not think God's got you covered?

- In a world where supposedly no one wants to hear from us anymore but EVERYONE is looking for the answer that we have.

Look how God takes care of those that are faithful:

King Hezekiah fell ill and the Lord sent word through Isaiah that he needed to get ready because he was going to die.

II Kings 20:2-3

² Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord, ³ “Remember, O Lord, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

II Kings 20:4-6

⁴ Before Isaiah had left the middle court, the word of the Lord came to him: ⁵ “Go back and tell Hezekiah, the leader of my people, ‘This is what the Lord, the God of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will heal you. On the third day from now you will go up to the temple of the Lord. ⁶ I will add fifteen years to your life. And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city for my sake and for the sake of my servant David.’ “

God gave Hezekiah 15 more years to live.

- From that point on he knew when his time would be done.

Here’s a question: If God told you that He was giving you exactly 15 years to live what would you spend that time doing?

Isaiah 6:8

⁸ 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!”