

## God Gave Isaiah The Vision Spanning 4 Decades

### Isaiah 1:1

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#### I. The Historical Background and Biblical Context

##### A. Historical Background

**God's Vision for Humanity** was declared "**in the Beginning**" in *crystal clear and glorious fashion* as recorded in Genesis Chapters 1 and 2. Broadly speaking, **God's Vision for Humanity** was for them to (a) remain in Holy Communion with Him, (b) "be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it," "get married and have family," and (c) "work" and "care" for Nature. These **Divine Themes** were *reconstituted* in **God's Plan of Salvation** *initiated* by the LORD after **The Fall** beginning with Noah which was *renewed* in Abraham and Sarah, *continued* in Isaac and Rebecca and *eventually* in The Twelve Tribes of Israel. **Whereas God remained true and faithful to His Vision for Humanity**, the people that He created didn't always remain faithful to Him. As a matter of fact, people in general and the Israelites in particular continued to turn their backs on the God who created them! **Whereas God remained true and faithful to the Promises** that He made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joshua, Samuel and David, **the Israelites again and again broke their faith and became rebellious by rejecting the Covenant**. Whereas God in His Love, Grace, Mercy and Faithfulness continued to *send His Servants* with Messages of **Repentance, Reconciliation, Restoration and Healing**, *the Israelites again and again continued to rebel against Him*. Whereas God continued to offer the way for Redemption through **the Law** so that His people would *conform to His Vision*, *the history of the Israelites (and later Christians) is filled with unfaithfulness, backsliding and rebellion!* However, there have been and continue to be few Remnants who never stopped loving, trusting in and serving the Almighty God!

##### B. Biblical Context

**God's Vision for Humanity has not changed.** God's Promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David *has not changed*. Therefore, God will keep His Word given to His people (Israelites in the OT and Christians in the

NT) guaranteed by **The Covenants** because of His Faithfulness! Because of God's Faithfulness, His Vision for Humanity will be fulfilled in the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ! **Indeed, God's Love for Humanity is from everlasting to everlasting as confirmed by His Word!** Hallelujah!

**God's Plan of Salvation has not changed.** It was *firmly established* in Jesus Christ when God sent Him to be born in human form to *reaffirm God's Plan of Salvation*, *renew The Covenant* in His Blood and *initiate The Church* to spread God's Kingdom on earth! **God's Mercy Endures Forever!**

### **God Never Stopped Calling and Appointing His Servants!**

**The way God Calls, Gifts and Appoints His Servants has not changed.** It is God who called and appointed Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David and the **Prophets** of the Old. It is the same God who called and appointed Apostle Paul and His servants in the New Testament era. It is the same God who called, gifted and appointed the pastors of today including Pastor Ralph S. Hodge. That is Good News! As long as God keeps on calling, gifting and appointing His servants, His Word shall go forth generation after generation! **God's Faithfulness continues until our Lord Jesus Christ comes back!** Hallelujah!

It is very important that I should highlight one **crucial distinction** regarding the Prophets of the OT. The majority of the Prophets were called and appointed to serve God during the **period of Apostacy** which lasted **about 400 years**. *During this period of Apostacy, most of the Israelites completely turned their backs on God only to cling to idol worship of all kinds!* **Therefore, God called and appointed several Prophets to proclaim the prophecy of judgement against the Israelites and idol worshipping nations.**

We will be studying the **Book of Isaiah**, one of the faithful prophets of the Old Testament, who faithfully served God during the **reigns of 4 kings** which covers **40 years** of the history of the Israelites.

## **II. The Lesson: God Gave Isaiah the Vision Spanning 4 Decades**

As I have laid out in the Historical Background and Biblical Context sections, **God's Vision** was cast "In the Beginning" of Creation and *extends* to the **Second Coming of Christ in the End of Time**. *In other words, God's Vision spans the entirety of the History of Humanity from Beginning to End. So it is written in the Scriptures – The Bible.* Hallelujah! The Prophecies of the Old Testament occupy *part* of the history of the Israelites as well as *indications* of **the Future** which includes the history of the Christians. ***That means, a good portion of the Old Testament Prophecies have already been fulfilled!***

So, what is the Nature of the Vision God gave to various servants of His including the OT Prophets? To gain clarity and understanding, let us review the **Definitions of Vision** both from the Dictionary and the Bible.

#### A. Dictionary Definitions:

1. Something ***seen*** otherwise than by ordinary sight; something *beheld as in a dream* or ecstasy or ***revealed as to a prophet***.
2. A visual image *without corporal presence*; also, an object of imaginative contemplation, as to have a vision of wealth, etc.
3. Power or activity of the imagination; **as, a poet with vision.**
4. **Unusual discernment or foresight; as, a man of vision.**
5. Actual sight; ocular perception.

#### B. Biblical Revelations on Visions:

1. Genesis 15:1-21 (vv. 1-7);
2. Numbers 12:1-10;
3. 1 Samuel 3:1-21 (vv. 1, 15).
4. 2 Samuel 7:1-17 (v. 17);
5. Psalm 89:1-29 (vv. 19-29);
6. Isaiah 1:1; chapters **6:1-13**; 21 (vv. 1-2), 22 (vv. 1-5);
7. Ezekiel: the whole book is full of **Exceptionally Vivid Visions**.
8. Daniel chapters 2 (v.19); 7 (v.2); 8:1-27; 9:1-24; 10:1-16; 11:1-14.

#### C. The Characteristics of Visions

As we carefully examine all the Scriptures referred above, one thing is very clear: (a) It is God who gives **Visions**, (b) God Gives **Visions** to His Chosen Servants and (c) **Visions serve a Divine Purpose**. These

characteristics are *all in unity and harmony with God's Original Vision for Humanity and His Plan of Salvation.* Since it is *impossible* for a man or people to be able to see God in His Fullness – His Glorious Presence and Power, He *reveals* Himself in *various ways* in a way people *can* receive, withstand and comprehend.

#### **D. Various Visions Predict God's Actions for Specific Periods of Time.**

- 1. Abraham and Sarah:** When God initiated His Plan of Salvation with them, He guaranteed it with His Promises and the Covenant of Circumcision (Genesis 12 and 15) which produced Isaac the Seed of the Promise. God revealed Himself in Vision to Abraham.
- 2. Moses.** His Call, Gifts and Appointments were revealed in extraordinary and dramatic ways. The Fire in the bush which didn't consume it. The Numerous and Gloriously Manifested Miracles. The Visions of Heavenly Things manifested and replicated among the Israelites (the Priesthood, the Tabernacle, the Glory of God) within the boundaries of the Law and the Covenant.
- 3. Joshua.** The *realization of the Vision* concerning the Promised Land through Joshua.
- 4. David.** All that was *revealed* to David is recorded in Psalms: there are several prophecies in the Psalms; the Blue Print for the Jerusalem Temple given to David by the Holy Spirit (1 Chronicles 28:11-13); the future security of his reign, etc. (2 Samuel 7).
- 5. Isaiah.** The Book of Isaiah is filled with God's Vision regarding the fate of the two rebellious kingdoms of the Israelites as well as prophecies regarding the coming of the Messiah.
  - a) **The Vision** Isaiah saw was one of the most **Glorious Visions** at the Time God **called** him and **appointed** him as a Prophet (Isaiah 6:1-13). Isaiah received this **Vision** "in the year King Uzziah died."
  - b) **The Prophecies** in the Visions God gave Isaiah (as well as the other prophets) included Judgement and Call for Repentance.
  - c) Isaiah served as a Prophet for 40 years during the reign of 4 Kings, namely, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah.
  - d) **Special Context:** List of all the 39 Kings of the Israelites.
    - **Contrast between the Kings of Israel and Judah**
    - **400 years of Apostacy during the time of the kings**

- **Followed by 400 years of Divine Silence after Malachi, the last OT prophets!**

### **III. The Conclusion: Beware of What History Teaches Us!**

#### **1. Loss of Territory in the Context of Failing to Advance God's Kingdom.**

Unfaithfulness, Backsliding and Apostasy lead to conflicts, war, loss of territories, poverty, sickness and slavery. **Satan Gains; we lose big time!**

- **When Satan gains territories and dominates society, Love, Peace, Joy, Goodness, Kindness, Patience and Self Control become absent!**
- **When Satan gains territories and dominates society, Truth, Justice and Freedom are lost!**

#### **2. Gain of Territory in the Context of Advancing God's Kingdom on earth.**

Faithfulness, Obedience and Dedicated Service *facilitate* in us **the Fruit of the Holy Spirit** to grow and flourish in the in those who genuinely believe in God. **We Gain; Satan loses big time!**

- **When more people accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, God's Vision for Humanity is Fulfilled. Acts 1:8 and Matthew 28:18-20 are activated! Discipleship happens and Churches multiply and expand! More and more territories are gained; hence, God's Kingdom on earth expands! There will be:**
  - **Repentance**
  - **Redemption**
  - **Reconciliation**
  - **Restoration**
  - **Spiritual Revival**
- **When the Word of God spreads and Christians increase in number, the Truth, Righteousness and Justice of God prevails in society Satan's strongholds get torn down! Hence, God's Vision is Fulfilled and God's Plan of Salvation keeps on advancing until our Lord Jesus Christ comes back!**