



Isaiah 42 '20/20 Spiritual Vision' Week 2

Recap

God calls us to be doers of the Word and not merely readers or listeners. Many of us have spent much time examining the Scriptures, but very little time allowing the Scriptures to examine us. How many sermons have we heard and forgotten? How many Bible studies have failed to leave a mark in our lives? How much private Bible reading goes in one ear and out the other. The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 15:4

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Before we get into this week's study, think back over what we learned from **Isaiah 40** last week.

Discuss together how God's word offers us hope and how this hope enables us to continue trusting God in difficult times.

Behold the servant

This week we are introduced to the first of Isaiah's famous 'servant songs'. Each song (42:1-9; 49:1-13; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12) reveals more about how God intends to bring hope to Israel and the nations. God will bring blessing through his servant. This servant will succeed where others have failed. Throughout the Scriptures, prophets, kings and sometimes rulers of other nations are called 'God's servant'. Isaiah is described as God's servant in 20:3 and God's people Israel are described as his servant in 41:8-9. However, up to this point, every one of these chosen servants have failed in their responsibilities to faithfully serve God.

Look over the description of Israel as God's servant in 42:18-25. How would you sum up Israel's attitude toward God and God's response to Israel? Bear in mind that Isaiah is pointing forward to the time of the Babylonian exile.

Why do you think that Israel was described as God's servant? What responsibilities did they have?

Why do you think God describes his servant people as blind and deaf?

In what ways are people blind and deaf today? What are the risks to our spiritual vision and hearing?

Read over Isaiah 42:1-9

What responsibilities does God give to his servant?

What will guarantee this servant's success in contrast to God's other servants?

How does God's servant offer hope to God's people in dark times?

Read Isaiah 42:10-17

What are the reasons given for praising God?

What does this teach us about God's ongoing purpose in sending his Servant? How can we join in this praise?

Finding fulfillment

The New Testament declares Jesus to be the servant prophesied in Isaiah. **Take a look at Matthew 11:1-5 and 12:15-21. How does Jesus fulfill the promises of Isaiah 42.**

What do you see more clearly now as a result of studying Isaiah 42? How might this offer you hope in dark times?

Prayer

**Spend time praying together, using the words of Isaiah 42 to give thanks and praise to God.
Pray for God to open the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf to his message of hope.
Call upon God to renew all things and bring his justice to this world.**