



SESSION 1 of 4

Isaiah

MEETING AIM

To tell the story of Isaiah's vision and call, and to encourage the children by explaining that God also wants to speak to them.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Isaiah 6:1-8

BACKGROUND

Isaiah was writing between 740 and 700BC. This was in the period of history where Judah and Israel were in rebellion against God. Isaiah wrote to the people of Judah prophesying of the judgement to come, but also giving words of encouragement. In chapter 6, Isaiah remembers how God called him to this ministry. He mentions that it happened in the year King Uzziah died. This marked the end of a period of relative peace and the beginning of a hugely challenging (albeit self-inflicted) time for God's people.

5 CIRCLE TIME

As you begin the session, invite the children to sit together in a circle and pass round a simple object. Ask the child who has the object to talk about the most amazing thing they've ever seen. Sometimes it's helpful to have a sand timer so you have enough time for each person to share if they want to. Children who don't want to say anything can just pass the object on. Pray and thank God for all the amazing things you've all seen.

5 INTRO ACTIVITY

You will need: a big piece of paper; pens
Place a big piece of paper on the floor (lining or flip-chart paper) and ask the children to draw what they think God would look like if they could see him. Ask them to draw where he might be, and anything or anyone that might be around him. Say that in today's story a man called Isaiah saw God in a very dramatic way!

10 BIBLE STORY

You will need: a chair that can be used as a throne; a long robe or piece of cloth; three sets of dress-up angel wings; barbecue tongs; a piece of black paper scrunched into a ball

Gather the children together and tell this story.

Isaiah was a man who talked to God. And God talked to him. In fact, God gave him messages to pass on to the rest of the people. We say that Isaiah was a prophet. In today's story, we're going to see how God asked Isaiah to give some very important messages to the people.

The story is about a vision Isaiah saw. A vision is a bit like when you have a dream, except that you can be awake when you see it. It's sometimes God's way of getting our attention. A vision can feel like it's really happening to you.

The vision Isaiah saw was all about God. He saw God sitting on a huge throne. *Place the chair at the front and ask someone to come and pretend to be Isaiah, looking at the throne. Ask another person to come and sit on the throne.*

In the vision, God was wearing a long robe. It was so long that the ends of it filled the whole temple where the throne was. *Put a long robe or piece of material round the child on the throne, letting it drape down onto the floor.*

Above God there were some special angels. *Choose someone to be an angel.* These angels had six wings! *Put three sets of wings on your angel.* The angels were calling out: "Holy, holy, holy!" That means they knew God was very different and special. *Ask everyone to call out: "Holy, holy, holy."* The angels made such a racket calling out that the entire temple shook and the whole place filled with smoke!

Isaiah was a bit frightened. God was so mighty, and Isaiah knew that he was small and not very important at all. He also knew that he and the rest of the people were not obeying God's rules as they should have been. "Woe!" he shouted out. *Get everyone to shout "Woe!"*

But God had a plan for Isaiah. One of the special angels flew over to Isaiah with a hot coal in some tongs. *Give the tongs to your angel and let him / her pick up the black scrunched-up paper.* The angel put the coal onto Isaiah's lips and told him he could start again, forgetting the bad things he had done.

Then Isaiah heard God speak. He was saying: "Who will go and speak my words to the people?" Isaiah couldn't help himself; his hand shot straight up in the air: "Me! Me! Send me!" *Get everyone to put up their hands and shout: "Me! Me! Send me!"*

5 CHATTING TOGETHER

Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

- What was surprising about the story?
- How do you think Isaiah felt when he was having his vision?
- Why do you think the vision was so dramatic?
- Why do you think Isaiah suddenly felt he wasn't good enough?
- What message do you think God might have given Isaiah to go and tell the people?

10 CREATIVE RESPONSE

You will need: stones of a size that fit comfortably in a child's hand (but not too small); black paint; PVA glue; brushes; red glitter
Say that you are going to make a pretend hot coal like the one that touched Isaiah's mouth in the story. Mix the black paint with a bit of PVA glue and let the children paint their stones. Before they are dry, sprinkle them with red glitter so they look like glowing coals. As you work, carry on chatting about the story and what it means to be forgiven.

5 PRAYER

You will need: a stone from 'Creative response'
Hold the stone and say that God still wants to talk to us now. When we pray, we can listen as well as talking. Pass the stone (have more than one if your group is large) around the circle and let each child hold it as they listen to what God wants to say to them. Encourage them to imagine what God might want to say.

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