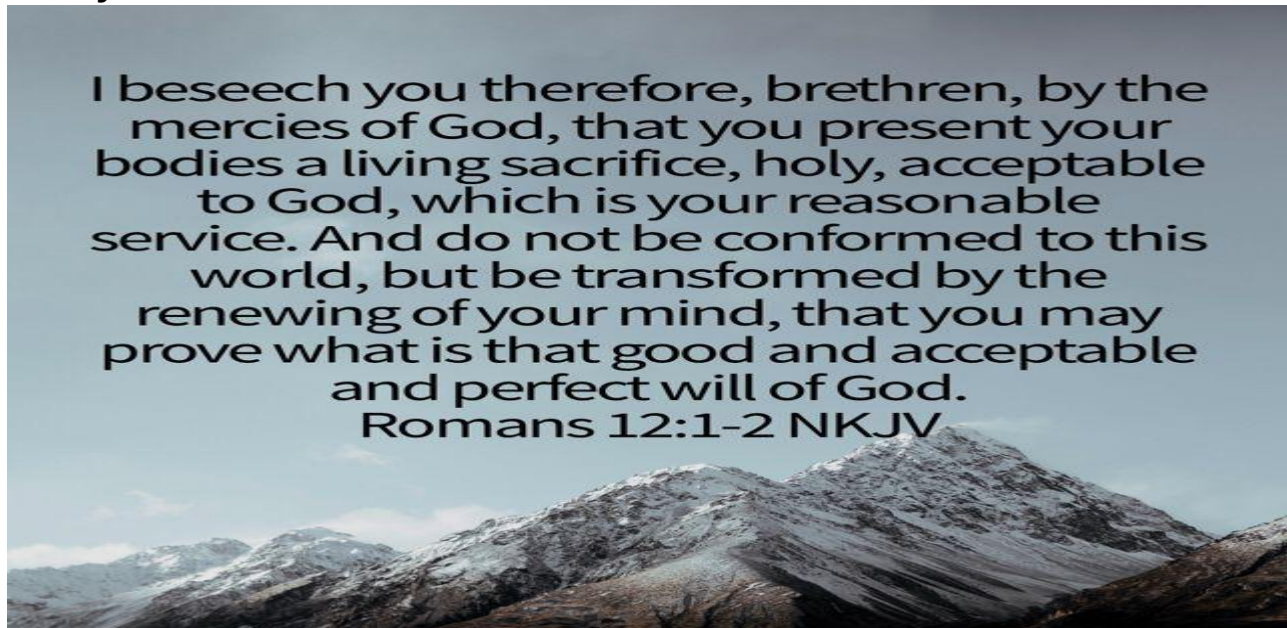


Isaiah: “Here am I” Isaiah 6:1-13 FBC Canton Sunday am July 19, 2026

Introduction: Present ourselves to God for transformation or be stuck in joyless Christianity.



God is about to transform Isaiah's life. He has been a prophet, a believer in the Lord before chapter 6, but he is being called to a completely transformed existence to be writer of one of the deepest books in the OT and a prophet to 4 different kings.

How does that process begin in him and in us?

I. Transformation begins when old allegiances are surrendered. V. 1-13

Uzziah was one of the good ones.

a. The Lord is only one we can have on the throne of our lives. V. 1

i. He is:

- 1. Seated, not panicked.**
- 2. High and lifted above all priorities.**
- 3. Hem of his robe out ranks all.**

a. Hem of the Robe: Train of his Robe: [Rank was viewed in the hem of the robe or skirt; it often held the genealogy, social role, etc.; a contract was sealed by impressing the embroidery into the clay tablet; a divorce could be accomplished by ripping off the hem; etc. Cf. Mt 9:20; 14:36; 23:5; Mk 6:56; Lk 8:44; 1 Sam 24; Ruth 3:9.]

b. The angels serve him, so must we! V. 2-4

- i. Description is meant to put us in awe of God, not the angels.**
- ii. Declaration is meant to put us in submission.**
 - 1. Shaking should shake us to the core.**

- a. 3x Holy for the trinity.
- 2. Whole earth full of his glory.
 - a. What you focus on will be your identity.
- c. **Isaiah is undone, why aren't we? V. 5**
 - i. **Self-focus always destroys savior-focus!**
 - 1. Pride is never the pathway to greatness.
 - ii. **Greater light reveals greater flaws. V. 6**
 - 1. **Our mouths are flawed. James 3**

9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have
 • been made in God's likeness.

10 Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.

11 Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?

12 My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

- iii. **Purity comes before sending. V. 7-13**
 - 1. **Proper placement of "I." John 3:30**

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.
 - Isaiah 6:8 (KJV) -



- a. **Going means "I surrender all."**
 - i. **All our allegiances. Geography.**
 - 1. **Future=sawn in two.**
 - a. All decisions.
 - 2. **Message. V. 9-13**

- a. People will not always hear or see what God is saying through you.

To see with one's eyes will not convince a will that is opposed to the truth (compare Jhn 11:45, 46 12:10, 11). "One must love divine things in order to understand them" [PASCAL].



- b. God is bringing judgment.
- c. God is bringing restoration.
- d. God will always have a faithful remnant.

Conclusion: Surrender for transformation.

1. What is the most important thing to you? Ask God if it should be ranked that high?
2. What does your daily calendar begin with?
3. What do your finances declare what is or is not your most important thing?

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown

Commentary on Isaiah 6

The Book of the Prophet Isaiah
Commentary by A. R. FAUSSET
CHAPTER 6

[Isa 6:1-13](#). VISION OF JEHOVAH IN HIS TEMPLE.

Isaiah is outside, near the altar in front of the temple. The doors are supposed to open, and the veil hiding the Holy of Holies to be withdrawn, unfolding to his view a vision of God represented as an Eastern monarch, attended by seraphim as His ministers of state ([1Ki 22:19](#)), and with a robe and flowing train (a badge of dignity in the East), which filled the temple. This assertion that he had seen God was, according to tradition (not sanctioned by [Isa 1:1](#); see JF & B for [Introduction](#)), the pretext for sawing him asunder in Manasseh's reign ([Hbr 11:37](#)). Visions often occur in the other prophets: in Isaiah there is only this one, and it is marked by characteristic clearness and simplicity.

1. In. . . year. . . Uzziah died--Either *literal* death, or *civil* when he ceased as a leper to exercise his functions as king [*Chaldee*], ([2Ch 26:19-21](#)). 754 B.C. [CALMET] 578 (*Common Chronology*). This is not the first beginning of Isaiah's prophecies, but his inauguration to a higher degree of the prophetic office: [Isa 6:9](#), &c., implies the tone of one who had already experience of the people's obstinacy.

Lord--here *Adonai, Jehovah* in [Isa 6:5](#); *Jesus Christ* is meant as speaking in [Isa 6:10](#), according to [Jhn 12:41](#). Isaiah could only have "seen" *the Son*, not the divine essence ([Jhn 1:18](#)). The words in [Isa 6:10](#) are attributed by Paul ([Act 28:25, 26](#)) to the *Holy Ghost*. Thus the Trinity in unity is implied; as also by the thrice "Holy" ([Isa 6:3](#)). Isaiah mentions the robes, temple, and seraphim, but not the form of God Himself. Whatever it was, it was different from the usual Shekinah: that was on the mercy seat, this on a throne; that a cloud and fire, of this no form is specified: over that were the cherubim, over this the seraphim; that had no clothing, this had a flowing robe and train.

2. stood--not necessarily the posture of *standing*; rather, *were in attendance on Him* [MAURER], hovering on expanded wings.

the--not in the *Hebrew*.

seraphim--nowhere else applied to God's attendant angels; but to *the fiery flying* (not winged, but *rapidly moving*) serpents, which bit the Israelites ([Num 21:6](#)), called so from the poisonous *inflammation* caused by their bites. *Seraph* is to burn; implying the *burning* zeal, dazzling *brightness* ([2Ki 2:11](#) [6:17](#) [Eze 1:13](#) [Mat 28:3](#)) and serpent-like *rapidity* of the seraphim in God's service. Perhaps Satan's form as a *serpent* (*nachash*) in his appearance to man has some

connection with his original form as a seraph of light. The head of the serpent was the symbol of wisdom in Egypt (compare [Num 21:8](#) [2Ki 18:4](#)). The seraphim, with six wings and one face, can hardly be identified with the cherubim, which had four wings (in the temple only two) and four faces ([Eze 1:5-12](#)). (But compare [Rev 4:8](#)). The "face" and "feet" imply a human form; something of a serpentine form (perhaps a basilisk's head, as in the temples of Thebes) may have been mixed with it: so the cherub was compounded of various animal forms. However, seraph may come from a root meaning "princely," applied in [Dan 10:13](#) to Michael [MAURER]; just as cherub comes from a root (changing m into b), meaning "noble."

twain--Two wings alone of the six were kept ready for instant flight in God's service; two veiled their faces as unworthy to look on the holy God, or pry into His secret counsels which they fulfilled ([Exd 3:6](#) [Job 4:18](#) [15:15](#)); two covered their feet, or rather the whole of the lower parts of their persons--a practice usual in the presence of Eastern monarchs, in token of reverence (compare [Eze 1:11](#), their bodies). Man's service a fortiori consists in reverent waiting on, still more than in active service for, God.

3. ([Rev 4:8](#)). The Trinity is implied (on "Lord," see on JF & B for [Isa 6:1](#)). God's holiness is the keynote of Isaiah's whole prophecies.

whole earth--the Hebrew more emphatically, the fulness of the whole earth is His glory ([Psa 24:1](#) [72:19](#)).

4. posts of. . . door--rather, foundations of the thresholds.

house--temple.

smoke--the Shekinah cloud ([1Ki 8:10](#) [Eze 10:4](#)).

5. undone--([Exd 33:20](#)). The same effect was produced on others by the presence of God ([Jdg 6:22](#) [13:22](#) [Job 42:5, 6](#) [Luk 5:8](#) [Rev 1:17](#)).

lips--appropriate to the context which describes the praises of the lips, sung in alternate responses ([Exd 15:20, 21](#) [Isa 6:3](#)) by the seraphim: also appropriate to the office of speaking as the prophet of God, about to be committed to Isaiah ([Isa 6:9](#)).

seen--not strictly Jehovah Himself ([Jhn 1:18](#) [1Ti 6:16](#)), but the symbol of His presence.

Lord--Hebrew, "JEHOVAH."

6. unto me--The seraph had been in the temple, Isaiah outside of it.

live coal--literally, "a hot stone," used, as in some countries in our days, to roast meat with, for example, the meat of the sacrifices. Fire was a symbol of purification, as it takes the dross out of metals ([Mal 3:2, 3](#)).

the altar--of burnt offering, in the court of the priests before the temple. The fire on it was at first kindled by God ([Lev 9:24](#)), and was kept continually burning.

7. mouth. . . lips--(See on JF & B for [Isa 6:5](#)). The mouth was touched because it was the part to be used by the prophet when inaugurated. So "tongues of fire" rested on the disciples ([Act 2:3, 4](#)) when they were being set apart to speak in various languages of Jesus.

iniquity--conscious unworthiness of acting as God's messenger.

purged--literally, "covered," that is, expiated, not by any physical effect of fire to cleanse from sin, but in relation to the *altar sacrifices*, of which Messiah, who here commissions Isaiah, was in His death to be the antitype: it is implied hereby that it is only by sacrifice sin can be pardoned.

8. I . . . us--The change of number indicates the Trinity (compare [Gen 1:26](#) [11:7](#)). Though not a sure *argument* for the doctrine, for the *plural may* indicate merely majesty, it *accords* with that truth proved elsewhere.

Whom. . . who--implying that *few* would be willing to bear the self-denial which the delivering of such an unwelcome message to the Jews would require on the part of the messenger (compare [1Ch 29:5](#)).

Here am I--prompt zeal, now that he has been specially qualified for it ([Isa 6:7](#); compare [1Sa 3:10, 11](#) [Act 9:6](#)).

9. Hear. . . indeed--*Hebrew*, "In hearing hear," that is, *Though ye hear* the prophet's warnings *again and again*, ye are doomed, because of your perverse will ([Jhn 7:17](#)), *not to understand*. Light enough is given in revelation to guide those sincerely seeking to *know*, in order that they may *do*, God's will; darkness enough is left to confound the wilfully blind ([Isa 43:8](#)). So in Jesus' use of parables ([Mat 13:14](#)).

see. . . indeed--rather, "though ye *see again and again*," yet, &c.

10. Make. . . fat-- ([Psa 119:17](#)). "Render them the more hardened by thy warnings" [MAURER]. This effect is the fruit, not of *the truth* in itself, but of the corrupt state of *their hearts*, to which God here judicially gives them over ([Isa 63:17](#)). GESENIUS takes the imperatives as futures. "Proclaim truths, the *result* of which proclamation *will be* their becoming the more hardened" ([Rom 1:28](#) [Eph 4:18](#)); but this does not so well as the former set forth God as *designedly* giving up sinners to *judicial* hardening ([Rom 11:8](#) [2Th 2:11](#)). In the first member of the sentence, the order is, *the heart, ears, eyes*; in the latter, the reverse order, *the eyes, ears, heart*. It is from the *heart* that corruption flows into the *ears and eyes* ([Mar 7:21, 22](#)); but through *the eyes and ears* *healing* reaches the heart ([Rom 10:17](#)), [BENGEL]. ([Jer 5:21](#) [Eze 12:2](#) [Zec 7:11](#) [Act 7:57](#) [2Ti 4:4](#)). In [Mat 13:15](#), the words are quoted in the *indicative*, "*is* waxed gross" (so the *Septuagint*), not the *imperative*, "make fat"; God's word as to the future is as certain as if it were already fulfilled. To *see with one's eyes* will not convince a will that is opposed to the truth (compare [Jhn 11:45, 46](#) [12:10, 11](#)). "One must *love* divine things in order to *understand* them" [PASCAL].

be healed--of their spiritual malady, sin ([Isa 1:6](#) [Psa 103:3](#) [Jer 17:14](#)).

11. how long--will this wretched condition of the nation being hardened to its destruction continue?

until-- ([Isa 5:9](#)) --fulfilled primarily at the Babylonish captivity, and more fully at the dispersion under the Roman Titus.

12. ([2Ki 25:21](#)).

forsaking--abandonment of dwellings by their inhabitants ([Jer 4:29](#)).

13. and it shall return, and. . . be eaten--Rather, "*but it shall be again* given over *to be consumed*": if even a tenth survive the first destruction, it shall be destroyed by a second ([Isa 5:25](#) [Eze 5:1-5, 12](#)), [MAURER and HORSLEY]. In *English Version*, "return" refers to the poor remnant left in the land at the Babylonish captivity ([2Ki 24:14](#) [25:12](#)), which afterwards fled to Egypt in fear ([2Ki 25:26](#)), and subsequently *returned* thence along with others who had fled to Moab and Edom ([Jer 40:11, 12](#)), and suffered under further divine judgments.

tell--rather, "terebinth" or "turpentine tree" ([Isa 1:29](#)).

substance. . . when. . . cast. . . leaves--rather, "As a *terebinth* or *oak in which, when they are cast down* (not 'cast their leaves,' [Job 14:7](#)), *the trunk* or *stock* remains, *so the holy seed* ([Ezr 9:2](#)) *shall be the stock of that* land." The seeds of vitality still exist in both the land and the scattered people of Judea, waiting for the returning spring of God's favor ([Rom 11:5, 23-29](#)). According to Isaiah, not all Israel, but the *elect remnant alone*, is destined to salvation. God shows unchangeable severity towards sin, but covenant faithfulness in preserving a remnant, and to it Isaiah bequeaths the prophetic legacy of the second part of his book (the fortieth through sixty-sixth chapters).

Chuck Smith

Verse by Verse Study on Isaiah 6-10 (C2000)

By Chuck Smith

Shall we turn now in our Bibles to Isaiah, chapter 6, as Isaiah records for us his commissioning by God for his ministry. Now you remember in chapter 1 that Isaiah tells us that his time of prophecy extended through the kingdom or through the kings of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. As we pointed out, it is thought that he was put to death by the evil son of Hezekiah, Manasseh. But his call to his ministry as a prophet is given to us in chapter 6, and it so happened that it came,

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple ([Isa 6:1](#)).

Uzziah was a very popular king. He had reigned over Israel for fifty-two years. He began his reign when he was just sixteen years old. Under his reign the nation, and actually I say Israel, but it was the Southern Kingdom of Judah over which he was reigning. And during this period, Judah had great

military advancement and great prosperity. They developed a great water system, enlarged their agricultural area. They enlarged their territory by moving into the territory of the Philistines-something that they weren't able to do prior to this under the other kings. He tore down the walls of Gath and of Ashdod, the great Philistine stronghold. He planted settlements in the Philistine territory. He had a very strong and powerful standing army of 310,000 men. They set their scientists at work building new types of war weapons for those days, great slings to throw huge stones and to shoot arrows and so forth. And he overall strengthened the nation mightily, so that the people felt very secure and very comfortable during the reign of Uzziah. He was a popular man.

The name of Uzziah spread abroad throughout all the land, even to the going down to Egypt. Everybody heard of him. And not only that, everybody was talking about him. And the name Uzziah was on the lips of all the people. And very importantly we read, "And as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper" ([II Chronicles 26:5](#)). He was a prosperous king. He was a popular king, the kind of a man that you have great confidence in because of his accomplishments. And so the people had great confidence in Uzziah. They had come to trust in him and rely upon him, perhaps too much so, as is often the case with a good, popular leader.

People begin to rely upon them too much and you get your eyes on to man and off of the Lord. And you begin to put your trust in man rather than in the Lord. And so many times it is necessary when that becomes the case, that in order that we might get our eyes back on the Lord, God has to remove the man. And oftentimes God does take that man that you've been relying on and trusting in and removes him out of the scene, in order that you might get your eyes upon God. Such was the case with Uzziah. And so it's very significant that Isaiah would say, "In the year the king Uzziah died I saw the Lord." Prior to that his eyes were on Uzziah. Prior to that his trust was in Uzziah. He was a good, popular king. Things are going well. Things are prosperous. Yet you don't, it seems, unfortunately, think about the Lord so much in prosperity. It's when all of a sudden calamity strikes.

The throne is empty. What are we going to do? Uzziah's son is not the same as his dad. He's surely not capable as was his father. The Northern Kingdom is going down the tubes. Anarchy is reigning, actually. One king after another is being assassinated. There is confusion. And they are in danger of being wiped out. What are we going to do? Uzziah's dead. The throne is empty.

But Isaiah received a vision. A vision of the Lord in which he realized that the throne is not empty. "In the year king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting on the throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple." So God having removed his idol, Isaiah got his eyes now upon the Lord, and he sees that the throne is not vacated. That God is upon the throne.

Oh, how important it is for us to realize that God is on the throne. That God is ruling over the affairs of our lives and God is ruling over the affairs of the world. We are prone to tremble when we see the

world conditions. As you just look at the things that are happening in the world today, it's enough to scare any sane man and give him a heart attack. But if you look beyond and realize hey, God is ruling, God is in control, then I can rest. I can sleep at night, only because I know that God is in control. I know that God is sitting upon the throne. So important that we realize that God is upon the throne. In our lives God rules, God reigns. That's the important thing. So because God does reign, whatever does come upon my path is there because God has allowed it to come upon my path. The Lord reigns. And it is so important that we have this as a mental concept constantly. God reigns.

Now he describes the throne of God. He sees the seraphim that are above the throne of God. And he describes the seraphim. Now we are told that there are also cherubim around the throne of God, and these are angelic beings. And evidently there is a great similarity between the cherubim and the seraphim. Now in Ezekiel, he also, and we'll be getting to that soon, he also had a vision of the throne of God in chapter 1 and chapter 10. And he described the cherubim, other angelic beings that are around the throne of God.

In John, chapter 4, he had a vision of the throne of God. And he saw the glassy sea in front of the throne. He saw the emerald around the throne of God, and then he also saw these living creatures. Whether the seraphim or the cherubim that John describes, we do not know. But basically their ministry is that of just worshipping and leading the worship of God around His throne, as the cherubim or the creatures in Revelation cry, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty, which is, which was, which is to come" ([Revelation 4:8](#)), so here the seraphim. They are described as having six wings. With two of them they cover their face, with two of them they cover their feet and they use two of them to fly. Interesting looking creatures to be sure. They are not, though, to be mistaken as birds or some kind of an animal, because they are highly intelligent creatures.

And one cries to another, and says, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory ([Isa 6:3](#)).

Declaring the glory of God and the holiness of God.

And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke ([Isa 6:4](#)).

And so he describes the heavenly scene, even as John described the heavenly scene in Revelation, chapter 4 and 5, and even as Ezekiel describes in chapter 1 and 10. Now I would recommend these chapters as important reading for any serious child of God. Because he is describing something that you're going to be seeing before very long. Events that you're going to be watching. And if you don't read about them and know what's going on, then you're going to look like some hick when you get to heaven, mouth open, and everybody will know you didn't do your homework. So these are interesting portions to study, so that when you get there and the whole thing is coming down and the cherubim are saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty which is, which was, which is to come," then you can

say, "All right, now watch those twenty-four guys. Watch them, they're going to take their crowns and throw them on that glassy sea. Watch this now, you know." And you'll be able to really play it cool because you know the sequence of the worship there about the throne of God. So I highly recommend the reading of these portions where the throne of God is described. Always with each description there is that awesomeness of God, the Creator of the universe, as He sits upon His throne, as He rules and reigns over the universe, and that worship and acknowledgment of Him about the throne. Isaiah had the vision of the throne of God.

Then said I, Woe is me! ([Isa 6:5](#))

Because now he sees himself in a whole new light. Up till now he had been looking at himself in the dim light of the world in which he lived. And in the dim light of the world around us we don't look too bad. In fact, we look pretty good. But I'll tell you, be careful of looking at yourself in a mirror in the sunshine. Nothing is hid. I mean, looking at yourself in that light is a whole different story. And so looking at ourselves in the light of God is a whole different story. I don't know, I don't know of a single man who has had a true vision of God who didn't more or less with Isaiah say, "Woe is me!"

When Peter realized it was the Lord, he said, "Depart from me, Lord. I'm a sinful man." When Daniel describes his vision of God and all, he said, "My beauty turned into ugliness." Seeing God, we see ourselves in the true light. And no man can be proud. You see a man who is proud, you see a man who has not yet seen God.

Jesus in the beatitudes, in His great manifesto in [Matthew 5](#), [6](#) and [7](#) began the beatitudes. In fact, He began the whole sermon by saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" ([Matthew 5:3](#)). Now He begins the sevenfold description of the Christian in these beatitudes, the characteristics that mark the Christian. But the first characteristic is poor in spirit. From whence comes this poverty of spirit? It comes when I see God. That's the beginning of my walk with God. My vision of God begins my walk with Him, and in the vision of God, seeing God, I see myself. And as I see myself I say, "Hey, woe is me. I'm nothing." Poverty of spirit.

"Blessed are they which mourn," the next characteristic, "for they shall be comforted" ([Matthew 5:4](#)). My poverty of spirit leads me to weeping over my condition. How could I do those things? How could I have done that? And I see myself now in God's light and oh, what a revelation that is. "Then said I, "Woe is me!"

for I am undone ([Isa 6:5](#));

I'm crooked and I dwell amongst.

and I have unclean lips, and I dwell amongst a people of unclean lips ([Isa 6:5](#)):

So he saw one of the seraphim then that flew, and with his tongs he took a glowing coal from off the altar. Now the study of the tabernacle is extremely interesting, because the tabernacle is a model of

heaven and the throne of God. And so if you want to really know what heaven is going to look like, that is the throne of God area of heaven, you can study the tabernacle and there you have a little model. And God said to Moses, "Make sure that you make it according to the specifications." Why? Because it's a model of heavenly things. So even in the earthly tabernacle they had the altar with the coals, so there in heaven is an altar with coals. And one of the seraphim went to the altar with tongs, took these coals and he brought it to Isaiah and he touched his lips with that glowing coal. And he said, "Your iniquity is taken away, or your crookedness is taken away." His cry, "Woe is me for I am crooked." Your crookedness is taken away. And your sin is cleansed. I'm a man of unclean lips. "Your sin is purged," he said, "or cleansed." So the cleansing by the work of God.

Notice it wasn't Isaiah's work. It was God's work. Isaiah's was the recognition of his condition. God's work was that of the cleansing then once he recognized his condition. All God wants you to do is acknowledge your condition. He doesn't ask you even to reform. That comes. But He asks you to just acknowledge, to confess. "If thou shall confess thy sins, He is faithful and just to forgive you your sins, and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness" ([1 John 1:9](#)). But you got to confess your sin. "Woe is me! I'm undone. I'm dwelling amongst the people of unclean lips. I have unclean lips." Your crookedness is taken away. Your uncleanness, your sin is cleansed. What a glorious thing, the work of God. And it comes immediately upon my acknowledgment and confession.

David in the thirty-second Psalm begins the psalm, "O how happy is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" ([Psalm 32:1](#)). And before I confess my sin, hey, I was just dried up inside. It was like the drought of summer. I was so dry and parched. My bones were aching. For the hand of God was heavy on me. Then I said, "I will confess my sin unto the Lord and Thou forgavest my sin" ([Psalm 32:5](#)). Just before he got the words out of his mouth, the minute in his heart he said, "Oh, I'm so horrible, I'm just going to confess. I'm going to just turn it over to God," in that moment the cleansing and the forgiveness came. And that's just how anxious God is to cleanse and forgive you. The moment in your heart you say, "God, I have sinned. I'm sorry. Woe is me; I'm crooked. My lips are unclean." Just that quick the seraphim came and said, "Hey, your crookedness is taken away. Your sin is cleansed." Oh, the beautiful work of God's grace and the forgiveness in His love for us. All He asks is you just confess. He is willing and wanting to wash and cleanse you from all your sins. But that isn't the end of it. God does want to work in your life. God will work in your life if you give Him the opportunity. But God never stops there. God wants to work through your life. There is a needy world out there. It's in darkness. You are dwelling in the midst of people of unclean lips. And they need to know that God will wash and cleanse them also. So the work of God in your life always ends up objectively. First of all subjective, what God can do for you. But then what God can do through you to touch others. And that's what it's all about.

So I saw God. When I saw God, I said, "Woe is me!" When he heard them declare, "Holy, holy, holy," declaring the holiness of God, then you see yourself and, "Woe is me, I'm crooked."

Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall we send, who will go for us? Then said I ([Isa 6:8](#)),

Now he's speaking again. But now this is a different, this is a man who is now being cleansed. This is a man whose life has been touched by the fire of God. And He said, "'Who shall we send?' 'Then said I,'"

Here am I [Lord]; send me ([Isa 6:8](#)).

Once God has touched your life, then God wants to use your life to touch others. God has a work that He wants to do. And the problem is always, who will go for us? Whom will we send? Jesus said, "Behold the fields are white unto harvest but the laborers are few" ([Matthew 9:37](#)). Who will go for us? Whom shall we send? The man whose life has been touched by God becomes an available instrument for God. "Here am I, Lord. Send me." And his commission:

And so God said to him, Go, and tell this people ([Isa 6:9](#)),

Now at this time Judah was on the road down. They have forsaken the living God. Idol worship had been introduced. There were times of spiritual reform, but they were usually surface. They never got into the real heart of the nation itself. And yet, God wasn't going to just let them be destroyed without still a witness. But they weren't going to really listen to the witness, but still God was going to be faithful and witness to them anyhow. And that is, to me, an interesting thing about God. Even though a person isn't going to respond, even though a person won't listen, yet God will still give them the chance. God will still speak to them. He doesn't cease talking. And so He said, "Go tell this people."

You may hear indeed, but you don't understand; you may see indeed, [but you're really not seeing,] you don't perceive ([Isa 6:9](#)).

And so God said,

Make the heart of the people fat ([Isa 6:10](#)),

That is, give them the word. Give them the message of God. That they'll have no excuse.

their ears heavy ([Isa 6:10](#)),

Just hang the message on them.

shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and be healed. Isaiah responded to the Lord, How long? And he answered, Until the cities are wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate ([Isa 6:10-11](#)),

Now God was going to continue to preach to these people and continue to warn these people and continue to give them opportunity until the whole land was desolate, till the last one was left. God will continue His witness. Even as God will continue His witness to the world today and is bearing witness

to the world today, but the world today isn't listening. They're making fun of the witness of God. But still we are to witness. God will not leave Himself without a witness. Oh, the political cartoonists on the editorial pages are having a field day with the moral majority, and with creation and evolution.

I saw on Daily Pilot today in the editorial page a cartoon of some big, fat slob saying to his little son who's coming home from school with his books, "God made me in His own image, you know, and after His likeness. I didn't evolve." It's just dispersion that is cast against God, really. And still we're to preach. Still we're to bear witness. Still we're to warn. Though they don't listen, though they don't see, though their hearts are heavy, though their eyes are blinded, still God wants a witness left with them. Until the place is desolate there's nothing left, God will bear witness.

Now the church is the instrument by which God is bearing His witness to the world today. But the church will soon be taken out. The witness of the church is just about over. Once the church is taken out, it doesn't mean God's witness is over. Just the witness of the church is over. God's going to send two witnesses, powerful witnesses with all kinds of power, and He's sending them to Jerusalem. God will also seal 144,000 of the Jews that will be witnesses for Him during these dark, dark, dark hours that are coming upon the earth. And then God is even going to send angels flying through the midst of heaven orbiting the earth bearing witness and preaching the everlasting gospel and warning men not to take the mark of the beast. Even down to the end, even by angelic beings God is going to keep His witness going until the whole place is desolate, left without inhabitants. For God is faithful in bearing His witness to the people.

So how long, Lord? Till the whole thing is over. So the witnesses, God had His witnesses, His prophets, who were warning the people right up until and through the time that Nebuchadnezzar carried off the first captives. Jeremiah was still there bearing witness to the people. Telling them to repent and turn to God and get right with God.

And the LORD has removed people far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. But yet it shall be that a tenth will return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof ([Isa 6:12-13](#)).

In other words, an oak tree cast its leaves. It looks like it's dead, but yet it comes back. The teil tree looks like it's so dead, but yet it comes back. So it will look like the nation Israel is dead. It will appear that way, but yet God said, "I'll bring them back. A tenth part, only one in ten will return. But I will bring them back." And so God's promise of bringing the people back from the captivity.

Chuck Smith
Sermon Notes for Isaiah 6:1

I. UZZIAH HIS GREATNESS.

A. Entered throne at perilous times.

1. Grandfather & father both murdered.

a. Both went after idolatry.

B. Although only 16 years old he was very prosperous.

C. He wrought great victories against the Philistines & Arabians.

D. He fortified Jerusalem built towers & ingenious weapons of war.

II. UZZIAH HIS MISTAKE [2Ch 26:8](#).

A. His name spread abroad vs. 8.

B. His name spread abroad for he was strong vs. 15.

C. Everyone was saying UZZIAH THIS UZZIAH.

1. His name on lips of all the people.

III. "IN THE YEAR KING UZZIAH DIED I SAW THE LORD HIGH AND LIFTED UP."

A. God had to remove His idol Uzziah before His prophet could see Him.

B. Great tragedy of many ministers & evangelists today.

1. Busy making a name for themselves.

a. People go from service saying:

1. "Isn't he a wonderful preacher!"

2. "Isn't he a powerful speaker!"

3. He's marvelous.

2. How much better to lift up Christ to the extent that they will say:

a. Isn't Jesus wonderful.

C. Don't get your eyes on man.

1. A priest was once applauded as he entered the service. "Strange they should applaud the servant in the Master's House."

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David Guzik

Study Guide for Isaiah 6

ISAIAH'S CONVICTION, CLEANSING AND CALL

A. The conviction of the prophet.

1. ([Isaiah 6:1-2](#)) What Isaiah saw.

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.

a. **In the year that King Uzziah died**: King Uzziah of Judah had a long and distinguished reign, described in [2 Chronicles 26](#) and in [2 Kings 15:1-7](#) (**Uzziah** is called *Azariah* in [2 Kings 15](#)).

i. Uzziah began his reign when he was only 16 years old, and he reigned 52 years. Overall, he was a good king, and [2 Kings 15:3](#) says, *he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done*. [2 Chronicles 26:5](#) says, *He sought God in*

the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God; and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him prosper.

ii. Uzziah also led Israel in military victories over the Philistines and other neighboring nations, and he was a strong king. Uzziah was an energetic builder, planner, and general. ²

[Chronicles 26:8](#) says of Uzziah, *His fame spread as far as the entrance of Egypt, for he became exceedingly strong.*

iii. But Uzziah's life ended tragically. [2 Chronicles 26:16](#) says, *but when he was strong his heart was lifted up, to his destruction, for he transgressed against the LORD his God by entering the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense.* In response, God struck Uzziah with leprosy, and he was an isolated leper until his death.

iv. So, to say **in the year King Uzziah died** is to say a lot. It is to say, "In the year a great and wise king died." But it is also to say, "In the year a great and wise king who had a tragic end died." Isaiah had great reason to be discouraged and disillusioned at the death of King Uzziah, because a great king had passed away, and because his life ended tragically. Where was the LORD in all this?

b. **I saw the LORD sitting on a throne**: Where was the LORD in all this? The LORD was **sitting on a throne**! God was still enthroned in heaven and was still in charge of all creation.

i. There is a throne in heaven, and the LORD God sits upon it as the sovereign ruler of the universe! This is the central fact of heaven; that there is **an occupied throne** in heaven. God does not sit on a **chair** in heaven. Anyone might sit on a **chair**. But **sovereign kings** sit on thrones. **Judges** sit on thrones. Those with proper **authority and sovereignty** sit on thrones.

ii. Isaiah was not alone in seeing God's throne. Almost everyone in the Bible who had a vision of heaven, was taken to heaven, or wrote about heaven spoke of God's throne.

- The prophet Michaiah saw God's throne ([1 Kings 22:19](#)).
- Job saw God's throne ([Job 26:9](#)).
- David saw God's throne ([Psalm 9:4](#) and [9:7](#), [11:4](#))
- The Sons of Korah saw God's throne ([Psalm 45:6](#), [47:8](#)).
- Ethan the Ezrahite saw God's throne ([Psalm 89:14](#)).
- Jeremiah saw God's throne ([Lamentations 5:19](#))
- Ezekiel saw God's throne ([Ezekiel 1:26](#), [10:1](#)).
- Daniel saw God's throne ([Daniel 7:9](#)).
- The Apostle John saw God's throne ([Revelation 4:1-11](#)). In fact, the book of Revelation may as well be called "the book of God's throne," because God's throne is specifically mentioned more than 35 times in that book.

iii. The core belief of atheism or materialism is that there is no throne; there is no seat of authority or power all the universe must answer to. The core belief of humanism is that there is a throne — but man sits upon it. But the Bible makes it clear that there is a throne in heaven, and no fallen man sits on the throne, but the Lord GOD is enthroned in heaven.
iv. Isaiah may have been depressed or discouraged because a great leader of Judah was no longer on the throne. God in heaven now shows Isaiah, “Don’t worry about it, Isaiah. Uzziah may not be on his throne, but I am on My throne.”

c. **High and lifted up**: The throne was exalted and majestic. The throne set its Occupant in a superior position.

d. **The train of His robe filled the temple**: Kings of that time would wear robes with long trains because they were difficult to maneuver and work in. Wearing a long train meant, “I am important enough that I don’t have to work. I am a person of honor and dignity. Others must serve me and wait upon me.” Essentially, the same is said when a bride wears a dress with a long train today.

i. God is so honored, so important, so dignified, that **the train of His robe filled the temple**. That’s a long train.

e. **Above it stood seraphim**: Surrounding the throne of God are angels known here as **seraphim**. In many other passages, these angels are known as cherubim (Psalms 80:1; Isaiah 37:16; Ezekiel 10:3) or as the living creatures of Revelation 4:6-11. This is the only chapter in the Bible where these creatures are named **seraphim**.

i. Some deny that cherubim and **seraphim** refer to the same beings. But the name **seraphim** means, “burning ones.” Ezekiel 1:13 describes cherubim (see also Ezekiel 10:15) this way: their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning. That certainly seems to describe burning ones.

f. **Each one had six wings**: In Revelation 4:8, the Apostle John also mentions their **six wings**. They need the six wings, so each can cover **his face** (to show they are too lowly to look upon the LORD), so each can cover **his feet** (to hide this “humble” area of the body, so nothing even possibly deficient is seen in the LORD’s presence), and so each can fly.

i. The LORD said to Moses, “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live” (Exodus 33:20). Apparently, the same is true even for angels, so the **seraphim** cover their faces.

ii. “The two wings with which the angels fly mean nothing else than their ready and cheerful performance of the commandments of God.... The two wings with which they cover their face show plainly enough that even angels cannot endure God’s brightness, and that they

are dazzled by it in the same manner as when we attempt to gaze upon the radiance of the sun.” (Calvin)

iii. “For the seraph remembers that even though sinless he is yet a creature, and therefore he conceals himself in token of his nothingness and unworthiness in the presence of the thrice Holy One.” (Spurgeon)

g. **Each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew:** The **seraphim** used four of their wings to express their humility and used two of their wings to express their willingness and ability to serve God. This is the proper balance.

i. “Thus they have four wings for adoration and two for active energy; four to conceal themselves, and two with which to occupy themselves in service; and we may learn from them that we shall serve God best when we are most deeply reverend and humbled in his presence. Veneration must be in larger proportion than vigor, adoration must exceed activity. As Mary at Jesus’ feet was preferred to Martha and her much serving, so must sacred reverence take the first place, and energetic service follow in due course.” (Spurgeon)

2. (Isaiah 6:3-4) What Isaiah heard.

And one cried to another and said:

**“Holy, holy, holy *is* the LORD of hosts;
The whole earth *is* full of His glory!”**

And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

a. **One cried to another and said:** The **seraphim** are not even directly addressing the LORD God here. They are proclaiming His glorious nature and character to one another, in the presence of the LORD.

b. **Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts:** Why do they repeat “**holy**” three times? Wasn’t it enough to simply say that the LORD was “**holy**” once? It wasn’t enough. They say it three times because there are Three Persons in the One God.

i. Calvin didn’t think that this was the best verse to prove the Trinity, but he still saw the truth of the Trinity here. “The ancients quoted this passage when they wished to prove that there are three persons in one essence of the Godhead.... I have no doubt that the angels here describe One God in Three Persons.”

c. **Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts**: Why do they repeat “**holy**” three times? Wasn’t it enough to simply say that the LORD was “**holy**” once? It wasn’t enough. In the Hebrew language, intensity is communicated by repetition. To say the LORD is **holy** says something. To say the LORD is **holy, holy**, says far more. To say, **holy, holy, holy is the LORD** is to declare His holiness in the highest possible degree.

i. What does it mean that God is **holy**, and **holy** in the highest possible sense? **Holiness**, at its root, has the idea of apartness. It describes someone, or something, which is set apart from other people or things. An object can be holy if it is set apart for sacred service. A person is holy if they are set apart for God’s will and purpose.

ii. What is the LORD set apart from? He is set apart from creation, in that the Lord GOD is not a creature, and He exists outside of all creation. If all creation were to dissolve, the Lord GOD would remain. He is set apart from humanity, in that His “nature” or “essence” is Divine, not human. God is not a super-man or the ultimate man. God is not merely smarter than any man, stronger than any man, older than any man, or better than any man. You can’t measure God on man’s chart at all. He is Divine, and we are human.

iii. Yet, because we are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27), humanity is compatible with Divinity. They are different, but they do not automatically oppose each other. This is how Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity, could add humanity to His deity when He became a man. Unfallen humanity is not deity, but it is compatible with it.

iv. God’s holiness is a part of everything He is and does. God’s power is a holy power. God’s love is a holy love. God’s wisdom is a holy wisdom. Holiness is not an aspect of God’s personality; it is one characteristic of His entire Being.

d. **The whole earth is full of His glory**: The seraphim surrounding the throne of God could see this probably more clearly than Isaiah could. We are often blind to the obvious glory of God all around us.

e. **The posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out**: The seraphim are majestic beings, and their voice carries weight. When they speak, the doorposts of God’s throne room shake! The idea may be that Isaiah was watching from the doorway, and when the seraphim cried out, he could feel the doorposts shake.

i. Yet these high, majestic beings — perhaps the highest beings in all of God’s creation — have one occupation. Their existence is given over to the praise and worship and honor of the LORD God who is enthroned in heaven. What could we possibly do that is a higher calling than that?

ii. They sang so powerfully the doorposts were shaken! Shouldn’t we sing with the same passion, the same heart, the same intensity? Do those angels have more to thank and praise God for than we do?

f. **The house was filled with smoke**: This **smoke** reminds us of the pillar of cloud that represented the presence of God ([Exodus 13:21-22](#)), the smoke on Mount Sinai ([Exodus 19:18](#)), and the cloud of God's Shekinah glory that filled the temple ([1 Kings 8:10-12](#)). A cloud of glory often marks the presence of the LORD.

3. ([Isaiah 6:5](#)) What Isaiah felt.

So I said:

“Woe *is* me, for I am undone!

Because I *am* a man of unclean lips,

And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;

For my eyes have seen the King,

The LORD of hosts.”

a. **Woe is me, for I am undone**: What made Isaiah feel like he was coming apart? Two things. First, the sight and sound of the **seraphim**. Second, the vision of the Lord GOD.

i. When Isaiah saw the angels, in all their holy humility, obedience, and praise to God, he realized not only that he was unlike the Lord GOD, he was also unlike the angels. They could cry out **Holy, holy, holy** and praise God so beautifully, but he could not because he was **a man of unclean lips**. “I am a man of unclean lips; I cannot say, Holy, holy, holy! which the seraphs exclaim. They are holy; I am not so: they see God and live; I have seen him, and must die, because I am unholy.” (Clarke)

ii. When Isaiah saw the LORD, he knew what kind of man **he** was. As poorly as he compared to the **seraphim**, that was nothing in relation to how he compared to the LORD. This vision (or actual experience) of the throne of God did not immediately make Isaiah feel **good**. The more clearly he saw the LORD, the more clearly he saw how bad his state was.

iii. Isaiah's deep sense of depravity is consistent with the experience of other godly men in the presence of the LORD. Job ([Job 42:5-6](#)), Daniel ([Daniel 10:15-17](#)), Peter ([Luke 5:8](#)) and John ([Revelation 1:17](#)) each had similar experiences.

iv. **I am undone** is not a bad place to be. “God will never do anything with us till he has first of all undone us.” (Spurgeon)

b. **Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips**: Isaiah saw his sinfulness, and the sinfulness of his people, mainly in terms of **sinful speech**.

i. By nature, our lips are full of flattery and false intent: **With flattering lips and a double heart they speak** ([Psalm 12:2](#)). By nature, our lips lie and are proud: **Let the lying lips be put to silence, which speak insolent things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous** ([Psalm 31:18](#)). By nature, our lips deceive: **Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit** ([Psalm 34:13](#)). By nature, our lips are violent: **Swords are in their**

lips (Psalm 59:7). By nature, our lips bring death to others: *The poison of asps is under their lips* (Psalm 140:3).

ii. Isaiah did not think for a moment that this was his *only* sin, but he saw that this was an example of the *great and incurable disease of sin* in him and his people.

c. **For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts**: Isaiah was a righteous, godly man by all outward appearance. Yet when he saw the enthroned **King**, the **LORD of hosts**, he saw how sinful he was in comparison.

i. Isaiah's life may have been as brilliant as a diamond. But when you lay a diamond against a perfectly black background and have the right light upon it, you can see every flaw and imperfection — flaws that were invisible before. Even so, when Isaiah's righteous life lay against the background of God's perfection, it looked different.

B. The cleansing of the prophet.

1. (Isaiah 6:6) A seraphim brings a coal from the altar.

Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar.

a. **One of the seraphim flew to me**: These angelic beings, surrounding the throne of God, ministered to Isaiah. One flew to Isaiah with **a live coal** — which means the **coal** was still hot and burning. It was so hot that even an angel had to use **the tongs from the altar**.

b. **The altar**: This must be heaven's version of the altar of incense that was set before the holy of holies in the tabernacle of God (Exodus 30:1-10). We know that the earthly tabernacle God instructed Moses to build was made after the pattern of a heavenly reality (Exodus 25:9).

i. The **throne** is for God; that is where He rules and reigns. **The altar** is for us; that is where we find cleansing and purging from sin. We should never confuse the two.

ii. "The fire was *taken from the altar*, to intimate that it was divine or heavenly; for the law forbade any *strange fire* to be brought to it, because in sacred things every human mixture is absolute profanation. By this figure, therefore, Isaiah was taught that all purity flows from God alone." (Calvin)

2. (Isaiah 6:7) A coal from the altar cleanses Isaiah's lips.

And he touched my mouth with it, and said:

"Behold, this has touched your lips;

Your iniquity is taken away,

And your sin purged."

a. **And he touched my mouth with it**: This must have been painful; a burning hot coal applied to the lips, one of the more sensitive areas of the body. Yet, nothing is written that Isaiah reacted in pain. Either there was no pain, because of a special blessing by God, or the pain did not matter because of the majesty of the surroundings and the goodness of the cleansing.

i. Isaiah knew he did not serve the LORD like these seraphim, the burning ones. So God said, "I will light a fire in you, also!" That is why a burning coal was used to purify Isaiah. "Jehovah, who is a consuming fire, can only fitly be served by those who are on fire, whether they be angels or men." (Spurgeon)

ii. Isaiah cried out, *Woe is me, for I am undone!* (Isaiah 6:5) We might think that a burning coal to the lips would be more painful than a vision of the holy God. But for Isaiah, it was more disturbing to see the holiness of God, and to see his lack of holiness, than it was to have a burning coal applied to his lips.

b. **Your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged:** Isaiah's sin had to be burned away; the fire of judgment was applied to his place of sin.

i. This was obviously a spiritual transaction. If one has a sinful mouth, it will do nothing to place a burning hot coal on their lips. That will not take away or purge their sin.

ii. Yet, the same principle works on our behalf in regard to Jesus' work on Calvary. Our sin was placed upon Him, and He was burned with the fire of God's judgment. Yet because He was holy and righteous Himself, the fire of God's judgment did not harm Him; it only burned away the sin, our sin.

iii. Once Isaiah had met with the LORD, been convicted of his sin, and cleansed from its guilt, then he was ready to serve God. "The effect of that live coal will be to fire the lip with heavenly flame. 'Oh,' says one man, 'a flaming coal will burn the lip so that the man cannot speak at all.' That is just how God works with us; it is by consuming the fleshly power that he inspires the heavenly might. Oh let the lip be burnt, let the fleshly power of eloquence be destroyed, but oh for that live coal to make the tongue eloquent with heaven's flame; the true divine power which urged the Apostles forward, and made them conquerors of the whole world." (Spurgeon)

C. The commission of the prophet.

1. (Isaiah 6:8) God calls and Isaiah responds.

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying:

"Whom shall I send,

And who will go for Us?"

Then I said, "Here am I! Send me."

a. **Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?** God looked for someone to send. He wanted someone to go.

i. How strange it is for God to ask a question at all! What does God wonder about? What questions would He have? What does God not know? But God was asking for a person because God wants to reach the world, and He wants to reach it through willing

people. It isn't that God doesn't know who these people are. It is that God is waiting for ready hearts to reveal themselves.

ii. How strange it is that this God of majesty, sovereignty, and power asks for volunteers! He could easily create robots to do His work or command angels to carry out His will. But God wants willing, surrendered servants. Have you been waiting for God to force you to serve Him? He looks for volunteers.

b. **Whom shall I send**: This means that the missionary, the Christian worker, the witness of Jesus Christ, is sent. This is a divine commission. **Who will go for Us** means that the missionary, the Christian worker, the witness of Jesus Christ, has decided to go. God's divine will to send and the human will to go are in perfect cooperation.

i. Here we see another subtle reference to the Trinity. Who is sending? I or Us? It seems to be the same Person speaking in both the singular and the plural. It is the same Person! "The change of the number, I and us, is very remarkable; and both being meant of one and the same Lord, do sufficiently intimate a plurality of the persons in the Godhead." (Poole)

c. **Here am I! Send me**: Isaiah emphatically answered God's call. He did not hesitate. Isaiah wanted to be the answer to God's question.

i. What created this kind of heart in Isaiah? First, he had a heart that had been in the presence of God. He had a heart that knew its own sinfulness. He had a heart that knew the need among the people, the need for God's word. He had a heart that had been touched by God's cleansing fire. And he had a heart that heard God's heart to reach the nations.

d. **Send me**: This meant Isaiah was submitted to the LORD in all his service. He didn't even say, "Here I am, I will go." Isaiah would not go at all unless he knew he was sent by the LORD. Many are quick to say, "Here I am, I will go" but never wait for the LORD to **send** them.

2. **(Isaiah 6:9-10)** His mission described.

And He said, "Go, and tell this people:

'Keep on hearing, but do not understand;

Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'

Make the heart of this people dull,

And their ears heavy,

And shut their eyes;

Lest they see with their eyes,

And hear with their ears,

And understand with their heart,

And return and be healed."

a. **And He said, "Go"**: When we say, "Here am I! Send me" to the LORD, we should expect that He will say **"Go."** He may say, "**Go** and serve Me here" or "**Go** and serve me there" or "**Go** and be prepared for future service," but God always has a **"Go"** for us.

- b. **Go and tell these people, “Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing but do not perceive”**: God told Isaiah to go and preach to a people who wouldn’t respond so that their guilt would be certain. As Trapp wrote, Isaiah would “Preach them to hell.”
- c. **Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes**: This is an unsatisfying audience and ministry for any preacher. Isaiah might not be satisfied with this ministry. The people might not be satisfied with it. But God would be satisfied with it.
- d. **And understand with their heart, and return and be healed**: This shows what the word of God can accomplish when it is received with open eyes, open ears, and an open heart. It brings understanding to our hearts, it makes us return, and it brings healing to our lives. If you are under the word of God and these things aren’t happening to you, ask God to work with your eyes, ears, and heart.

3. (Isaiah 6:11-13) Isaiah is told how long he must prophesy this way.

Then I said, “Lord, how long?”

And He answered:

“Until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant,

The houses are without a man,

The land is utterly desolate,

The LORD has removed men far away,

And the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.

But yet a tenth will be in it,

And will return and be for consuming,

As a terebinth tree or as an oak,

Whose stump remains when it is cut down.

So the holy seed shall be its stump.”

- a. **Lord, how long?** This is a logical question from anyone who is given such a difficult commission. “Do I have to preach to those who won’t hear, and their rejection of my message will ultimately seal their doom? How long will I have to serve in that kind of ministry?”
- b. **Until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant**: This answered the question of how long Isaiah was to preach. He should preach until destruction comes. He should preach in hope of the restoration of a remnant (**yet a tenth will be in it, and will return**). Even though Isaiah’s ministry was difficult, it was not without hope.
- c. **And be for consuming**: The remnant will indeed return, but even the remnant will eventually be judged. Israel was not done being disobedient when they returned from the Babylonian captivity, and God was not done bringing His judgment on a disobedient Israel.

i. “The devastation, great as it was to be, would not be total; but even its survivors would have to submit to further judgment. The illustration from nature, however, introduces an element of hope.” (Grogan)

ii. We would expect this dramatic call of Isaiah to open the book. But the Bible clearly states that the message is more important than the messenger. Isaiah's message was more important than Isaiah the messenger.

iii. When Isaiah saw the LORD, who did he see? He saw God in the Second Person of the Trinity, he saw Jesus before He added humanity to His deity. We know this because the Apostle John quotes Isaiah 6:10, and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, adds: These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him (John 12:41).

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Chapter 6 Chuck Missler; Isaiah The Throne of God

(Cf. Ezek 1, 10; Dan 7; Rev 4, 5.)

1] Train: *shuwl* {shool}; · · · , from an unused root meaning to hang down;
n m; hem 6, skirt 4, train 1; 11.

1) Skirt (of robe) 1a) of high priest's robe 1b) of God's train, city as
woman, ignominy, defilement (fig).

[Rank was viewed in the hem of the robe or skirt; it often held the
genealogy, social role, etc.; a contract was sealed by impressing the
embroidery into the clay tablet; a divorce could be accomplished by
ripping off the hem; etc. Cf. Mt 9:20; 14:36; 23:5; Mk 6:56; Lk 8:44; 1 Sam
24; Ruth 3:9.]

2] Cherubim (Ezek 1, 10; Rev 4), Seraphim (Isa 6 only), and Ophanim
("wheels") are angelic beings associated with the Throne of God.

Seraphim: similar to the cherubim (some believe they're identical). Some

suggest that the Cherubim are enforcers: judgment; the Seraphim, grace.

(Contrived?)

Cherubim: Gen 3:24; Ezek 28; Isa 14:13. God spoken of as He “Who dwelleth between the Cherubim” (as on the Mercy Seat above the Ark of the Covenant). See *Mystery of the Lost Ark*.

Four faces (Ezek 1:10; 10:14); wings: Ezek: four; Rev, Isa: six.

3] Holy, Holy, Holy. 3x: Trinity?

6] Rev 8:5; Ex 1:13; 10:2. The fire never goes out (Lev 6:13).

7] Dan 10:16; Jer 1:9.

8] Notice the “us.” (Trinity again.)

Isaiah's New Commission

9-10] Mt 13:14,15; Jn 12:39-41; Acts 28:25-27; Acts 15:13-18; Amos 4:11-12.

13] “Substance”: 04678 *matstsebeth* {mats-tseh'-beth} n f; pillar 4, substance 2; 6.

Pillar, *mastaba*, stump, pillar; as monument, personal memorial; with an Altar; (*Hoph*) stock, stump (of tree). Stump = Root of Jesse.

The Book of Isaiah

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Matthew Henry Commentary on Isaiah 6

Chapter 6

Hitherto, it should seem, Isaiah had prophesied as a candidate, having only a virtual and tacit commission; but here we have him (if I may so speak) solemnly ordained and set apart to the prophetic office by a more express or explicit commission, as his work grew more upon his hands: or perhaps, having seen little success of his ministry, he began to think of giving it up; and therefore God saw fit to renew his commission here in this chapter, in such a manner as might excite and encourage his zeal and industry in the execution of it, though he seemed to labour in vain. In this chapter we have,

- I. A very awful vision which Isaiah saw of the glory of God ([v. 1-4](#)), the terror it put him into ([v. 5](#)), and the relief given him against that terror by an assurance of the pardon of his sins ([v. 6, 7](#)).
- II. A very awful commission which Isaiah received to go as a prophet, in God's name ([v. 8](#)), by his preaching to harden the impenitent in sin and ripen them for ruin ([v. 9-12](#)) yet with a reservation of mercy for a remnant, ([v. 13](#)).

And it was as to an evangelical prophet that these things were shown him and said to him.

[Isa 6:1-4](#)

The vision which Isaiah saw when he was, as is said of Samuel, *established to be a prophet of the Lord* ([1 Sa. 3:20](#)), was intended,

- 1. To confirm his faith, that he might himself be abundantly satisfied of the truth of those things which should afterwards be made known to him. This God opened the communications of himself to him; but such visions needed not to be afterwards repeated upon every revelation. Thus God appeared at first as a God of glory to Abraham ([Acts 7:2](#)), and to Moses, [Ex. 3:2](#). Ezekiel's prophecies and St. John's, begin with visions of the divine glory.
- 2. To work upon his affections, that he might be possessed with such a reverence of God as would both quicken him and fix him to his service. Those who are to teach others the knowledge of God ought to be well acquainted with him themselves.

The vision is dated, for the greater certainty of it. It was *in the year that king Uzziah died*, who had reigned, for the most part, as prosperously and well as any of the kings of Judah, and reigned very long, above fifty years. About the time that he died, Isaiah saw this vision of God upon a throne; for when the breath of princes goes forth, and they return to their earth, this is our comfort, that *the Lord shall reign for ever*, [Ps. 146:3, 4](#), [10](#). Israel's king dies, but Israel's God still lives. From the mortality of great and good men we should take occasion to look up with an eye of faith to the King eternal, immortal. King Uzziah died under a cloud, for he was shut up as a leper till the day of his death. As the lives of princes have their periods, so their glory is often eclipsed; but, as God is everliving, so his glory is everlasting. King Uzziah dies in an hospital, but the King of kings still sits upon his throne. What the prophet here saw is revealed to us, that we, mixing faith with that revelation, may in it, as in a glass, behold the glory of the Lord; let us turn aside therefore, and see this great sight with humble reverence.

- I. See God upon his throne, and that throne *high and lifted up*, not only above other thrones, as it transcends them, but over other thrones, as it rules and commands them. Isaiah saw not *Jehovah*-the essence of God (no man has seen that, or can see it), but *Adonai*-his dominion. He saw the Lord Jesus; so this vision is explained [Jn. 12:41](#), that Isaiah now saw Christ's glory and spoke of him, which is an incontestable proof of the divinity of our Saviour. He it is who when, after his resurrection, he sat down on the right hand of God, did but sit down where he was before, [Jn. 17:5](#). See the rest of the Eternal Mind: Isaiah *saw the Lord sitting*, [Ps. 29:10](#). See the sovereignty of the Eternal Monarch: he sits *upon a throne*-a throne of glory, before which we must worship,-a throne of government, under which we must be subject,-and a throne of grace, to which we may come boldly. This throne is high, and lifted up above all competition and contradiction.
- II. See his temple, his church on earth, filled with the manifestations of his glory. His throne being erected at the door of the temple (as princes sat in judgment at the gates), *his train*, the skirts of his robes, *filled the temple*, the whole world (for it is all God's temple, and, as the heaven is his throne, so

the earth is his footstool), or rather the church, which is filled enriched, and beautified with the tokens of God's special presence.

- III. See the bright and blessed attendants on his throne, in and by whom his glory is celebrated and his government served ([v. 2](#)): *Above the throne*, as it were hovering about it, or nigh to the throne, bowing before it, with an eye to it, *the seraphim stood*, the holy angels, who are called *seraphim-burners*; for he *makes his ministers a flaming fire*, [Ps. 104:4](#). They burn in love to God, and zeal for his glory and against sin, and he makes use of them as instruments of his wrath when he is a consuming fire to his enemies. Whether they were only two or four, or (as I rather think) an *innumerable company of angels*, that Isaiah saw, is uncertain; see [Dan. 7:10](#). Note, It is the glory of the angels that they are seraphim, have heat proportionable to their light, have abundance, not only of divine knowledge, but of holy love. Special notice is taken of their wings (and of no other part of their appearance), because of the use they made of them, which is designed for instruction to us. They had *each of them six wings*, not stretched upwards (as those whom Ezekiel saw, [ch. 1:11](#)), but,
 - 1. Four were made use of for a covering, as the wings of a fowl, sitting, are; with the two upper wings, next to the head, they covered their faces, and with the two lowest wings they covered their feet, or lower parts. This bespeaks their great humility and reverence in their attendance upon God, for he is greatly feared in *the assembly of those saints*, [Ps. 89:7](#). They not only cover their feet, those members of the body which are less honourable ([1 Co. 12:23](#)), but even their faces. Though angel's faces, doubtless, are much fairer than those of the children of men ([Acts 6:15](#)), yet in the presence of God, they cover them, because they cannot bear the dazzling lustre of the divine glory, and because, being conscious of an infinite distance from the divine perfection, they are ashamed to show their faces before the holy God, who *charges even his angels with folly* if they should offer to vie with him, [Job 4:18](#). If angels be thus reverent in their attendance on God, with what godly fear should we approach his throne! Else we do not the will of God as the angels do it. Yet Moses, when he went into the mount with God, took the veil from off his face. See [2 Co. 3:18](#).
 - 2. Two were made use of for flight; when they are sent on God's errands they fly swiftly ([Dan. 9:21](#)), more swiftly with their own wings than if they flew on the wings of the wind. This teaches us to do the work of God with cheerfulness and expedition. Do angels come upon the wing from heaven to earth, to minister for our good, and shall not we soar upon the wing from earth to heaven, to share with them in their glory? [Lu. 20:36](#).
- IV. Hear the anthem, or song of praise, which the angels sing to the honour of him that sits on the throne, [v. 3](#). Observe,
 - 1. How this song was sung. With zeal and fervency-*they cried* aloud; and with unanimity-*they cried to another*, or one with another; they sang alternately, but in concert, and without the least jarring voice to interrupt the harmony.
 - 2. What the song was; it is the same with that which is sung by the four living creatures, [Rev. 4:8](#). Note, Praising God always was, and will be to eternity, the work of heaven, and the constant

employment of blessed spirits above, [Ps. 84:4](#). Note further, The church above is the same in its praises; there is no change of times or notes there. Two things the seraphim here give God the praise of:-

- (1.) His infinite perfections in himself. Here is one of his most glorious titles praised: he is [the Lord of hosts](#), of their hosts, of all hosts; and one of his most glorious attributes, his holiness, without which his being the Lord of hosts (or, as it is in the parallel place, [Rev. 4:8](#), [the Lord God Almighty](#)) could not be so much as it is the matter of our joy and praise; for power, without purity to guide it, would be a terror to mankind. None of all the divine attributes is so celebrated in scripture as this is. God's power was spoken twice ([Ps. 62:11](#)), but his holiness thrice, [Holy, holy, holy](#). This bespeaks,
 - [1.] The zeal and fervency of the angels in praising God; they even want words to express themselves, and therefore repeat the same again.
 - [2.] The particular pleasure they take in contemplating the holiness of God; this is a subject they love to dwell upon, to harp upon, and are loth to leave.
 - [3.] The superlative excellency of God's holiness, above that of the purest creatures. He is holy, thrice holy, infinitely holy, originally, perfectly, and eternally so.
 - [4.] It may refer to the three person in the Godhead, Holy Father, Holy Son, and Holy Spirit (for it follows, [v. 8](#), [Who will go for us?](#)) or perhaps to [that which was, and is, and is to come](#); for that title of God's honour is added to this song, [Rev. 4:8](#). Some make the angels here to applaud the equity of that sentence which God was now about to pronounce upon the Jewish nation. Herein he was, and is, and will be, holy; his ways are equal.
- (2.) The manifestation of these to the children of men: [The earth is full of his glory](#), the glory of his power and purity; for he is holy in all his works, [Ps. 145:17](#). The Jews thought the glory of God should be confined to their land; but it is here intimated that in the gospel times (which are pointed to in this chapter) the glory of God should fill all the earth, the glory of his holiness, which is indeed the glory of all his other attributes; this then [filled the temple](#) ([v. 1](#)), but, in the latter days, the earth shall be full of it.
- V. Observe the marks and tokens of terror with which the temple was filled, upon this vision of the divine glory, [v. 4](#).
 - 1. The house was [shaken](#); not only the door, but even [the posts of the door](#), which were firmly fixed, [moved at the voice of him that cried](#), at the voice of God, who called to judgment ([Ps. 50:4](#)), at the voice of the angel, who praised him. There are voices in heaven sufficient to drown all the noises of the many waters in this lower world, [Ps. 93:3, 4](#). This violent concussion of the temple was an indication of God's wrath and displeasure against the people for their sins; it was an earnest of the destruction of it and the city by the Babylonians first, and afterwards by the Romans; and it was designed to strike an awe upon us. Shall walls and posts tremble before God, and shall we not tremble?

- 2. The house was *darkened*; it was *filled with smoke*, which was as a *cloud spread* upon *the face of his throne* ([Job 26:9](#)); we cannot take a full view of it, nor order our speech concerning it, by reason of darkness. In the temple above there will be no smoke, but everything will be seen clearly. There God dwells in light; here he *makes darkness his pavilion*, [2 Chron 6:1](#).

[Isa 6:5-8](#)

Our curiosity would lead us to enquire further concerning the seraphim, their songs and their services; but here we leave them, and must attend to what passed between God and his prophet. *Secret things belong not to us*, the secret things of the world of angels, but things revealed to and by the prophets, which concern the administration of God's kingdom among men. Now here we have,

- I. The consternation that the prophet was put into by the vision which he saw of the glory of God ([v. 5](#)): *Then said I, Woe is me!* I should have said, "Blessed art thou, who hast been thus highly favoured, highly honoured, and dignified, for a time, with the privilege of those glorious beings that *always behold the face of our Father*. Blessed were those eyes which saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and those ears which heard the angels' praises." And, one would think, he should have said, "Happy am I, for ever happy; nothing now shall trouble me, nothing make me blush or tremble;" but, on the contrary, he cries out, *"Woe is me! for I am undone"*. Alas for me! I am a gone man; *I shall surely die* ([Judges 13:22](#); [6:22](#)); I am silenced; I am struck dumb, struck dead." Thus Daniel, when he heard the words of the angel, *became dumb*, and there was *no strength, no breath, left in him*, [Dan. 10:15](#), [17](#). Observe,
 - 1. What the prophet reflected upon in himself which terrified him: *"I am undone"* if God deal with me in strict justice, for I have made myself obnoxious to his displeasure, *because I am a man of unclean lips*." Some think he refers particularly to some rash word he had spoken, or to his sinful silence in not reproving sin with the boldness and freedom that were necessary—a sin which God's ministers have too much cause to charge themselves with, and to blush at the remembrance of. But it may be taken more generally; *I am a sinner*; particularly, *I have offended in word*; and who is there that hath not? [Jam. 3:2](#). We all have reason to bewail it before the Lord,
 - (1.) That we are of unclean lips ourselves; our lips are not consecrated to God; he had not had the *first-fruits of our lips* ([Heb. 13:15](#)), and therefore they are counted common and unclean, *uncircumcised lips*, [Ex. 6:30](#). Nay, they have been polluted with sin. We have spoken the language of an unclean heart, that evil communication which corrupts good manners, and whereby many have been defiled. We are unworthy and unmeet to take God's name into our lips. With what a pure lip did the angels praise God! "But," says the prophet, "I cannot praise him so, for *I am a man of unclean lips*." The best men in the world have reason to be ashamed of themselves, and the best of their services, when they come into comparison with the holy angels. The angels had celebrated the purity and holiness of God; and therefore the prophet, when he reflects upon sin, calls it *uncleanness*; for the sinfulness of sin is its contrariety to the holy nature of God, and upon that

account especially it should appear both hateful and frightful to us. The impurity of our lips ought to be the grief of our souls, for by our words we shall be justified or condemned.

- (2.) That we dwell among those who are so too. We have reason to lament not only that we ourselves are polluted, but that the nature and race of mankind are so; the disease is hereditary and epidemic, which is so far from lessening our guilt that it should rather increase our grief, especially considering that we have not done what we might have done for the cleansing of the pollution of other people's lips; nay, we have rather learned their way and spoken their language, as Joseph in Egypt learned the courtier's oath, [Gen. 42:16](#). *"I dwell in the midst of a people* who by their impudent sinnings are pulling down desolating judgments upon the land, which I, who am a sinner too, may justly expect to be involved in."
- 2. What gave occasion for these sad reflections at this time: *My eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts*. He saw God's sovereignty to be incontestable-he is the King; and his power irresistible-he is the Lord of hosts. These are comfortable truths to God's people, and yet they ought to strike an awe upon us. Note, A believing sight of God's glorious majesty should affect us all with reverence and godly fear. We have reason to be abased in the sense of that infinite distance that there is between us and God, and our own sinfulness and vileness before him, and to be afraid of his displeasure. We are undone if there be not a Mediator between us and this holy God, [1 Sa. 6:20](#). Isaiah was thus humbled, to prepare him for the honour he was now to be called to as a prophet. Note, Those are fittest to be employed for God who are low in their own eyes and are made deeply sensible of their own weakness and unworthiness.
- II. The silencing of the prophet's fears by the good words, and comfortable words, with which the angel answered him, [v. 6, 7](#). One of the seraphim immediately flew to him, to purify him, and so to pacify him. Note, God has strong consolations ready for holy mourners. Those that humble themselves in penitential shame and fear shall soon be encouraged and exalted; those that are struck down with the visions of God's glory shall soon be raised up again with the visits of his grace; he that tears will heal. Note, further, Angels are ministering spirits for the good of the saints, for their spiritual good. Here was one of the seraphim dismissed, for a time, from attending on the throne of God's glory, to be a messenger of his grace to a good man; and so well pleased was he with the office that he came flying to him. To our Lord Jesus himself, in his agony, there *appeared an angel from heaven, strengthening him*, [Lu. 22:43](#). Here is,
 - 1. A comfortable sign given to the prophet of the purging away of his sin. The seraph *brought a live coal from the altar*, and touched his lips with it, not to hurt them, but to heal them-not to cauterize, but to cleanse them; for there were purifications by fire, as well as by water, and the filth of Jerusalem was purged by the *spirit of burning*, [ch. 4:4](#). The blessed Spirit works as fire, [Mt. 3:11](#). The seraph, being himself kindled with a divine fire, put life into the prophet, to make him also zealously affected; for the way to purge the lips from the uncleanness of sin is to fire the soul with the love of God. This live coal was taken from off the altar, either the altar of incense or that of burnt-offerings, for they had

both of them fire burning on them continually. Nothing is powerful to cleanse and comfort the soul but what is taken from Christ's satisfaction and the intercession he ever lives to make in the virtue of that satisfaction. It must be a coal from his altar that must put life into us and be our peace; it will not be done with strange fire.

- 2. An explication of this sign: "*Lo, this has touched thy lips,*" to assure thee of this, that *thy iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged*. The guilt of thy sin is removed by pardoning mercy, the guilt of thy tongue-sins. Thy corrupt disposition to sin is removed by renewing grace; and therefore nothing can hinder thee from being accepted with God as a worshipper, in concert with the holy angels, or from being employed for God as a messenger to the children of men." Those only who are thus purged from an evil conscience are prepared *to serve the living God,* [Heb. 9:14](#). The taking away of sin is necessary to our speaking with confidence and comfort either to God in prayer or from God in preaching; nor are any so fit to display to others the riches and power of gospel-grace as those who have themselves tasted the sweetness and felt the influence of that grace; and those shall have their sin taken away who complain of it as a burden and see themselves in danger of being undone by it.
- III. The renewing of the prophet's mission, [v. 8](#). Here is a communication between God and Isaiah about this matter. Those that would assist others in their correspondence with God must not themselves be strangers to it; for how can we expect that God should speak by us if we never heard him speaking to us, or that we should be accepted as the mouth of others to God if we never spoke to him heartily for ourselves? Observe here,
 - 1. The counsel of God concerning Isaiah's mission. God is here brought in, after the manner of men, deliberating and advising with himself: *Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?* God needs not either to be counselled by others or to consult with himself; he knows what he will do, but thus he would show us that there is a counsel in his whole will, and teach us to consider our ways, and particularly that the sending forth of ministers is a work not to be done but upon mature deliberation. Observe,
 - (1.) Who it is that is consulting. It is the Lord God in his glory, whom he saw upon the throne high and lifted up. It puts an honour upon the ministry that, when God would send a prophet to speak in his name, he appeared in all the glories of the upper world. Ministers are the ambassadors of the King of kings; how mean soever they are, he who sends them is great; it is God in three persons (Who will go for us? as [Gen. 1:26](#), *Let us make man*), Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. They all concur, as in the creating, so in the redeeming and governing of man. Ministers are ordained in the same name into which all Christians are baptized.
 - (2.) What the consultation is: *Whom shall I send? And who will go?* Some think this refers to the particular message of wrath against Israel, [v. 9, 10](#). "Who will be willing to go on such a melancholy errand, on which they will go in the bitterness of their souls?" [Eze. 3:14](#). But I rather take it more largely for all those messages which the prophet was entrusted to deliver, in God's name, to that people, in which that hardening work was by no means the primary intention, but a secondary effect

of them, [2 Co. 2:16](#). *Whom shall I send?* intimating that the business was such as required a choice and well-accomplished messenger, [Jer. 49:19](#). God now appeared, attended with holy angels, and yet asks, *Whom shall I send?* For he would send them a *prophet from among their brethren*, [Heb. 2:17](#). Note,

- [1.] It is the unspeakable favour of God to us that he is pleased to send us his mind by men like ourselves, whose terror shall not make us afraid, and who are themselves concerned in the messages they bring. Those who are workers together with God are sinners and sufferers together with us.
- [2.] It is a rare thing to find one who is fit to go for God, and carry his messages to the children of men: *Whom shall I send?* Who is sufficient? Such a degree of courage for God and concern for the souls of men as is necessary to make a man faithful, and withal such an insight into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven as is necessary to make a man skilful, are seldom to be met with. Such an interpreter of the mind of God is one of a thousand, [Job 33:23](#).
- [3.] None are allowed to go for God but those who are sent by him; he will own none but those whom he appoints, [Rom. 10:15](#). It is Christ's work to put men into the ministry, [1 Tim. 1:12](#).
- 2. The consent of Isaiah to it: *Then said I, Here am I; send me.* He was to go on a melancholy errand; the office seemed to go a begging, and every body declined it, and yet Isaiah offered himself to the service. It is an honour to be singular in appearing for God, [Judges 5:7](#). We must not say, "I would go if I thought I should have success;" but, "I will go, and leave the success to God. Here am I; send me." Isaiah had been himself in a melancholy frame ([v. 5](#)), full of doubts and fears; but now that he had the assurance of the pardon of his sin the clouds were blown over, and he was fit for service and forward to it. What he says denotes,
 - (1.) His readiness: "Here am I, a volunteer, not pressed into the service." *Behold me*; so the word is. God says to us, *Behold me* ([ch. 65:1](#)), and, *Here I am* ([ch. 58:9](#)), even before we call; let us say so to him when he does call.
 - (2.) His resolution; *"Here I am"*, ready to encounter the greatest difficulties. *I have set my face as a flint.* Compare this with [ch. 50:4-7](#).
 - (3.) His referring himself to God: "Send me whither thou wilt; make what use thou pleasest of me. Send me, that is, Lord, give me commission and full instruction; send me, and then, no doubt, thou wilt stand by me." It is a great comfort to those whom God sends that they go for God, and may therefore speak in his name, as having authority, and be assured that he will bear them out.

[Isa 6:9-13](#)

God takes Isaiah at his word, and here sends him on a strange errand-to foretel the ruin of his people and even to ripen them for that ruin-to preach that which, by their abuse of it, would be to them a savour of death unto death. And this was to be a type and figure of the state of the Jewish church in the days of the Messiah, when they should obstinately reject the gospel, and should thereupon be

rejected of God. These verses are quoted in part, or referred to, six times, in the New Testament, which intimates that in gospel time these spiritual judgments would be most frequently inflicted; and though they make the least noise, and come not with observation, yet they are of all judgments the most dreadful. Isaiah is here given to understand these four things:-

- 1. That the generality of the people to whom he was sent would turn a deaf ear to his preaching, and wilfully shut their eyes against all the discoveries of the mind and will of God which he had to make to them ([v. 9](#)): *"Go, and tell this people,* this foolish wretched people, tell them their own, tell them how stupid and sottish they are." Isaiah must preach to them, and they will *hear* him indeed, but that is all; they will not heed him; they will not *understand* him; they will not take any pains, nor use that application of mind which is necessary to the understanding of him; they are prejudiced against that which is the true intent and meaning of what he says, and therefore they will not understand him, or pretend they do not. They *see indeed* (for the vision is made plain on tables, so that he who runs may read it); *but they perceive not* their own concern in it; it is to them as a tale that is told. Note, There are many who hear the sound of God's word, but do not feel the power of it.
- 2. That, forasmuch as they would not be made better by his ministry, they should be made worse by it; those that were wilfully blind should be judicially blinded ([v. 10](#)): "They will not understand or perceive thee, and therefore thou shalt be instrumental to *make their heart fat,* senseless, and sensual, and so to *make their ears* yet more *heavy,* and to *shut their eyes* the closer; so that, at length, their recovery and repentance will become utterly impossible; they shall no more *see with their eyes* the danger they are in, the ruin they are upon the brink of, nor the way of escape from it; they shall no more *hear with their ears* the warnings and instructions that are given them, nor *understand with their heart* the things that belong to their peace, so as to be converted from the error of their ways, and thus *be healed.*" Note,
 - (1.) The conversion of sinners is the healing of them.
 - (2.) A right understanding is necessary to conversion.
 - (3.) God sometimes, in a way of righteous judgment, gives men up to blindness of mind and strong delusions, because they would not *receive the truth in the love of it,* [2 Th. 2:10-12](#). *He that is filthy let him be filthy still.*
 - (4.) Even the word of God oftentimes proves a means of hardening sinners. The evangelical prophet himself makes the heart of this people fat, not only as he foretels it, passing this sentence upon them in God's name, and seals them under it, but as his preaching had a tendency to it, rocking some asleep in security (to whom it was a lovely song), and making others more outrageous, to whom it was such a reproach that they were not able to bear it. Some looked upon the word as a privilege, and their convictions were smothered by it ([Jer. 7:4](#)); others looked upon it as a provocation, and their corruptions were exasperated by it.

- 3. That the consequence of this would be their utter ruin, v. 11, 12. The prophet had nothing to object against the justice of this sentence, nor does he refuse to go upon such an errand, but asks, "Lord, how long?" (an abrupt question): "Shall it always be thus? Must I and other prophets always labour in vain among them, and will things never be better?" Or, (as should seem by the answer) "Lord, what will it come to at last? What will be in the end hereof?" In answer to this he is told that it should issue in the final destruction of the Jewish church and nation. "When the word of God, especially the word of the gospel, had been thus abused by them, they shall be unchurched, and consequently undone. Their cities shall be uninhabited, and their country houses too; the land shall be untill'd, desolate with desolation (as it is in the margin), the people who should replenish the houses and cultivate the ground being all cut off by sword, famine, or pestilence, and those who escape with their lives being removed far away into captivity, so that there shall be a great and general forsaking in the midst of the land; that populous country shall become desert, and that glory of all lands shall be abandoned." Note, Spiritual judgments often bring temporal judgments along with them upon persons and places. This was in part fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, when the land, being left desolate, enjoyed her sabbaths seventy years; but, the foregoing predictions being so expressly applied in the New Testament to the Jews in our Saviour's time, doubtless this points at the final destruction of that people by the Romans, in which it had a complete accomplishment, and the effects of it that people and that land remain under to this day.
- 4. That yet a remnant should be reserved to be the monuments of mercy, v. 13. There was a remnant reserved in the last destruction of the Jewish nation (Rom. 11:5, At this present time there is a remnant); for so it was written here: But in it shall be a tenth, a certain number, but a very small number in comparison with the multitude that shall perish in their unbelief. It is that which, under the law, was God's proportion; they shall be consecrated to God as the tithes were, and shall be for his service and honour. Concerning this tithe, this saved remnant, we are here told,
 - (1.) That they shall return (ch. 6:13; 10:21), shall return from sin to God and duty, shall return out of captivity to their own land. God will turn them, and they shall be turned.
 - (2.) That they shall be eaten, that is, shall be accepted of God as the tithe was, which was meat in God's house, Mal. 3:10. The saving of this remnant shall be meat to the faith and hope of those that wish well to God's kingdom.
 - (3.) That they shall be like a timber-tree in winter, which has life, though it has no leaves: As a teil-tree and as an oak, whose substance is in them even when they cast their leaves, so this remnant, though they may be stripped of their outward prosperity and share with others in common calamities, shall yet recover themselves, as a tree in the spring, and flourish again; though they fall, they shall not be utterly cast down. There is hope of a tree, though it be cut down, that it will sprout again, Job 14:7.
 - (4.) That this distinguished remnant shall be the stay and support of the public interests. The holy seed in the soul is the substance of the man; a principle of grace reigning in the heart will keep life

there; he that is *born of God* has *his seed remaining in him*, [1 Jn. 3:9](#). So the holy seed in the land is the substance of the land, keeps it from being quite dissolved, *and bears up the pillars of it*, [Ps. 75:3](#). See [ch. 1:9](#). Some read the foregoing clause with this, thus: *As the support at Shallecheth is in the elms and the oaks, so the holy seed is the substance thereof*; as the trees that grow on either side of the causeway (the raised way, or terrace-walk, that leads from the king's palace to the temple, [1 Ki. 10:5](#), at the gate of Shallecheth, [1 Chron 26:16](#)) support the causeway by keeping up the earth, which would otherwise be crumbling away, so the small residue of religious, serious, praying people, are the support of the state, and help to keep things together and save them from going to decay. Some make the holy seed to be Christ. The Jewish nation was *therefore* saved from utter ruin because *out of it, as concerning the flesh, Christ* was to come, [Rom. 9:5](#). *Destroy it not, for that blessing is in it* ([ch. 65:8](#)); and when that blessing had come, it was soon destroyed. Now the consideration of this is designed for the support of the prophet in his work. Though far the greater part should perish in their unbelief, yet to some his word should be a savour of life unto life. Ministers do not wholly lose their labour if they be but instrumental to save one poor soul.

[Return to Top](#)