

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Isaiah: Jahweh Is Salvation

X. God's Call Of Isaiah To His Prophetic Ministry In Light Of Judah's Spiritual Problems, Isaiah 6:1-13

A. God's Preparation Of His Servant For Ministry To A Spiritually Destitute People

(Isaiah 6:1-7)

I. Introduction

- A. Isaiah's name means, "Jahweh Is Salvation," a name **precisely** matching the *ministry* Isaiah was to perform.
- B. God wanted Isaiah to minister to the spiritually destitute nation of Judah that was irretrievably headed into judgment, but to equip him to minister **effectively** to this people, God had to get Isaiah to see how the Lord Himself was Judah's only Hope. That equipping occurs in Isaiah 6:1-7, and we view it for our insight:

II. God's Preparation Of His Servant For Ministry To A Spiritually Destitute People, Isaiah 6:1-7.

- A. The Isaiah 6:1-13 record of God's call of Isaiah to his prophetic ministry in Judah is placed in the book of Isaiah after five introductory chapters of Isaiah's message to Judah to reveal the awful apostate status of Judah behind his prophetic ministry, Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, vol. I, p. 231-234.
- B. In line with this theme, Isaiah reports that God's call for him to his prophetic ministry came the year that king Uzziah died (Isaiah 6:1a), and the circumstances of Uzziah's reign and death further emphasize this apostasy:
 - 1. Judah's King Uzziah had ruled for 52 years, starting off obeying the Lord and thus enjoying His blessing of great financial prosperity and rulership over the Philistines, Arabians and Mehunim, 2 Chron. 26:1-16.
 - 2. However, when Uzziah had become great, he turned proud, and tried to usurp the priests' role of burning incense on the temple's altar of incense, so the Lord had struck Uzziah with leprosy, 2 Chron. 26:17-20.
 - 3. Uzziah was then destined to live apart as a leper until the day of his death (2 Chron. 26:21-23), and his son Jotham had ruled as a good king, but he had not entered the temple of God possibly in bitterness or fear over his father's being struck with leprosy, so the people had acted corruptly, 2 Chron. 27:1-9.
 - 4. When Jotham died, wicked Ahaz came to the throne, and Judah was in decline (2 Chron. 28:1-27), and Uzziah, the last really great king in Judah, then had finally died in Ahaz's third year of rule, Ibid., p. 235.
 - 5. Around that same year, 739 B. C., Rome arose as a kingdom on the Tiber River in Italy, and "(f)rom now on Judah declined more and more, and Rome increased," Ibid.
 - 6. Thus, it was a year of great decline and foreboding for Judah's future when Isaiah was called to minister!
- C. Accordingly, God sought to **prepare** Isaiah for an *effective* ministry to a humanly hapless Judah, and to that end, Isaiah 6:1-7 introduces Isaiah to an (1) **Almighty God** Who was also a (2) **holy God, separate from sin**:
 - 1. God taught Isaiah to look to Himself as Almighty God to handle the vacuum left by the loss of Uzziah:
 - a. Though Judah's last great king in Uzziah had just died, Isaiah saw the Lord God of Israel sitting high and lifted up on a great throne, and his royal robe filled the temple, Isaiah 6:1.
 - b. In the vacuum created by the death of great king Uzziah, Isaiah was to **hope** in **ALMIGHTY GOD!**
 - 2. God taught Isaiah to look to Himself as a Holy God to handle the vacuum left by the loss of holy kings:
 - a. Amid the sin and consequent loss of blessing under even relatively "good" kings Uzziah and Jotham, not to mention the evil Ahaz, God presented Himself to Isaiah as **perfectly holy**, separate from sinful failure, Isa. 6:2-4: (1) above the throne Isaiah saw seraphs, each with 6 wings who used 4 to cover their faces and feet in signaling God's holiness and 2 to fly, and one cried to another, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory," Isa. 6:2-3. Opposite the loss of the regional glory of Uzziah and Jotham due to sin, a holy God's glory filled the world. (2) At the seraph's cry, the "foundations of the thresholds" moved and the temple filled with smoke, Isa. 6:4; Ryrie Study Bib., KJV, 1978, ftn. to Isa. 6:4.
 - b. Isaiah reacted to this display of God's holiness by confessing he was undone, a man of unclean lips who dwelt among a people of unclean lips, for this view of a holy God deeply convicted him of sin, Isaiah 6:5.
 - c. One of the seraphs then flew to Isaiah with a hot coal from the altar held in tongs, and he touched Isaiah's lips with it, indicating his sin of unclean lips had been purged for his prophetic ministry, Isa. 6:6-7.

Lesson: In God's call for Isaiah to minister as prophet to the very sinful nation of Judah in its humanly hopeless decline, He impressed Isaiah with His OWN greatness and holiness of God, Isaiah's and Judah's only HOPE.

Application: To minister to a spiritually needy party, God calls us like Isaiah to recall HIS GREATNESS and HIS HOLINESS that we RELY on HIM as our HOPE to address the VACUUM of the LOSS of greatness due to SIN, be that sin in OURSELVES OR in the spiritually needy PARTY God has called us to disciple!