

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

B. God's Assignment Of His Servant To Minister To A Spiritually Destitute People (Isaiah 6:8-13)

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 headed into sure judgment, so after equipping Isaiah by supplying him with an exalted view of God's greatness and holiness, the Lord assigned him a specific ministry in Isaiah 6:8-13, and we view that ministry for our insight in similar callings:

II. God's Assignment Of His Servant To Minister To A Spiritually Destitute People, Isaiah 6:8-13.

- A. God's call that he minister to spiritually destitute Judah required Isaiah **fully to trust in the Lord**, Isaiah 6:8:
 - 1. After Isaiah was impressed with God's greatness and holiness, being made aware of his sin to confess it and be cleansed (Is. 6:1-4, 5-7), the Lord asked, "Whom shall **I** send, and who will go for **us**?" (Isa. 6:8a) [This shift from the **singular** to the **plural** pronoun in this question implies "that in the Speaker Himself there is a plurality of persons," a hint of the Trinity, Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, vol. I, p. 254.]
 - 2. God asked this question without describing Isaiah's actual task, for the one God calls He expects to be willing to do **whatever** he is assigned, and one can achieve *whatever* God assigns if he **trusts** God as the **Almighty** (Isa. 6:1-4) and he is **cleansed** from sin to serve a **holy** God Who is separate from sin, Isa. 6:5-7.
 - 3. Built up in his faith in God and purged of his sin, Isaiah in faith offered to fill God's calling, Isaiah 6:8b.
- B. God's call that he minister to spiritually destitute Judah required Isaiah **to be faithful in his task**, Isa. 6:9-12:
 - 1. The task the Lord assigned Isaiah from the human perspective seemed bleak and unproductive, Isa. 6:9-10: God told Isaiah to go and tell Judah to "keep on hearing," but not to understand, to "keep on seeing," but not to perceive, Isaiah 6:9; Ibid., fn. to Isaiah 6:9. Isaiah's ministry would serve to harden the people of Judah against repenting that God might judge them for their persistent rebellion, Isaiah 6:10 NIV!
 - 2. Concerned about the end result and thus value of such a bleak ministry, Isaiah asked the Lord how long he was to perform this task, and God replied that he was to do so until judgment fell -- until the cities laid in ruin without inhabitant, until the houses were deserted and the fields ruined and ravaged, until the Lord had sent everyone far away in captivity and the land had become utterly forsaken, Isaiah 6:11-12.
 - 3. Such a bleak ministry of hardening people unto judgment would take its toll on God's servant, Isaiah, but he was required to fulfill his task faithfully until God's judgment had completely fallen on Judah.
- C. God's call that he minister to spiritually destitute Judah required Isaiah **to focus on God's grace**, Isaiah 6:13:
 - 1. The Lord told Isaiah that a tenth of Judah's population would return to form a later nation, but even that tenth itself would eventually be laid waste due to sin followed by divine judgment, Isaiah 6:13a. This prediction was fulfilled after Judah had returned from the Babylonian Captivity only to reject the Messiah Jesus when He came, and so itself be once again be judged under the hand of the Romans in A. D. 70.
 - 2. Nevertheless, like the terebinth and the oak, trees that were known for their great durability even when cut down to leave stumps from which tree growth might still rise, the remnant of Judah would always remain (due to God's unconditional Abrahamic Covenant to Abraham's seed), Isaiah 6:13b with Genesis 12:1-3.
 - 3. We know from Bible prophecy that this prediction involves the rise of the remnant in Israel in the Great Tribulation, and that when this remnant is purged of sin and receives her Messiah, Jesus, God will set up the Messianic Kingdom in the land of Judah, cf. Zechariah 12:9-13:1.
 - 4. Thus, Isaiah was to recall God's long-term grace toward Judah as motivation to continue to serve the Lord amid his short-term ministry hardships!

Lesson: *To minister to a spiritually destitute Judah, once he was impressed with God's greatness and holiness to be cleansed from sin, Isaiah was fully to trust God, to serve in unconditional faithfulness and to focus on God's grace.*

Application: *In serving God by ministering unto a spiritually destitute party, (1) may we recall (a) God's greatness and (b) holiness so as to purify ourselves by confessing our sins. Thus equipped for service, (2) may we (a) trust God to be committed to do whatever He calls us to do, (b) to perform that calling with unconditional faithfulness regardless of the short-term hardships involved, and (c) to focus for encouraging motivation to serve on the hope of God's eventual gracious discipling of a remnant. (cf. Mark 4:14-19, 20)*