

## Isaiah's Epiphany 08-16-15 AM

In Isaiah 6 we read about the commissioning of Isaiah the prophet. He would prophecy around 65 years; we presume he must have been a young man when this moment happened. We can break down the events in Isaiah 6 to several parts: his view of heaven, his fearful conclusion, his reaction to being cleansed, his calling to the people, and the ultimate result of his work.

**A View of Heaven:** Not many people in the Bible have had this view of heaven. Micaiah claimed to (although he may have only been speaking in a parable, 1 Kings 22:19); John saw a similar view in Revelation 4:2; Ezekiel saw the same vision as John in Ezekiel 1:1; finally, Zechariah may have seen heaven (or like Micaiah a parable of heaven in Zechariah 3:1). Question: If you could see into heaven, how would it make you feel?

**A Fearful Conclusion:** When a person comes to the presence of God, their inadequacy is revealed (Judges 6:22, 13:22). It is as though they put on their cleanest whites, but when compared to pure white, it was dingy and ugly. When a man stands in the presence of God, his fate becomes clear (Job 4:17); they are condemned as unclean. Question: If you realized your inadequacy, how would it make you feel?

**What It Means to be Saved:** When Isaiah came to his conclusion, a Seraphim came to him and took away his uncleanness. This burning coal may have frightened him, especially bringing it to his lips, a very sensitive part of his body. But the result was magnificent. This is what it means to be saved, to have our sins taken away. Paul described this in many places (consider Romans 8:23-24). Question: If you understood what being saved means, how would it make you feel?

**The Calling of the Christian:** Now God calls for someone to take a message to the lost. So it is with a Christian; in fact, Isaiah's exact mission is repeatedly restated to Christians (Matthew 13:14, Mark 4:10, Luke 8:10, John 12:40, Acts 28:26, Romans 11:8). We are called to bring the exact same message to the world: God's judgment is coming. Isaiah's reaction to the divine command is one of the most commendable responses of any person in the Bible: here am I, send me. Question: If you knew what God wanted of you, how would it make you feel?

**The World's Reply:** God already knew how this mission would go. He saw how it was that most people would react; they would be deaf to what they heard, blind to what they saw, and insensitive to the need for change. Yet God also said that there will always be a few who listen, a tenth (or as He goes on to say, a small part of a tenth). This is how God's word operates; it never fails to accomplish its purpose (Isaiah 55:11). Question: If you know that no matter what, some success is going to occur, how would it make you feel?

**Conclusion:** Isaiah's calling was the same as ours. He was brought to glory and salvation by a vision, we are brought to glory and salvation by the revelation that is the word of God. He was called to act on his salvation, as we are too. He was warned of the difficulties and the general response of the world, and we are told the same. But finally he was advised of the success he would expect, and we need to keep in mind that we will have some success in our efforts.