

Isaiah Answers God's Call

Key Verse: *“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

Selected Scripture:
Isaiah 6

GOD USED THE PROPHET

Isaiah to denounce the sinful conduct of the Israelites and also to exhort them towards repentance and reformation. Because they failed to heed these messages, Isaiah was given a prophetic vision in which God's majesty, power, and holiness would be revealed at a time when the entire earth would be filled with his glory.—Isa. 6:1-3

The surrounding atmosphere depicting Divine and angelic presence contained in this vision shook the heavenly temple's foundation, and created a sense of awe as Isaiah considered this scene. Since Isaiah acknowledged his imperfection and inadequacy to describe the Divine glory, a seraphim was sent forth with a live coal from off the altar to purge his lips. Thus, in a symbolic fashion, he was equipped with the power of eloquence beyond his own natural ability in order that he could speak in a forceful manner as God would so direct.—vss. 4-7

Our Key Verse describes Isaiah's affirmative response to God's inquiry by willingly volunteering to proclaim a heaven-sent message to the people of Israel. Isaiah was called upon to declare the Word of the LORD to the Jews

who were in a covenant relationship with God but, as a nation, they rejected him.—vss. 9,10

In a larger sense and on a prophetic level, Isaiah represented Christ who referred to this vision as recorded in the New Testament.—John 12:38-41

Isaiah was given a commission to continue preaching about the LORD's judgment despite the fact that the people would harden their hearts and not change their ways. (Isa. 6:11-13) In similar fashion, through Christ, God sent a message of grace and an invitation for the humble-minded ones of Israel to accept the privilege of becoming disciples and ultimately sharers in his kingdom to bless the human family.

A comparatively small number from that chosen nation accepted this opportunity to become the nucleus of his Gospel Age church. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."—Luke 13:34,35

Nevertheless, the great commission of sending forth the same message of grace and the blessings of the coming glorious reign of Christ continues to be proclaimed throughout the earth by his followers. "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." (Heb. 3:1) If we are faithful in emulating the Master's example of witnessing to the Truth of God's Word, then surely we can entertain the hope of being united with him in the grand work of bringing mankind back from the tomb. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."—II Tim. 4:7,8; Isa. 35:5-10 ■