

## A Message of Doom and Gloom or a Message of Hope?

As we come to this season of the year wherein we as the Church of our Lord take time to remember His birth some 2000 years ago, as we continue to observe the Christ in the Book of Isaiah, I want us to consider chapters 6 thru 9 with this theme in mind; "Who is this one born in Bethlehem and why did He come down to earth in such great humility?"

Beginning this morning in chapter six we are mindful that in the first 13 verses we have the glorious vision of Isaiah wherein he sees the Lord, high and lifted up. And upon seeing the Lord in His glory and holiness he is so overcome that he sees himself as one falling apart in the presence of that one upon the throne. We hear him cry out "*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.*" (Isa 6:5) At which time we read, "*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. And he touched my mouth with it, and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged."* Isa 6:6-7

At which time after being cleansed by the coals of the altar he overhears this question from the throne, the very voice of the Lord, saying: "*Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?*" And Isaiah, no doubt still being filled with awesome wonder and great fear, fully enraptured by the vision he is experiencing responds, "Here am I. Send me."

This morning then in this series of messages leading up to the 25<sup>th</sup> of December, that day the church has set aside to observe the birth of our Savior, I will begin with the commission which will include a warning to ancient Israel of a coming judgment interspersed with a message of great hope and comfort to God's remnant people.

### A. Isaiah's Commission

1. It was the year King Uzziah died.
  - a. We may consider his death symbolic of the coming end of Israel as an earthly kingdom
  - b. Yet we shall be made aware of a coming hope of a kingdom eternal and glorious
2. Isaiah's vision, he saw the Lord
  - a. No one has seen God at any time - John 1:18
  - b. Yet the Lord, from time to time, graciously condescends to clothe Himself with a visibility for the instruction and comfort of his people.
  - c. The one he saw on the throne was "Adonai" the Lord, the Sovereign
  - d. We are told by John that this was Jesus prior to His incarnation. - *These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him. (Jn. 12:41)*
3. The Lord here is not described but the description we have fills our minds with a sense of majesty.
  - a. His robe fills the temple
  - b. His throne is exalted on high
  - c. The attendants proclaim His glory
4. God's sovereignty is made known for He sits upon a throne high and exalted

*Isa. 66:1 Thus says the Lord: "Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me?"*

5. He is in the heavenly temple
  - a. The temple here is not a symbol but a reality.
  - b. God's throne is in His heavenly temple; it always has been and always will be.
  - c. It is the earthly temple that was but the shadow of the real.

*Heb 9:24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.*

- d. Thus we learn that any earthly temple is but a shadow and that it is never to be considered the dwelling place of God. - *Where is the house that you will build Me? (Isa. 66:1)*

6. But we will learn that our Lord will condescend and come down to man.
7. But we must never think of His kingdom as an earthly kingdom.

#### B. Isaiah's call and preparation

1. He had confessed the sinfulness of his lips, and they are touched by a coal from the altar.
  - a. There is no cleansing in the coal, it was merely a sign of the work completed
  - b. More importantly he is assured that his sins are forgiven and that he is cleansed.
  - c. Isaiah is passive in this work
  - d. A faithful messenger of God can only proclaim what God has done and will do.
2. God's call, "*who will go for us and whom shall we send.*"
3. Isaiah's response "Here am I send me."

*2 Tim 4:2-3 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.*

#### C. The message

1. It can only be described as a strange message indeed
2. A proclamation of the rejection of the message.

*Isa 6:9-10 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."*

3. For how long shall I preach this message? Until the destruction of the nation

*Isa 6:11-12 "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.*

4. A proclamation of desertion.
  - a. The cities will be laid waste
  - b. The people will be taken far away
  - c. The land will be forsaken

5. But a glimmer of hope remains

*Isa 6:13 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 tenth shall return

As it were from the stump of a tree cut down will come a holy seed.

CONCLUSION: This is an introductory message - next we shall consider the following:

Does Isaiah's message portend a final curtain call?

Will the end of this earthly kingdom affect the covenant God made with Abraham?

What about the promises to Abraham, Judah and David?

How does this apply to Christ?

How does this speak hope to God's remnant?