

Isaiah's call.

Isaiah 6:1-8.

Sunday morning, January 27, 2008.

I. I saw the Lord... Vs. 1.

- A. Isaiah lived and ministered in Jerusalem and its immediate surroundings.
- B. He no doubt frequented the temple services
At the end of the temple services the priest would come out of the sanctuary having offered his prayers in behalf of the people together with the incense on the altar of incense standing before the holy of holies. He would open the temple door, the people would sing a Psalm, and he would pronounce the benediction on the people, thus ending the service.
- C. Isaiah was not a priest; He was from the tribe of Judah. He was not allowed in the sanctuary, but would have been allowed at the end of the service to stand in the open doorway and to look into the sanctuary. The setting suggests that this was the case. (The house was filled with smoke, and he felt the posts of the door shaking.)

II. The temple Isaiah saw.

- A. He does not see the earthly temple but rather a blending together of the earthly temple and the heavenly temple of the NT. (Hebrews and Revelation).
- B. Most notably the veil is missing, and with "unveiled face" he beholds the glory of the Lord. 2 Cor. 3:18.
- C. Isaiah sees the Lord on a throne, high and lifted up.
This is the place of God's rule, and from where He executes justice and judgment.
- D. He is accompanied by the heavenly beings, the Seraphim, mentioned only here.
They sing the Lord's praises, perhaps in reply to the worship that just took place on earth, and they stand ready to do the Lord's bidding.

III. The smoke and the shaking of the house.

- A. The house was filled with smoke.
This represents the prayers and praises of God's people as well as the heavenly worshippers, which ascend from the golden altar, together with the incense before the throne of God. See Rev. 5:8 and 8:3-5.
- B. The worship in the earthly temple had just ended, and the heavenly beings had added their own praises to that of earth; as such the house is filled with smoke.
- C. The house, and the door posts where Isaiah was standing were shaken.
This ought to be a familiar occurrence to us by now as we have looked together at Hebrews 12:18-29 and the book of Revelation.
We see there how the word of God is proclaimed from the heavenly temple;
How the worshippers respond with prayer and praise;
And how God responds to their prayers and praise by shaking heaven and earth in Hebr., and by thundering, lightnings and earthquakes in Rev.
- D. Hebr. 12 26,27 tells us that this shaking indicates the removal of the things that are present as fallen earthly realities, so that the eternal and spiritual things may remain.

In Hebrews this is the temporary OT economy of types and shadows.

In Revelation it is the passing away of this present evil world.

In Isaiah it is the destruction of worldliness in the hearts of God's people.

See Isaiah 6:9-13

- E. The shaking then indicates that the Lord is about to act in answer to the prayer and praise of His people; that is the faithful remnant that was among them. See also in this light the disciples' prayer, and the Lord's reply in Acts 4:23-31. And the Lord's reply to Paul and Silas' prayer and praise in the Philippian jail Acts 16:25-32.

IV. Standing before God.

- A. Isaiah had come as a worshipper to the Lord's temple.

Together with the godly remnant he had offered his prayers, representatively through the priest, on the golden altar.

At the end of the service he had come near to God, as close as he was allowed to get, up to the doorway of God's house. Maybe he did so to see where his

prayers

had been offered up, his heart being anxious to follow his prayers. Psalm 5:3.

- B. Here the Lord meets him and shows him the heavenly counterpart to the earthly temple. He sees the Lord enthroned; ready to rule and execute judgment.

The temple is shaken, indicating the Lord is about to act in shaking the nation, that their worldliness may fall away; their dross consumed; their gold refined.

- C. As the Lord is about to act He is not about to do it unilaterally. The Lord involves the godly remnant in His rule and in His judgments, and so Isaiah is drawn into the process. In the same way believers are said to rule and reign with Christ in the NT. Rev. 5:10.

Think of Moses in this light: "See I have made you as God to Pharaoh." Ex. 7:1.

And Elijah: "As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there will be no dew or rain in the land these years except at my word." 1 Ki.

17:1.

- D. Three things describe such a man or woman acc. to our text.

1. An intimate acquaintance with the corruption of their own hearts. Vs. 5.

"Woe is me for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips."

(lest they think themselves better or as being above the people they serve.)

2. An intimate acquaintance with the life changing and life shaking power of the Holy Spirit. An encounter with the coals from the altar. Vs. 6,7.

(So they may have an experiential hope and burden for their people.)

3. A whole life investment into their own prayers. Vs. 8.

The great rule of intercessory prayer:

"You can not stand before God in behalf of the needs of others, asking God to do or to supply, that which God has empowered you to provide."

Isaiah with the godly remnant had prayed at the temple. God had answered that He was about to act. Yet He says to Isaiah as He is about to act, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" Isaiah had to invest himself in his own prayers, and so do we. "Here am I, send me." and "According to their ability, yes and beyond their ability they were freely willing... 2 Cor. 8:3