

Isaiah: The Sinful Prophet

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Isaiah is one of the greatest prophets of the Old Testament. In particular, he told us a great deal about the nature of the Messiah, to take away sin and to suffer for our sake. We read about his calling by God in Isaiah 6. There we find that Isaiah, while a young man, had the opportunity to look into heaven. Not many have had this view of heaven; Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1:1), Micaiah (1 Kings 22:19), Zechariah? (Zechariah 3:1), Paul (2 Corinthians 12:8) and John (Revelation 4:2). It is important to note what happened when he saw the glory of God: Isaiah saw the sinfulness of himself.

It is not to say that Isaiah was a terribly sinful man. Indeed, we would call him righteous. But when any man stands comes to the presence of God, their inadequacy is revealed (consider Judges 6:22, 13:22). In that moment reality comes crashing down on us. As Job said: "Can mankind be just before God? Can a man be pure before his Maker?"

Yet in that realization God provided the solution: forgiveness of sins. This is what it means to be saved (Romans 8:23-24). How ought a person react to salvation? This seems to characterize the reaction of Isaiah whenever God seeks someone to serve Him. Isaiah provides that profound response to the calling of God: Here am I send me.

This calling is not so different from our own. In fact, Isaiah's mission is repeatedly restated in the New Testament as being ours too (Matt. 13:14, Mark 4:10, Luke 8:10, John 12:40, Acts 28:26, Romans 11:8). We are called to bring a message to the world, and we are told that the worlds reply will be much like that of Isaiah's world. Isaiah was told that most would be deaf, blind, and insensitive, and that they would not accept God's terms of surrender. But it is also important to note that God said that there will always be a few who listen (Isaiah 55:11).

Isaiah's calling was the same as ours. His life is the same as ours. As he was brought to glory and salvation, we too are introduced to the same in the Word of God. As he was called to act on it, we too are called to act. We too are warned of the difficulties. We too are advised of the success.