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"What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us."

– A.W. Tozer (*The Knowledge of the Holy*)

2

Isaiah 6:1-13

¹ In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. ² Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³ And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory." ⁴ And the door sockets of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the house was filling with smoke.

3

Isaiah 6:1-13

⁵ Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." ⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs. ⁷ He touched my mouth *with it* and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is atoned for."

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Isaiah 6:1-13

⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!" ⁹ He said, "Go, and tell this people: Keep on listening, but do not perceive; Keep on looking, but do not understand. ¹⁰ Render the hearts of this people insensitive, Their ears dull, And their eyes dim, Lest they see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, Understand with their hearts, And return and be healed."

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Isaiah 6:1-13

¹¹ Then I said, "Lord, how long?" And He answered, "Until cities are devastated *and* without inhabitant, Houses are without people And the land is utterly desolate, ¹² "The LORD has removed men far away, And the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. ¹³ "Yet there will be a tenth portion in it, And it will again be *subject* to burning, Like a terebinth or an oak Whose stump remains when it is felled. The holy seed is its stump."

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An Unusual Calling

1. The Calling

- the immediate effect of atonement is reconciliation with God – he hears the Lord and speaks to Him
- Isaiah immediately and willingly volunteers without knowing the nature or difficulty of the mission

The grateful offering of oneself in service is the response of those who have experienced God's grace

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An Unusual Calling

2. The Content

- Isaiah is to command the people *not* to understand or believe even though they keep listening!
- Isaiah is commanded to make the people spiritually blind and unreceptive *lest* they repent and God heal them

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An Unusual Calling

2. The Content

- Isaiah's preaching will be the instrument of God's judicial hardening of His obstinate people

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An Unusual Calling

3. The Duration

- until God's justice is carried out to its full extent – the land is desolate and the people are in exile
- the entirety of Isaiah's ministry!

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An Unusual Calling

4. The Glimmer of Hope

- there is still life in the "stump" (the desolate people), an offspring holy to the Lord ("holy seed")
- ultimately, this is the coming Davidic seed/son (the Messiah), the "shoot from the stump of Jesse" (Is. 11:1)

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An Unusual Calling

➤ Fulfillment (the Bible's storyline)

- this judicial hardening of Israel culminates in their rejection of Jesus, and continues until this day
– Matt. 13:14-16; John 12:39-41; Acts 28:25-28; Rom. 11:7-10
- at the present time there is a remnant from Israel "according to God's election of grace" (Rom. 11:5); a sign of future salvation for Israel (Rom. 11:25-27)

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An Unusual Calling

- God's Judicial Hardening
 - a judicial act of God that renders people spiritually insensitive and prevents them from responding in faith to God (e.g. Pharaoh)
 - an act in which God "gives over" the person to their rebellion which they have chosen (Rom. 1:24-28)

13

An Unusual Calling

- God's Judicial Hardening
 - God's timing and purposes are His own – *"today if you hear His voice do not harden your heart"* (Psalm 95:7-8)

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