CHAPTER 6:

Isaiah 6:1 (NKJV)
6 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.

Chapter 6 marks a pivotal turning point in the history of Judah
• It also marks the beginning of a new era in Isaiah’s preaching
• The death of King Uzziah ends an era in Judah’s history
• 2 Chronicles 26:8 tells us that Uzziah was known worldwide as a king who brought peace and prosperity
• He was an inventor, he built up the Israeli army to be a powerful force

So it’s interesting that with his death, Isaiah sees the Lord
• Isaiah never saw the LORD until Uzziah died
• So it is with us… you won’t really see the Lord until your “Uzziah” dies.
• Your “Uzziah” might be a wise mentor, a good church, a godly friend
• Don’t fix your eyes on the fellowship, a ministry or a man
• Fix your eyes on Jesus because He wants to be the vision for your life

Now that Uzziah is dead, the wicked king Ahaz will now rule Judah
• Whereas strength and prosperity characterized King Uzziah, war and weakness will characterize King Ahaz and Assyria will become a dominant international power on earth because of King Ahaz

Isaiah is in the temple when he sees this vision of the Lord

Isaiah 6:2–5 (NKJV)

2 Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one cried to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!” 4 And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 So I said: “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.”

The word seraphim literally means burning
• Isaiah sees the same four living creatures that are described in Revelation 4 who are around the throne saying holy, holy, holy
• Seraphims aren’t like computer programmed robots that go around saying holy, holy, holy…
• They are superior in intelligence who are so enamored with Someone who is whole, complete, not eroded by sin in any way, whose glory fills the earth
• They could choose to fly out to the ends of the universe, but they choose to gaze at the Lord because He’s so incredible attractive
• In the midst of this incredible vision, Isaiah becomes aware of his sinfulness and he says… woe is me for I am undone
• That is the natural reaction – the natural man gazing upon the divine nature of God… the natural reaction is condemnation
• I am a man of unclean lips and I live amongst a people of unclean lips
• There is a connection between speech and behavior in the Bible
• Your speech reveals your heart
• If you have a bitter heart, your words will be filled with bitterness
• If you have a condemning heart, your words will be filled with criticism
• But if you have a heart filled with the love of God, your words will be filled with that love

Isaiah 6:6–8 (NKJV)
6 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. 7 And he touched my mouth with it, and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged.” 8 Also 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.”

• Notice the angel touches the area where Isaiah felt condemned
• That’s the nature of grace
• Grace is attracted to the place where we feel most condemned
• The area of life where my life is undone
• Whatever that area is, let the Lord touch it with the purifying work of grace that He desires to do in you… just like He did for Isaiah

Isaiah 6:9–13 (NKJV)
9 And He said, “Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’ 10 “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.”  

Then I said, “Lord, how long?” And He answered: “Until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant, The houses are without a man, The land is utterly desolate,” The L ORD has removed men far away, And the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. 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.”

Notice the natural response from Isaiah after he is touched by God…

He wants to serve

• Not in a passive sense… Lord if you want to use me go ahead
• But in an enthusiastic sense… Pick me Lord. Here I am, send me!
• And the Lord tells Isaiah to go and He gives Isaiah a message
• Now most scholars refer to this passage as the call of Isaiah, but I have two problems with this view
• The first problem is where it is placed in the Book… it’s not at the beginning
• You would think if it was Isaiah’s call to ministry it would have occurred in chapter 1
• The second problem I have is the fact that Isaiah has already been ministering in chapters 1-5… so the call happens after the fact
• This doesn’t make sense
• Roy Gingrich, one of the commentators that I like, says that the call of Isaiah does not have reference to his original call to his prophetic ministry but to a subsequent call to special service
• This special call came in a time of national crisis
• King Uzziah is dead, the nation is filled with moral decay and Assyria is rising to power and is a threat to the nation’s existence

Thus, God gives Isaiah a special message to tell the people…

• Listen guys, you’re not listening, you’re not seeing, you’re not understanding, your ears your eyes are shut and your heart is hardened
• Isaiah asks God… how long will I preach this message?
• God says… until My land is devastated, until my people are in exile, until my remnant is disciplined and until only a holy seed remains in the stump of the once mighty oak… the seed being a reference to Jesus.
• How would you like to have Isaiah’s job?

Chapter 7-12
Isaiah begins his prophetic ministry to King Ahaz
The historical setting of this section of scripture is set in the reign of Judah’s King Ahaz… considered the worst of all the Kings of Israel
The events described in chapters 7-8 recall the circumstances surrounding the Syro-Ephraimite War (734-732 BC) when the Israelite King Pekah and the Syrian King Rezin attacked Judah
These kings wanted to force Ahaz to join their coalition against Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria or the replace Ahaz with a more cooperative ruler if he would not join them
2 Kings 16:1-4 and 2 Chronicles 28:1-4 describe Ahaz as a wicked king who led the people into idolatry – the worship of Baal
We are told that Ahaz sacrificed his own son to Baal
Therefore, as punishment for these sins, the Syrians and the Israelites attack Judah and kill over 120,000 soldiers and take over 200,000 people in captivity from Judah… they also plunder the land
However, Jerusalem was not conquered
Since Ahaz saw no way to win this war, against the advice of Isaiah, he sends gold and silver from the royal palace and the temple to the Assyrian King Tiglath-pileser III and offered to be his vassal king
In exchange the Assyrians would rescue him from these enemies
The Assyrians attack Syria, destroy Damascus and make Israel and Judah his vassals.
Isaiah warned King Ahaz and told him to trust the Lord for protection, don’t make any unholy alliances…
King Ahaz rejected Isaiah’s counsel which in sense is rejecting God’s help
God promised the Assyrians would conquer Judah
Now when Isaiah delivers this message to King Ahaz, he is told by God to bring his son whose name is Shear-jashub which means a remnant shall return
While Isaiah is telling King Ahaz the bad news, standing next to Isaiah is the good news… a remnant will return

Isaiah 7:7–9 (NKJV)
7 thus says the Lord GOD: “It shall not stand, Nor shall it come to pass. 8 For the head of Syria is Damascus, And the head of Damascus is Rezin. Within sixty-five years Ephraim will be broken, So that it will not be a people. 9 The head of Ephraim is Samaria, And the head of Samaria is Remaliah’s son. If you will not believe, Surely you shall not be established.” ’
Listen King Ahaz, your kingdom is over and then God says… I’m going to establish a new kingdom

Isaiah 7:14–16 (NKJV)
14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. 15 Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. 16 For before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings.

- Before this child is born, both Kings of Israel… from Judah and Israel will forsake the land… and
- We see that in the intertestimental period of the Bible… there was no king in Israel after the nation was led into captivity

The land was forsaken

Isaiah 7:23–25 (NKJV)
23 It shall happen in that day, That wherever there could be a thousand vines Worth a thousand shekels of silver, It will be for briers and thorns. 24 With arrows and bows men will come there, Because all the land will become briers and thorns. 25 And to any hill which could be dug with the hoe, You will not go there for fear of briers and thorns; But it will become a range for oxen And a place for sheep to roam.

Chapter 8

Isaiah 8:1–4 (NKJV)
8 Moreover the LORD said to me, “Take a large scroll, and write on it with a man’s pen concerning Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz. 2 And I will take for Myself faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.” 3 Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the LORD said to me, “Call his name Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz; 4 for before the child shall have knowledge to cry ‘My father’ and ‘My mother,’ the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria will be taken away before the king of Assyria.”

Isaiah married the virgin, and the legal documents were duly witnessed and sealed.
• He even announced that their first child would be a son and his name would be Maher-shalal-hash-baz, which means “quick to plunder, swift to the spoil.”
• Since Isaiah’s sons were signs to the nation (8:18), this name was significant.
• It spoke of future judgment when Assyria would conquer Syria and invade both Israel and Judah, and when Babylon would take Judah into exile.
• A child would start speaking meaningful sentences about the age of two.
• In 732 B.C., about two years after Isaiah’s son was born, both Pekah and Rezin were dead (7:1); and Assyria had conquered Syria and begun to invade Israel (2 Kings 15:29).
• The army was “quick to plunder and swift to take the spoil.”
• In the remainder of this chapter, Isaiah uses 3 vivid contrasts to show the rulers of Judah the mistake they were making by trusting Assyrian instead of trusting the Lord

(Vs. 5-10) Isaiah tells them they chose a flood instead of a peaceful river

Isaiah 8:7 (NKJV)
7 Now therefore, behold, the Lord brings up over them The waters of the River, strong and mighty— The king of Assyria and all his glory; He will go up over all his channels And go over all his banks.

Judah rejoiced when Assyria defeated Syria
• They didn’t realize that Assyria would turn on them and flood their land
• But Isaiah saw no permanent victory for Syria, they were invading Immanuel’s land and God was with His people and promised to deliver them...

Isaiah 8:10 (NKJV)
10 Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing; Speak the word, but it will not stand, For God is with us.”

(Vs. 11-15) Isaiah tells them they chose a snare instead of a sanctuary

Isaiah 8:14 (NKJV)
14 He will be as a sanctuary, But a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense To both the houses of Israel, As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

**God warned Isaiah not to follow the majority by supporting the popular pro-Assyrian party**
- He was accused of treason because Isaiah opposed all foreign alliances and urged the people to put their faith in the Lord
- The leaders of Israel were asking is it popular? Is it safe?
- Isaiah was asking is it right? Is it God’s will?

(Vs. 16-22) **Isaiah tells them they chose darkness instead of light**

Isaiah 8:19–22 (NKJV)
19 And when they say to you, “Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter,” should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living? 20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.
21 They will pass through it hard-pressed and hungry; and it shall happen, when they are hungry, that they will be enraged and curse their king and their God, and look upward. 22 Then they will look to the earth, and see trouble and darkness, gloom of anguish; and they will be driven into darkness.

- In their time of crisis, instead of consulting God, they consulted demons and this only increased their moral and spiritual darkness
- Because they chose another god, God is going to give them what they desire… you will now walk in darkness and gloom of anguish… all you will see is trouble and darkness

**But despite their moral darkness, God promises a great light**

Isaiah 9:2 (NKJV)
2 The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.

- Isaiah prophesies that a new leader, a great light is coming and this leader will expand the nation and increase joy in the land
6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah declares that this leader would be both human (a child is born) and divine (a Son is given)
The government of the world would be upon Him
He will be known as Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father
His government will never end, will bring peace and will restore justice

(9:8-10:4) Isaiah prophesies the destruction of the Northern Kingdom

Isaiah 9:8-12 (NKJV)
• 8 The LORD sent a word against Jacob. And it has fallen on Israel. 9 All the people will know— Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria— Who say in pride and arrogance of heart: 10 “The bricks have fallen down, But we will rebuild with hewn stones; The sycamores are cut down, But we will replace them with cedars.” 11 Therefore the LORD shall set up The adversaries of Rezin against him, And spur his enemies on, 12 The Syrians before and the Philistines behind; And they shall devour Israel with an open mouth. For all this His anger is not turned away, But His hand is stretched out still.

God gives four reasons for bringing judgement on Israel
• In vs. 8-12, the FIRST reason God gives for judgment is their pride and arrogance
• Because of their pride and arrogance, they will be devoured by the Syrian from the east and the Philistines from the south west
• In vs. 13-17 God gives a SECOND reason for judgment… because Israel refused to repent, the leaders led Israel into error and the people followed the leaders… God will no longer watch over their young men, nor will He show mercy to their orphans and widows

Isaiah 9:13 (NKJV)
13 For the people do not turn to Him who strikes them, Nor do they seek the LORD of hosts.
Isaiah 9:16 (NKJV)
16 For the leaders of this people cause them to err, And those who are led by them are destroyed.

• The THIRD reason God gives is because of the wickedness of the people (Vs. 18-21)
• The FOURTH reason God gives is because the judges are robbing from the people by making unrighteous decrees

Isaiah 10:1–2 (NKJV)
10 “Woe to those who decree unrighteous decrees, Who write misfortune, Which they have prescribed 2 To rob the needy of justice, And to take what is right from the poor of My people, That widows may be their prey, And that they may rob the fatherless.

• We are in this place today in our nation… judges are making unrighteous decrees… even thought it’s not their job to do so
• Judges are there to uphold the law, not judge whether or not a law should not be passed

(Vs. 5-19) God says He will use the Assyrians to judge Israel

Isaiah 10:5–6 (NKJV)
5 “Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger And the staff in whose hand is My indignation. 6 I will send him against an ungodly nation, And against the people of My wrath I will give him charge, To seize the spoil, to take the prey, And to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

The problem is Assyria seizes the opportunity to destroy Judah in order to conquer all the nations

Isaiah 10:7 (NKJV)
7 Yet he does not mean so, Nor does his heart think so; But it is in his heart to destroy, And cut off not a few nations.

So God will judge Assyria for their arrogance

Isaiah 10:12–13 (NKJV)
12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the LORD has performed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, that He will say, “I will punish the
fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his haughty looks."
13 For he says: "By the strength of my hand I have done it, And by my wisdom, for I am prudent; Also I have removed the boundaries of the people, And have robbed their treasuries; So I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man.

- God will wipe out the armed forces of the Assyrians to the point that even a child can number them (Vs. 19)
- The Assyrians conquered Judah in 701 B.C. but God promises that a remnant will return and they will no longer seek security through an alliance with the Assyrians (as Ahaz did) but they will lean upon the Lord

Isaiah 10:20–21 (NKJV)
20 And it shall come to pass in that day That the remnant of Israel, And such as have escaped of the house of Jacob, Will never again depend on him who defeated them, But will depend on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. 21 The remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, To the Mighty God.

- (Vs. 28-34) describe the rapid advance of the Assyrian army towards Jerusalem and the miraculous destruction of the Assyrian army as it lay camped at the doors of Jerusalem
- We read in 2 Kings 19:35-36 that an angel of the Lord wiped out the Assyrian army

Isaiah 10:33–34 (NKJV)
33 Behold, the Lord, The LORD of hosts, Will lop off the bough with terror; Those of high stature will be hewn down, And the haughty will be humbled. 34 He will cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, And Lebanon will fall by the Mighty One.

Next week we look at the Millennial reign of Christ beginning with the announcement of the coming Kingdom… the Spirit of the Lord is upon me