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The Call of Isaiah

6: 1-13

DIG: Why is the call of Isaiah placed here instead of at the beginning of the book?



In one sense **ADONAI** has revealed **Himself** to us through **His** Word and **His Son** who **tabernacled among us (John 1:14)**, but in another sense **ADONAI** is a **God who hides Himself (45:15)**. No matter how hard we try, all of our efforts to understand **YHVH** are doomed to failure. **His** plans and purposes are a mystery to us because **His thoughts** and **ways** are higher than ours (**55:8-9**). We will only know **the Lord** when **He** decides to reveal **Himself to us (Deuteronomy 29:29)**. When we search for **God** in our own strength - that is, when the direction of the search is from down upward - we cannot succeed. It is only when **ADONAI** seeks us - that is, when the direction of the search is from up downward - that contact between **God** and ourselves can be made. The call of **YHVH** to **His** people, then, is basic to biblical faith. Every man-made religion is founded on the principle that it is possible for people to reach out and touch **God** through their own initiative. But our faith, as taught in the Bible, affirms that our relationship to **the LORD** is based on divine grace and not on human activity. Revelation takes place only when **the Creator** discloses **Himself** to us.¹⁷

While **Jeremiah** and **Ezeki'el** place **their** calls at the beginning of **their** books, **Isaiah** places **his** in **Chapter 6**, following the initial prophecies. It makes for a smooth transition. Just as **Chapter 6** is the conclusion to **Chapters 1-5**, it is also the introduction to **Chapters 7-12**. In addition, the placement here rather than at the beginning accomplishes two things.

First, the vision of **the Holy, Holy, Holy One** reinforces what **Isaiah** has already said in the first five chapters, and establishes several themes that **he** will detail in **Chapters 7 to 66** - that a **Holy God** cannot tolerate sin! Secondly, it vindicates **Isaiah's** authority to say what **he** is going to say. The readers might be asking themselves, "Why should we believe this **prophet** and respond to **his** message?" This chapter demonstrates that **the One True God** called **Isaiah**, and that **his** message should not be ignored.

Attempts to determine the nature of the vision are endless. Whether it was ecstatic, mystical or "actual" has no bearing upon the reality of the impact on **Isaiah's** ministry. *How he saw the Lord* is insignificant. What matters is that **he** saw **Him**, and saw **Him** in such a way that changed **his** ministry and **his** life forever. When we encounter **Ha'Shem's** Word today, it should do the same for us.