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Until the LORD Has Sent Everyone Far Away

6: 11-13

Until the LORD has sent everyone far away DIG: How did the stubbornness of Isaiah's audience differ from that of the Pharisees? When will this prophecy be fulfilled? In what stages? How do these verses preview the rest of the book? When God says a tenth will remain, what does He mean by that? What did Isaiah name his son? Why? Who will conquer the Land? Who is the holy seed? How does this stump relate to the Branch in 4:2-6?

REFLECT: What ministry has God the Holy Spirit called you to? What is the most important aspect of your ministry? How do you measure "success," results or faithfulness? Is your focus an audience of One, or an audience of many? When you get discouraged, how does the Lord encourage you to know for certain that all is not lost? How can you encourage others in that regard? What can you expect to happen when called to use your spiritual gifts, for example?

When **Isaiah** learns that **his** ministry will end in failure, in one sense **he** asks: **For how long, Oh Lord** will I have to endure this? **God's** answer is not very encouraging. It will be **until the Land** is totally depopulated. **Until the cities lie ruined and without inhabitant, until the houses are left deserted and the field ruined and ravaged.** First, the Babylonians will carry **them** into seventy years of captivity. Ultimately, however, this judgment will come at the hands of the Roman general Titus and the Romans (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ, to see link click Mt - The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple on Tisha B'Av in 70 AD**). **Isaiah** starts **Chapter 6** by saying: **In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord.** This was very significant because **the year that King Uzziah died** was the year that Rome was established on the banks of the Tiber River. The instrument of **their** judgment was born.

In another sense, **Isaiah** cried out: **For how long, O Lord, will this insensibility and blind stubbornness continue (6:11a)?** He was neither angry nor objecting. **The prophet** was merely beside **himself**, as seen in **his** cry of dismay. It wasn't what **he** wanted to hear, nor did **he** want to see **his people** destroyed. But on the other hand, it surely isn't a refusal or an insistence that **the Lord** justify **Himself**. **He** was determined to obey, but **he** did so

with a heavy heart.

The answer to **Isaiah's** cry did not relieve **his** anguish. **God's** justice would not be fully carried out until **the Land** was virtually empty. This was the verdict: **Until the cities lie ruined and without inhabitant, until the houses are left deserted and the fields ruined and ravaged, until ADONAI had sent everyone away and the Land is utterly forsaken (6:11b-12). Only desolation, destruction, and exile of the sinful majority will bring an end to the deplorable conditions,** so the prophecies of **Deuteronomy** would come into fulfillment (**Deuteronomy 28:21** and **63; 29:28**).

In a way, these verses preview the rest of the book. They hint at the fact that the Assyrian threat will come and go in **Chapters 7** through **37**; but beyond that, the more ominous consequences of dealing with Babylon will be seen in **Chapters 38** through **48**. Although **Isaiah** did not live that long, **ADONAI** meant that **he** should stay faithful to **his** calling and continue to preach even if he did not see Jerusalem's downfall. That would be left to the "crying prophet" **Jeremiah** (see the commentary on [Jeremiah Ga - The Fall of Jerusalem](#)). The only way that **Isaiah** could carry out **his** duties as a **prophet** was by the empowering of **God Himself**. This was a ministry doomed to failure. But **the LORD** doesn't call the equipped . . . **He** equips the called.

*There is a song called, An Audience of One, and challenges us to realize that when we minister, we truly should only have a audience of **One, Jesus Christ**. It is **He** alone that we should be conscious of pleasing. If we were to please the entire world and not **Him**, then we have failed. On the other hand, if only **Him** and no one else, we will have succeeded. The only words that should really motivate us are those of our **Lord**. When you hear **His** words: **Well done, good and faithful servant (Matthew 25:21)**, any trials or disappointments during your earthly ministry will be well worth it.*

As far as **the Israelites** were concerned, **the Land** was not **theirs** to possess as **their** own. Rather, **they** possessed it in trust from the true **Landowner**. So long as **they** remained in **God's** favor, by living lives in keeping with **His** character, then **the Land** was **theirs** to develop and enjoy. But if **they** ceased to live in obedience to **YHVH**, **the Land** would vomit **them** out as it had the Canaanites before **them (Leviticus 18:25-27)**.²¹ Utter desolation was sure, but it was not the end. **God** was not finished with **Isra'el**.

Perhaps discouraged by such a negative response and terrible results, **Isaiah** was then assured by **the LORD** that not all was lost. **And though a tenth remains in the Land, it will again be laid waste (6:13a)**. A **remnant** would be left, the poor who were left in **Judah** by Nebuchadnezzar (**Second Kings 24:14**). This is one of **Isaiah's** most important

emphases in **his** book (1:9, 10:19-22, 11:1, 27:6 and 37:31-32). **Isaiah** named **his** first son **Shear-Jashub** (7:3), which means, *a remnant will return*, as a sign to **the nation** that all was not lost.



God compared that **remnant** to **stumps** that **terebinth** and **oak** trees **leave** when **they** are **cut down**, so the **holy seed** will be the **stump in the Land** (6:13b). The **stump** is **the vital and indestructible element from which the tree springs to life again**. From this **stump** or **holy seed**, the believing **remnant** would come and others would believe. Though **Judah's** population would be almost totally wiped out or exiled, **ADONAI** promised to protect a small number of believers **in the Land**. **God's** promise to Abraham to bless all the nations of the world through **His** offspring would not be forgotten (**Genesis 17**). Just as **Ha'Shem** saved Noah and his family from the judgment of the Flood, **the LORD** gives **His** faithful children the grace to overcome the trials of this life.

So, what we have in **Isaiah 6** is an outstanding example of a *call narrative* because it describes the basic elements of what people can expect to happen when they are called by **God** to serve **Him**. We can anticipate seeing **YHVH** as **He** really is (6:1-4), then seeing ourselves as we really are (6:5-8), and finally seeing the world as it really is (6:9-13).²²

Therefore, utter desolation for **Judah** was as sure as the rising sun, but it was not the end. In that sense this chapter is much like the book of **Amos**, who was **a prophet to the northern kingdom of Isra'el**. Although it is filled with judgment, it ends with hope. **The LORD's** judgment is never the last word for those who have put their trust/faith/belief in **Him**. If this was an encouragement to **Y'hudah** and **Yisra'el**, it should be no less for us.