

Answer the Call

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[0:00] Isaiah 6, verses 1-8 In the year the king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

Above it stood the seraphims. Each one had six wings. With twain he covered his face, with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory.

And the post of the door moved at the voice of him that cried. And the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, 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 mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongues from off the altar.

[1:29] And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged.

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Who shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me.

Praise you, Lord. We thank you, Lord, for your word. Stir our hearts. Help us to act upon it. For your sake. Amen. Answer the call.

Answer the call. God is calling. Will you answer the call? In Isaiah's call, it captured all of the senses.

The sights, the sounds, the smell, the shaking. In Isaiah's call, he had a vision. He saw the Lord. He saw the Lord, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, high and lifted up.

[2:45] It started with a vision. What are we looking for in our lives? What are we looking for? I urge you tonight, catch a glimpse of him.

Catch a glimpse of him today. High and lifted up. In the year that King Isaiah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon his throne. High and lifted up.

And his train filled the temple. Now it wasn't a choo-choo train. It was the train of his robes. It was the robes filled the place. The flowing robes.

The train of his robes. And he said he saw the Lord. We are to look unto Jesus. Look unto Jesus. Looking unto him. As those that cried, sir, we would see Jesus.

That's what we want to see, isn't it? That's what matters. That we see him. That we catch a glimpse of him. That we're caught away in an ecstasy. In a joy. In a wonderment of the King.

[3:43] High and lifted up. And his train filling the temple. That we'd be caught away from all that distracts. And takes away his attention. The attention that is due unto him.

That we are caught away from all that will blur that vision. That vision. Now I've got some vision problems. Vision problems. Our little dog's got some vision problems.

He bumps into the furniture. And he doesn't know where he's going. But he can still see a little bit.

And sometimes we're a bit like that, aren't we? We just see a little bit of God. One day we'll see him. And the scales will fall. That blurred vision will cease. And we'll see him truly as he is. There'll be no need for glasses or contact lenses. Everything will be crystal clear.

When we see him face to face. And won't that be glory? Isaiah saw the Lord. In all of his majestic glory. Seated, braiding, ruling. Enthroned in that due place of the King.

[4:45] In his might and supreme glory. He saw the Lord in his might and power. Seated high and lifted up. And the train of his robes was filling the place.

Verse 2. Above it, above the throne stood the seraphims. Each one had six wings. With 20 or with two, he covered his face. With two, he covered his feet. With two, he could fly. Wow, that would have been amazing, wouldn't it? Imagine that. You ain't seen nothing yet. When you think, well, this six-wing creature called the seraphim. They hovered above the throne. Bestowing honour and praise. Shielding their faces as if in reverence and honour and humility. They must have been moved by the sense of that moment. That sense of being in God's presence. In the sense of God's holiness. What a wonderment it would have been. And verse 3. And one cried unto the other. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.

[5:46] The whole earth is full of his glory. Isaiah's call was in the midst of a time of worship. He was in awe of God. How we need that.

How we need that. Desperately need that. The sense of the awe of God. The angels cry out, the holiness of God. Holy, holy, holy.

Thrice holy. In the Hebrew language I'm told, this is a superlative. In fact, it is what someone has called a super superlative.

Now I had to look up, what's the word superlative mean? In my lack of education. And here's what it means. You can learn a new word tonight. Superlative.

This is what it means. If you don't already know. It's of the highest quality or degree. Of the highest quality or degree. Holy, holy, holy.

[6:45] Above anything we can imagine. I think the holiness of God is pure and perfect. The creatures of that time, they stress God's holiness. He is set apart.

Set above. Holy. Absolutely. Absolutely. Isaiah not only had a vision. He had a sound. He had a sound. Not only do we have a vision and a sound, but there was a movement.

There was a smell. As it were. It's like all the senses were just astounded in this moment of Isaiah's call. And verse 4. And the doors, the posts of the door, or the doorposts, they moved at the voice of him that cried.

And the house was filled with smoke. And what a vision it would have been that the Lord high and lifted up, seated on a throne. His robes filling the temple. And then the place was filled with smoke. The atmosphere was thick. It was palpable. It was tangible. There was a shock to the senses. The sights. The sounds. The smell. The smoke. The shaking.

[7:48] As the doorposts were shaken in that place. And everything was rocking and rolling. As it were. And I don't mean to use that lightly. But I'm just trying to draw a picture of how the place was shaken.

When God met Isaiah. And then for Isaiah, it all comes down personally to this. As he is seized with that gripping reality of his need.

Of his inadequacy. Verse 5. Then said I, 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 mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Isaiah became conscious of his uncleanness.

He felt undone. Undone. Unclean. Unworthy. He was overwhelmed. Like someone has put it. When Isaiah saw the Lord.

[8:47] He said, woe is me. Not woe is my neighbour. Not woe is somebody else. Woe is me. As the sinner who went to pray.

Said God be merciful to me. Yes. A sinner. Woe is me. He felt his inadequacy. He realised his lack. His need. His unworthy condition.

I am a person of unclean lips. It's a bit like a story I read of King Frederick II. Sure you all know about him?

No. No. Should do some more reading. King Frederick II. He was an 18th century king. King of Prussia. King Frederick II. King Frederick II.

He went on a visit to a prison in Berlin. And the inmates crowded around King Frederick. And they wanted to proclaim that they were innocent.

[9:49] Everyone was saying, oh, it wasn't true. I didn't do it. I'm not guilty. All except one man. He sat quietly in the corner. His head bowed.

And King Frederick walked over to this man in the corner. And he said, what are you here for? Armed robbery, your majesty.

Are you guilty? Yes, sir. I deserve this punishment. The king turned to the guard and ordered, set this guilty man free.

I don't want him corrupting all these other innocent people. He knew that that man was guilty. Set this guilty man free.

I don't want him corrupting all these other innocent people. Of course, we're all guilty. That's the point. We're all guilty. We're all in need of God's grace, God's pardon, God's forgiveness.

[10:51] And Isaiah's need was met with God's supply. God's grace, God's pardon. God's pardon and grace in our lives begins when we admit our guilt.

It starts there. To be saved, we've got to acknowledge we're a sinner. And we need to be saved. And Isaiah found that grace. Verse 6, So one of these great six-wing creatures took this life coal and took it from the altar.

God was going to do a purifying work, which it symbolises here. A cleansing, a purging.

Woe is me. I'm a man undone. A man of unclean lips. Verse 7, Cleanse it.

Cleanse it. Cleanse it. Removed. And so I had the vision of the Lord, and he heard the voice of the Lord. Next thing was that he heard the voice. He saw the vision. He heard the voice. Verse 8, Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who shall go for us?

[12:26] Here was Isaiah's call, his commission. In fact, like someone has said, God did not direct his call to Isaiah. It's interesting when you take note of this.

Isaiah overheard God. He overheard him saying, Who will go for us? You know, the thrice holy God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Who will go for us?

Whom shall I send? Who will go for us? The call of God. It's not just for a select few, but for everyone. For everyone.

Who will go for us? The call goes out worldwide. Humanity wide. And it's when we hear his call. And the condition of our ears is such that our heart will respond.

It's like as the soul went out to sow, different conditions in the soil dictated whether the seed would work. And so we hear Isaiah's response.

[13:35] Then said I, Here are I. Send me. Isaiah was willing to go. God did not force his will on Isaiah.

Isaiah. Isaiah did not dream up an excuse why he couldn't go. In complete freedom, Isaiah could cry, Here am I.

Send me. He did not say what reluctant Moses effectively said in Exodus 4, verse 13, When he was called, Oh Lord, Please send someone else.

What about us tonight? What about you? Me? Do we wait on him? Do we see him high and lifted up? Do we see him in the awe and honour that is due to him?

Do we hear his voice? Do we wait upon him? What is our situation? Can you picture yourself there? Picture yourself there, With all the sights and sounds and smells, The shaking going on, Standing before him there, Before his throne.

[14:48] Do we hear the call? Do we answer the call? Do we stop and consider in our lives, We get busy. As was said earlier, Do we stop, Take stock and take time for worship?

Do we sense the Lord? Do we see the Lord? Do we hear his voice? Are we in awe of him? Do we sense his touch on our lives? What of his call to you?

How will you respond? In heartfelt worship and service, And that might be different for every one of us, How that plays out.

But the point is this, What is hindering you, Me, From obeying God's call? From answering that call? You know, There's many calls, Through scripture.

For example, We are called to a high calling. In Philippians 3.14, Paul says, I press towards the mark, For the price of the high calling, Of God in Christ Jesus.

[15:55] The picture of that athlete, Running that marathon track. Philippians 3.14, Press toward the mark, For the price of the high calling of God, In Christ Jesus.

A high calling, We're called to a holy calling, A holy calling. Paul 12, Timothy 2, Timothy 1, Verse 9, Who hath called us, Sorry, Who hath saved us, And called us with, A holy calling, Not according to

our works, But according to his, A holy calling, And grace, Which was given us, In Christ Jesus, Before the world began.

God marked it out, Before you were even born, Who hath saved us, And called us, With a holy calling, And we're called to a, Heavenly calling, Hebrews 3, Verse 1, Wherefore, Holy brethren, Partakers, Of the heavenly calling, Consider the apostle, And high priest, Of your faith, Of our profession, Christ Jesus, Holy brethren, Partakers of the heavenly calling, A high calling, A holy calling, A heavenly calling, We are chosen, Call down, 1 Peter 2, Verse 9, But ye are a chosen generation, A royal priesthood, A holy nation, A peculiar people, That you should show forth, The praises of him, Who have called you, Out of darkness, Into his marvellous light, He's called you, Out of darkness, Into his marvellous light,

You are called, You are called, With a high calling, A holy calling, A heavenly calling, You are called, A holy people, A peculiar people, Amen, It's a powerful call, A solemn call, And we need a fresh vision, We need to see the Lord, High, And lift it up, Like Isaiah did, And that vision sustains us, Through this journey, That we are looking unto Jesus, And we don't take our eyes off him, We are looking unto him, Steadfastly, Our eyes fixed upon him, Through this journey, That is life, And Isaiah's message, Was not popular, You know, He was sent, And he went, But, The context of Isaiah 6, As you read on, It says, You're going to, You're going to preach, But they're not going to hear you, They're not going to understand, Their eyes are going to be shut, Their ears are going to be heavy, You're not going to get much,

Response, But it doesn't matter, It doesn't, It doesn't matter, I was watching a video clip, Of a street preacher, You know, People were questioning, There's no results, There's no, You know, You're wasting your time, People aren't listening to you, Well, It's whether it's right, Isn't it?

[19:00] That's what matters, It's whether what we do is right, Whether it's right, Not whether it's relevant, Not whether, Not whether there's, Multitudes coming, You know, You know what I mean, We can be pragmatic, We can be about, Pulling the crowd, Or we can be about, What's right, It's what's right, That matters, So, Isaiah's message, Was not popular, But he went, And friends, Today, We are called to serve, All of us, To, To service, Just as with Isaiah, We've just got to keep our ears open, And hear, Whom shall I send?

Who will go for us? Hear that, Still, Small voice, Tune in, God wants us to go, Just as, Isaiah, Hudson, Hudson, Hudson, Taylor, Was used mightily of God, Because he was willing to serve, God, At any cost, Hudson, Taylor, He gave up his comfortable life, At home in England, And risked his life, To a harsh life, In a foreign environment, To spread the gospel, In China, And there's all kinds of opposition, You know, And you hear this often, With some that choose to follow God, That it seems like, Everything was against them, Yet he went, And he said, I used to ask God, If he would come and help me, Then I asked, If I could come and help him, Finally, I ended up by asking God, To do his own work, Through me, To do his own work, Through me, Now that's what matters, Isn't it?

How will you answer the call? Will you answer the call? Like Isaiah? Now look back through the scriptures, Through the Old Testament, Through the prophets, And men and women of God, And most prophets were slow to obey, When God called, Moses argued, He had an argument with God, Jeremiah hesitated, Jonah fled, He found the ship, That was going in the wrong direction, And got on that one, But God had other plans for Jonah, Peter had second thoughts, With Samuel, God had to speak three times, To get through to him, Yet all were called of God, All were called of God, There's many, Many other examples, We could give of men and women, That God called, To serve, God wants a willing response from us,

Don't you hate it, When you're badgered, To do something, I hate to badger people, And say, Well this needs doing, Well that needs doing, You know, You want to grab them by their shirt collars, And shake them, But no, It's got to be willing, Service, It's got to be willing, Service, When you hear there's a need, When you hear there's a need, Could it be God saying, Who shall I send?

[22:27] Who will go for us? I thank God for, Stuart and Jackie, They saw there was a need, In the Sunday school, I don't want to, Make them have swelled heads here, But they were just simply, Obeying God, When they saw the need, That arose, They saw there was a need, For a Sunday school, And God touched their hearts, And they heard that voice, Barry, Is signed up,

As one of the team, There's others joining in, And saying, I want to serve God, I want to serve him, And I know there's others, That have volunteered, In lots of different ways, And just, Trying to make that happen, But it's a willing response, We shouldn't have to be badgered, And nagged, And, What not, But rather, Let's have a willing response, To serve God in humility, Our service of God, Does not depend on our ability, But, On our ability, To depend on God, Our service of God, Does not depend on our ability, But, On our ability, To depend upon God, You may think, Who am I, To answer God's call, I'm not trained enough, I'm not smart enough, Whatever, I'm not tall enough, Short enough, I don't smile enough, I don't talk enough, Whatever it be, Yet, You see, How many times, God, Often chooses the leaders, That are totally outside, What is accepted, You know, Here's, I read this quote, Some examples, For example, The child David, Just a child, He's not old enough, He's just a child, A woman, Deborah, Who would have thought, She would be, In such a position, That she found, That God placed her in, A wandering Aramean, Abraham, He wasn't really, Of the right tribe, A scheming liar, Jacob, A coward, Gideon, Hiding away, When the trouble was on, A simple fisherman, Ignorant, Fisherman, Well, He never went to the right school, He doesn't have letters, Behind his name, He's not qualified, A teenage girl, From a remote country village, Marrying, All of these ones, The world would discount them, The church would discount them, Yet, No one is discounted, In God's plan, Everyone, Is, Eligible, To volunteer, When, I know, In, Just to kind of illustrate it, In a worldly stance, When, There's an army, Being called for, And there's soldiers to enlist, There's all kinds of rules, And regulations, There's, You know, There's a maximum age limit, There's a minimum age limit, There's a certain height, A certain weight, A certain fitness, A certain, Capacity, A certain, Intelligence, Test to do, And all of those things, Can bar you from entry, Into that army, Into that, Enlistment, But in God's army, There's no such thing, Amen, In God's army, You don't have to be a certain, Height, Shape, Fitness, Whatever, You can enlist today, In that army, And so, What will your response be, When you hear that call, Well, He's not talking to me, Surely, He's talking to, That guy, Or that one, Will we try and find a reason, Why not, Why not serve God, Why me God, What can I do, I'm too young, You know, I can't say that anymore, Why not someone else God, Why not someone else, We can all think of excuses, Why not, Serve God, Here's what someone put here, Just to illustrate this, Moses stuttered, David's armor didn't fit, John Mark was rejected by Paul, Oh, That, You know, Surely he'd be discounted then, The apostle didn't think he was fit, Hosea's wife was a prostitute, Amos' only trainee was in the school of victory, Pruning, Jacob was a liar, David had an affair, Solomon was too rich, Abraham was too old, David was too young, Timothy had ulcers, Peter was afraid of death, Lazarus was dead, God even used him, You know, John was self-righteous, Jesus was too poor, Naomi was a widow, Paul was a murderer, So was Moses, Jonah ran from God, Miriam was a gossip, Gideon and Thomas both doubted, Jeremiah was depressed and suicidal, Elijah was burnt out, [27:34] John the Baptist was a loud mouth, Martha was a worrywart, Mary was lazy, Samson had long hair, Noah got drunk, Did I mention that Moses had a short few, So did Peter, Paul, Well, Lots of folks did, So, There's many examples in the scriptures, Of how men and women who, Maybe even today, We discount them, They're not qualified, Yet God used them for his glory, Isn't that wonderful, And he still uses men and women like that today, When you answer God's call, Know this, That, It will not necessarily be easy for you, As you read in Isaiah 6, Verse 9 through 19, That the message that Isaiah had to deliver, Would be largely unheeded, Unheeded, You know, It's kind of disappointing, We've given out thousands and thousands of these flyers, And yet we've seen scarcely any response to that, But that's the message, It's unheeded today, It's sad, But it's true, That the message is unheeded today, Doesn't mean we stop preaching it, But rather preach it more with vigour, And vitality, All that we can do is be faithful, Be faithful, And do our duty, And God will have a remnant, Who will receive the message, And that's not to big note any of us, We're just humbly wanting to find, What God wants to say, And prayerfully, It's preached to you, Sometimes, The greatest ability that we can have, Is availability, Availability, So don't discount yourself, You might think, Well, I'm past it, Or, I'm, You know, Someone else is better qualified than

