

# Explore the Bible: September 13

*By Don Hicks*

**God Sends • Isaiah 6:1-13**



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One of the best-known verses in the book of Isaiah – and maybe in the whole Old Testament – is the key verse for this lesson – Isaiah 6:8. The Leaders Guide identifies it as the memory verse from this passage. Many of your class members may already be very familiar with the King James Version of this verse – “Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.” Some of your class members would prefer to memorize a modern translation, like this one from the Christian Standard Bible – “Then I heard the voice of the Lord asking: Who will I send? Who will go for us? I said: Here I am. Send me.” If you know your class leans toward one translation, use it to your advantage to encourage the learning of God’s Word by heart. The Apostle Paul stressed to Timothy the importance of learning God’s Word in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (MSG) – “Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another – showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God’s way. Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us.”

Our lesson this week is a study in the way God showed Isaiah

the task He had for him, and our study of Isaiah 6:1-13 can train us individually to live God's way and to find the task God has for us. God calls each Christian to a specific task and we need to say, "Here am I; send me." Teaching by example is always an effective way to show how to find and follow God's will. Isaiah is teaching us by a detailed accounting of God's call on his life. He begins in the year King Uzziah, the tenth king of Judah, died (740 BC). Isaiah saw the Lord God seated on a throne in the temple. This is an actual historical account of the vision that Isaiah had in Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem.

The details of the vision are important for us to be able to understand its application to our lives. Uzziah had been a good king for Judah and was a relative of Isaiah, so Isaiah was greatly affected by his death. As he mourned and reminisced in the temple, he was prepared for God to speak to him. The details of God's appearance to Isaiah are very dramatic.

Isaiah first tells us in verse one that God was seated on a throne high and lifted up. Next in Isaiah's description is that God's robe filled the temple. The high and lofty throne is of great encouragement to Isaiah, that God is still in charge and has the power to accomplish His loving purposes for His chosen people even though the Northern Kingdom of Israel had greatly declined. The description of the Seraphim ("burning ones," according to the Hebrew language) is very uniquely dramatic. There is an artist's rendition of the Seraphim on the cover of your Sunday School quarterly and also on page 12 of the Leaders Guide.

The Seraphim attending God on His lofty throne had three sets of wings. Two of the sets of wings covered their faces and their feet to show great deference to the Almighty. They were flying with their remaining set of wings, which becomes quite important when Isaiah in verse five realized, "I am ruined," because of unclean lips. As Isaiah became repentant for his

sin, God responded by sending one of the Seraphim to take a live coal from the altar. God had the Seraphim touch Isaiah's lips with glowing coal. Verse seven tells us, "Now that this has touched your lips, your iniquity is removed and your sin is atoned for" (CSB).

This prepares Isaiah to understand when he "heard the voice of the Lord asking: Who should I send? Who will go for us?" I believe the "us" here is a reference to the Triune God: Father, Son (Jesus Christ), and Holy Spirit. Isaiah then said "Here am I; send me." This total surrender to God's will is the way Isaiah became a prophet.

Success in finding and doing God's will does not remove the free will of those to whom God sends us to minister. God commands Isaiah to tell the people, but He also warns him they may not understand or perceive. People in that time and today may have blind eyes, deafened ears, and dull minds if they are not ready to listen to God's message.

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