



How will we answer God's call?

READ ISAIAH 6:1-8

Isaiah has a vision of God on a throne, surrounded by angels with many wings. The angels call out to each other about God's holiness, and the temple shakes. Isaiah immediately feels ashamed, even doomed, because he's contaminated by sin while looking at this majestic God. But one of the angels takes a hot coal from the altar and touches it to Isaiah's mouth, telling Isaiah that his sins are wiped out. Then Isaiah hears the voice of God asking, "Whom shall I send?" Isaiah answers, "Send me."

REMEMBER: Isaiah 6:8b (The Message Bible)

I spoke up. "I'll go. Send me."

MORE TO CONSIDER: Patterns

We've been talking about repeating patterns in the larger story of God, and how often the characters are invited to let go of what's familiar in order to embrace a deeper trust in God. God's story is filled with calls to action, calls to obedience, calls to enter into God's work in the world.

So far we've observed some very different responses to God's call. Remember God's call to Abraham and Sarah? God calls them to leave everything behind and venture into an unknown land in a really vague mission to "bless" the world. Their decision to answer God's call leads to the birth of Jesus hundreds of years later.

Then there's Jonah. His story unravels as he refuses both God's call to preach to his enemies and God's invitation to step into the far-reaching grace and mercy offered to everyone. Where does his story lead?

Then there's us – our chapter in this ongoing story, and our call. How will we answer it?

NEXT WEEK: Jeremiah 31:13-34

WONDER

DAY 1: How do you feel about stories of visions, and flowing robes that fill entire temples, and many-winged angels touching people with hot coals? Have you ever had dreams like this? Can you visualize what this writer is trying to convey? How does it feel to be Isaiah in this dream? Have you ever felt like that? What was it like?

PROGRESS

DAY 2: Do you ever feel like all the big religious moves, the mystical healing and visions and miracles, happened a long time ago? Or that they never happened at all, and exist only as allegories or fables? Is there anything miraculous, or mystical, happening in the world today? Is God still speaking? Is God still calling us? How?

CHARACTER

DAY 3: Do you always answer your phone? Why, or why not? What do you gain by picking up the phone, no matter what? What do you lose?

RELATIONSHIP

DAY 4: Have you ever had an internal "nudge"? An impulse to reach out to a friend, to engage a stranger, to act with compassion towards a person in need? Did you act on that impulse? What happened next?

WONDER

DAY 5: Where do impulses like that come from? Is there something divine in those nudges? How do you know? How do the characters in these Bible stories, or people today, know for sure when they hear the "voice" of God? Could you ever take this too far?

CHARACTER

DAY 6: Why does Isaiah feel unfit to answer God's call? Do you ever feel too unfit, uninformed or unworthy to serve? Why? Do you ever feel like the need in the world is just too overwhelming, and it's easier to just sit on the sidelines? How does this story speak into those concerns?

RESURRECTION

DAY 7: Does God really work through you? What would change if you made a conscious effort to act on all those nudges, or impulses? What kind of courage would it take to push aside all of your excuses the next time you feel God's nudge, and say, "send me"? What if we all did?