

“The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib; but Israel (America?) doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah sinful nation (USA?), a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children (Americans?) that are corrupters; they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye (Americans) will revolt more and more; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. Your country (America?) is desolate, your cities are burned with fire; your land (America?), strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. EXCEPT THE LORD OF HOSTS HAD LEFT UNTO US A VERY SMALL REMNANT, WE (AMERICANS?) SHOULD HAVE BEEN AS SODOM, AND WE (AMERICANS?) SHOULD HAVE BEEN LIKE UNTO GOMORRAH. HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD, YE RULERS OF SODOM; GIVE EAR UNTO THE LAW OF OUR GOD, YE PEOPLE OF GOMORRAH (THE USA?). Isa. 1:1-10.

Isaiah began to preach or prophesy about 770 BC, and it is said that he lived about 120 years, “85 of which he prophesied(!)” Isaiah is called by Ben Syra “*the great prophet,*” and by Eusebius, “*the greatest of the prophets.*” It is a generally received tradition of the Jews that Isaiah lived to the time of the ultra-wicked King “*Manasseh, and that he was sawn asunder by him; and which has been embraced by the ancient Christian writers, and is thought to be referred to in Heb. 11:37;*” to wit:

“And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment; They were stoned, THEY WERE SAWN ASUNDER, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy.)” (Heb. 11:36-40)

John Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, began his ministry with a passage out of Isaiah, recorded in all four Gospels; to wit: “*In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.*” Mat. 3:1-3. “*The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy message before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.*” Mk. 1:1-4. “*Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar ... the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.*” Lk. 3:1-4. “*There was a man sent from God whose name was John...And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? That we may give an answer to them that sent us. What saith thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.*” Jn. 1:6,19-23.

In all the Bible, Isaiah is quoted and cited more than any other; and, probably more than all others put together. It is certain that no one writes so fully and clearly of the Person, offices, grace, and kingdom of Christ; of His incarnation, birth of a virgin; of His sufferings and death, and the glory that should follow – as Isaiah does. The Lord Jesus preached his first sermon at Nazareth out of this book of Isaiah (Lk. 4:16-30); to wit:

“And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph’s son? And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself; whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way, and came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath DAYS.”(Lk. 4:16-30)

(NOTE the plural, DAYS, indicating a favorable reception for a time at least, but was later sharply chastised by the Savior as being more sinful than SODOM (!) To wit: *“Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not...And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell; for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.”* Mat. 11:20-24.)

And, it was in this book of Isaiah that the Ethiopian eunuch was reading when the angel of the Lord sent Philip to convert him, in what may be called the Greatest Miracle of Grace in the Desert. And it was the same book of Isaiah that Philip used in preaching to the eunuch and leading the eunuch to Christ; to wit:

“And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he rose and went; and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot READ ISAIAH THE PROPHET. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Isaiah, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man

should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before her shearer, so opened he not his mouth; In his humiliation his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus; and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.”(Acts 8:26-40)

Beloved, the circumstances of this amazing conversion of this high-ranking political figure are calculated to excite our admiration of the Providences of God – such as the conversion of Paul on the road to Damascus, and the hanging of the wicked Haman on the gallows which Haman himself had prepared for the hanging of Esther’s Uncle Mordecai. What is here remarkable in Divine Providence; that just at this time, and in this way, such a man should be traveling; and what was still a greater wonder of grace, that such an one should be the object of God’s peculiar favor, and should be chosen and called, have the unadulterated Gospel preached to him, and be admitted to church membership, with all the blessings and glorious benefits pertaining thereto. It is reported of this eunuch, that after his conversion he preached the Gospel to the inhabitants Zeylan and Arabia Felix, and in the island of Traprobane in the Red Sea; and at the last he suffered martyrdom. As did Isaiah, probably at the hands of wicked king Manasses, (good King Josiah’s grandfather) who ordered that Isaiah be *“sawn asunder.”* Heb. 11:7. But before his death at the ripe old age of 120 years, Isaiah, working with the Holy Ghost, left posterity **“The Book of the Prophet Isaiah,”** often called, most descriptively, **“The Book of the Words of the Prophet Isaiah.”** (Lk. 3:4).

The Savior Himself, and other preachers of the New Testament, quoted and cited **Isaiah** more than any other Old Testament figure; and, most especially when expounding the Calvinistic doctrines of grace, and when exposing the dangers of sodomy and other moral abominations (**Isa. Chapters 1 & 6**). To which may be added the elegance and sublimity of his style, in which he exceeded the greatest of orators, Demosthenes among the Greeks, and Tully among the Romans. Abarbinel says, that the purity and elegance of his diction is like that of kings and counsellors, who speak more purely and elegantly than other men. But, Beloved, be all that as it may, I can happily testify that a few choice passages in the **Book of Isaiah**, as quoted and cited by the Lord Jesus Himself, have done most to solidify my own doctrinal position vis-a-vis 100% – pure Calvinism. If the 6th & 53rd chapters of Isaiah be juxtaposed to the 12th chapter of John, this fundamental principle of Bible study will be clearly seen; to wit:

“In the year that 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; and 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 posts 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 tongs from off the altar; And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. 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. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate. And the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten; as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves; so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.”(Isa. 6:1-13)

What powerful preaching, providing a short biographical sketch of the genuine Gospel preacher and his short but uncompromising Gospel message. Every man who claims to be a called-of-God Gospel minister must be willing to have his “call” and his message measured by the grand ol’ Isaiah 6 yardstick. First off, he must demonstrate a thoroughgoing familiarity with the meteoric rise and disgraceful fall of king Uzziah, and convincingly fear and tremble lest he also meet Uzziah’s dismal fate; to wit: *“Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was 16 years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah. Sixteen years old was Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God; and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper. And he went forth and warred against the Philistines, and God helped him against the Philistine armies, and against the Arabians, and the Ammonites; and his name spread abroad; for he strengthened himself exceedingly, and he was marvellously helped of the Lord. But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction; for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense.”* 2 Chron. 26:1-16. When 81 priests stopped him, saying, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord; Go out of the sanctuary. Rather than repent and obey the priests, we read:

“Then was Uzziah wroth...and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests, in the house of the Lord...and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the Lord had smitten him. And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the Lord; and Jotham his son was over the king’s house, judging the people of the land.”(2 Chron. 26:19-21)

What a doleful situation, for the people of God to wake up every morning, and live every moment of every day, with the terrible reminder that theirs was the only nation whose head of state was living under the active curse of God. And, there must be a correlation between the opening line of Isaiah 6 – (to wit: *“In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up.”*) – and the bone-chilling, uncompromising message that must be delivered by Jehovah’s faithful messenger to all mankind; to wit: *“Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed... (and preach this message to the end of time).”* Isa. 6:9,10.

I love you. Amen.