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## Lord, I will go! *Renew Me*

(Isaiah 6:8)

### INTRODUCTION

**T**he writer Stephen R. Covey, in his well-known book *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, relates an experience that he lived in the New York subway. Covey tells that on that day the people were sitting calmly, some were reading the newspaper, others were lost in their thoughts or simply resting with their eyes closed. In short, the atmosphere was peaceful and tranquil.

Suddenly, a man and his children entered the train. The children were so boisterous and disobedient that the environment changed immediately.

The father of the children remained with his eyes closed, ignoring the scene completely. The children jumped from here to there and screamed at



their whim, throwing objects, even snatching the newspapers from people. The situation was very annoying, but the father didn't do anything.

Covey could not believe that what he was seeing. How could this man allow his children to behave this way! So, he stood up from his seat and addressed the father of the youngsters, saying: "Sir, your children are irritating many people. Can't you control them?"

It was at that moment when that man raised his eyes and said in a soft tone: "Oh, you are right. I guess I will have to do something, we went to the hospital... their mother died about an hour ago. I don't know what to think, I guess that they don't know how to react either."

After that revelation, Covey wrote: "Suddenly I saw things in a different way, and since I saw it in a different way, I *thought* in a different way, I *felt* a different way, I *behaved* in a different way. My irritation faded."<sup>1</sup>

Interesting story! It shows that when our vision about something changes, our thoughts, our feelings and, above all, our behavior change as well. In our message today I would like to invite you to renew your vision of God. I assure you that if you do it, your life will change completely!

## DEVELOPMENT

The Bible presents the story of a man who was changed completely when he renewed his vision of God. I am referring to the prophet Isaiah. According to the story, this prophet had a special vision about God. However, before analyzing the vision that changed the life of Isaiah, allow me to speak to you a little bit about his book.

The book of Isaiah is one of the most interesting books of all the Bible. Some say that is a miniature Bible! The book has sixty-six chapters, just like the Bible has sixty-six books. It has two great divisions, just like there are two divisions in the Bible, with thirty-nine chapters in the first division (like the Old Testament) and twenty-seven chapters in the second (like the New Testament).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen R. Covey. *Los 7 hábitos de la gente altamente efectiva* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Paidós, 2003), p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Henrietta C. Mears. *Lo que nos dice la Biblia* (Miami, FL: Editorial Vida, 1979), p. 202.

But, do you know what is the most interesting thing about the book of Isaiah? It's the book that speaks the most about Jesus! That is why Isaiah is called the messianic prophet. Isaiah tells us everything about Jesus:

- His birth (Isaiah 7:14)
- His family (Isaiah 11:1)
- His anointing (Isaiah 11:2)
- His character (Isaiah 11:3)
- The simplicity of his life (Isaiah 7:15)
- His meekness (Isaiah 42:1-4)
- His death (Isaiah 53)
- His resurrection (Isaiah 25:8)
- His glorious reign (Isaiah 11:32)

When you read the book of Isaiah you will find the people of Jesus in each one of his pages. But do you know something? When Isaiah wrote his book, things weren't well inside of God's people. There were all types of problems!

The people had moved away from God and consequently they were suffering badly.

The prophet Isaiah felt very sad about the condition God's people. Therefore, one day he decided to go to the temple to speak to God and make the decision of presenting each one of the problems his people were going through. There, in the temple, Isaiah had a vision of God, that completely changed his thoughts, his feelings and, above all, his behavior. What did God reveal in the temple? Please, let's read together Isaiah, chapter 6, verses 1 to 4:

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another:

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.<sup>3</sup>



God revealed Himself to Isaiah! The prophet could contemplate God sitting on his throne, surrounded by angels filled with a radiant glory and who sang without rest, saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; all the earth is filled with your glory."

What happened in the life of Isaiah when he had this wonderful vision of God? Let me leave the prophet himself to say what he experienced:

Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for." Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"

And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

When the prophet Isaiah had a vision of God, *the first thing that he experienced was the greatness of his sin*. If you read chapter 5, verses from 8 to 30, you will find that the prophet Isaiah preaches against the sin of his people. But when he had the vision of God, he doesn't point to other people's sins, instead he looked at his own sins. He looked at his filthy lips and his life full of sin!

The second thing that Isaiah experienced after having the vision of God was *the depth of the divine forgiveness*. Isaiah was not left in the desperation of sin, instead he was granted divine forgiveness. His lips were touched, and the angel told him: "Your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for."

Lastly, when Isaiah saw God he *responded with courage to the divine call*. Isaiah heard the voice of God that said: Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us? Then, without an excuse, his response to God was: "Here am I. Send me!"

The vision that Isaiah had of God changed him completely: it transformed his thoughts, his feelings, and, above all, his behavior. The life of Isaiah never was the same again! His life came to center itself completely in God and his service.

He served the Lord for many years and was willing to give his life as a sacrifice for the cause of God.



Being an elder, a young prophet asked him: "Master, why do you continue working relentlessly for the Lord?"

Isaiah responded: "Because one day I saw the Lord and my life changed completely!"

The story of the prophet and his encounter with God teaches us that when we have a vision of God in our lives, we will never be the same person again. Our thoughts will change, our feelings will change, but, above all, our behavior will change. We will never be static! Faced with the call of the Lord we will always be available to respond: "Here am I. Send me!"

For a long time, I asked myself: Why some believers are so active in the cause of the Lord while others seem indifferent? I discovered the response to that question through a simple allegory. According to the astronomers, the planets that move more rapidly are those that are closer to the sun. Mercury goes around the sun in only 80 earthly days. However, Jupiter, in order to completely lap around the sun, lasts no more or less than 12 years. What is the difference? Mercury is the planet that is the closest to the sun, as a result, it moves more rapidly.<sup>4</sup>

Yes, dear friends and brethren, like Isaiah when we have a vision of God and we get closer to his glory, we will experience an urgency and our movement will be more rapidly. The secret is in living more closely to his presence and renew our vision about him!

## CONCLUSION

**When you renew your vision of God, your thoughts will change, your feelings will change and, above all, your behavior will change.**

What occurred to Isaiah happened to young Carlos. For a long time, Carlos had been a nominal member of the church, in which he attended for mere compromise; just as he relates, even so, he felt hopeless, comfortless. One day, under a big snowstorm, he attended a service in a certain church; but the preacher could not go due to the climate. With no preacher, a shoemaker stood

<sup>4</sup> Joanne Baker. *50 cosas que hay que saber sobre el universo* (Editorial Ariel, 2011), p. 16.



up to preach before the few people that were present and read this text: “Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other” (Isaiah 45:22). The shoemaker, who had no experience in the art of preaching, repeated the passage and said: “Look! It isn’t necessary to lift a foot, nor a finger. It isn’t necessary that you study in college or contribute money to know how to seek. Look at me, says the Lord, and not at yourselves. There is no consolation in you.”

Then, with his eyes set on Carlos, he told him: “Carlos, it looks like you are sad. You will be unhappy if you don’t obey.” Then he shouted with more force: “Look to Jesus!” That day, Carlos said that he decided to look at Jesus and his life changed completely. Who did he become afterwards? He became a preacher known in history as Carlos Spurgeon, the prince of preachers. When Isaiah renewed his vision of God his life changed. When Carlos Spurgeon renewed his vision of God his life changed. When you renew your vision of God your thoughts will change, your feelings will change, your behavior will change. You will no longer be only a nominal member in church, but a servant of God that will be willing to say: “Here am I. Send me.”

Today I invite you to renew your vision of God. I guarantee that the day you do it, just like Isaiah you will say, “Lord, I will go.”

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Why is the book of Isaiah called the “miniature Bible”?
2. When the people were going through difficult times, what decision did Isaiah make?
3. Which were the three things that Isaiah experienced when he had a renewed vision of God?
4. What will happen in our lives when we renew our vision of God?